

May 31, 2022

Andrew Leon  
Planner  
Community Planning and Development (CPD)  
City of Mercer Island

Re: Rand-Milestone Short Plat  
7621 SE 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Mercer Island, Washington  
CAO 21-004

This letter provides geotechnical review comments for the above-referenced project. The proposed short plat was reviewed for compliance with Mercer Island City Codes (MICC):

- MICC 19.07.160 Geologically hazardous areas.
- MICC 19.09.090 Building pad. (Specifically 19.09.090(A)(2)(c).)

**MICC 19.07.160 Geologically hazardous areas**

A review of the geotechnical report provided for the proposed development (Riley Group, Inc. dated May 4, 2022) indicated on page 2 the following statement.

*“Evidence of mass wastage was observed at the site.”*

No additional discussion or details were provided regarding this statement.

**Comment 1:** Provide details on where this was observed, potential impacts to the proposed development as well as mitigation measures to be incorporated into the final design.

On page 4 of the geotechnical report, erosion hazard is indicated as the only hazard designated by the City of Mercer Island. Two additional hazards are identified for this lot: landslide and seismic.

**Comment 2:** Geotechnical engineer shall provide a critical area study as required by MICC 19.07.110.

**MICC 19.07.160. Section (B) is provided below.**

- B. *General review requirements.* Alteration within geologically hazardous areas or associated buffers is required to meet the standards in this section, unless the scope of work is exempt pursuant to section 19.07.120, exemptions, or a critical area review 1 approval has been obtained pursuant to section 19.07.090(A).
1. When an alteration within a landslide hazard area, seismic hazard area or buffer associated with those hazards is proposed, the applicant must submit a critical area study concluding that the proposal can effectively mitigate risks of the hazard. The study shall recommend appropriate design and development measures to mitigate such hazards. The code official may waive the requirement for a critical area study and the requirements of subsections (B)(2) and (B)(3) of this section when he or she determines that the proposed development is minor in nature and will not increase the risk of landslide, erosion, or harm from seismic activity, or that the development site does not meet the definition of a geologically hazardous area.
  2. Alteration of landslide hazard areas and seismic hazard areas and associated buffers may occur if the critical area study documents find that the proposed alteration:
    - a. Will not adversely impact other critical areas;
    - b. Will not adversely impact the subject property or adjacent properties;
    - c. Will mitigate impacts to the geologically hazardous area consistent with best available science to the maximum extent reasonably possible such that the site is determined to be safe; and

- d. Includes the landscaping of all disturbed areas outside of building footprints and installation of hardscape prior to final inspection.
3. Alteration of landslide hazard areas, seismic hazard areas and associated buffers may occur if the conditions listed in subsection (B)(2) of this section are satisfied and the geotechnical professional provides a statement of risk matching one of the following:
- a. An evaluation of site-specific subsurface conditions demonstrates that the proposed development is not located in a landslide hazard area or seismic hazard area;
  - b. The landslide hazard area or seismic hazard area will be modified or the development has been designed so that the risk to the site and adjacent property is eliminated or mitigated such that the site is determined to be safe;
  - c. Construction practices are proposed for the alteration that would render the development as safe as if it were not located in a geologically hazardous area and do not adversely impact adjacent properties; or
  - d. The development is so minor as not to pose a threat to the public health, safety and welfare.

The Riley Group's geotechnical report addendum dated May 4, 2022, did not indicate which statement of risk is appropriate for this development. The verbatim statement of risk must be ONE of the statements presented in MICC 19.07.160.(B)(3).

**Comment 3:** Provide a revised statement of risk that conforms to one of the statements presented in MICC19.07.160.(B)(3).

**MICC 19.09.090 Building pad.**

19.09.090(A)(2)(c). Building pads shall not be located within:

- (c) Critical areas, buffers or critical area setbacks; provided building pads may be located within geohazard hazard areas and associated buffers and setbacks when all of the following are met:
  - i. A qualified professional determines that the criteria of MICC 19.07.160(B)(2) and (3), Site Development, are satisfied;
  - ii. Building pads are sited to minimize impacts to the extent feasible; and
  - iii. Building pads are not located in steep slopes or within 10 feet from the top of a steep slope, unless such slopes, as determined by a qualified professional, consist of soil types determined not to be landslide prone.

It appears that Lot 2 is located over the sloped portion (also designated landslide hazard) of the site. No final grading is provided in this area.

**Comment 4:** This code section (MICC 19.09.090) cannot be met without meeting code section MICC19.07.160. Provide proposed final grades for the proposed lots. Provide information regarding proposed building excavation, e.g., will basement levels be involved? Provide an anticipated basement level elevation or finished floor elevations for at-grade structures for the proposed lots.

Adequate grading information should be provided for Lot 2 so that the geotechnical engineer can assess potential slope stability impacts and provide design mitigation recommendations.

Following review of this information, assessment of potential site and offsite impacts and provision of recommended mitigation measures, the geotechnical engineer can then provide a statement of risk as discussed in Comment 3 above.

**Rand-Milestone Short Plat**  
**CA021-004: 7621 SE 22<sup>nd</sup> Street**  
**Mercer Island, WA**  
**May 31, 2022**  
**Page 3 of 3**

**Summary**

There are four review comments to be resolved.

Should further information be required, feel free to contact me.

**Sincerely,**

**City of Mercer Island – CPD**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Lorilla". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michele Lorilla, P.E.  
Geotechnical Peer Reviewer