

Bachtold Annexation worst spot for development

For those that are interested, a petition has been started to oppose the development plans and provides additional information on the Bachtold Annexation and Hayden Homes development.

The city has been in discussion with Hayden Homes for some time regarding this development. Impacted homeowners were given notice of a potential development last November, without many details. Since that time a group of interested citizens has been gathering information and trying to understand why this land was selected as an Urban Growth Area in the first place.

This area has known drainage/flooding issues and is listed as a concern for development in every study the city has engaged. Quite simply, from traffic, to drainage, city services and cost to the city — you couldn't pick a worse spot. Yet the city seems focused on doing just that.

To be clear, this is not a solution for affordable housing based on the proposed price point of these homes. It is the furthest location away from any city services, which is the opposite of how most cities develop and plan affordable housing.

So, what we have is an out-of-state developer using newly crafted zoning laws that the citizens of Walla Walla never had a chance to even vote on. What's missing on this debate for some is that this proposal isn't just about this development; it's about the long-term look and feel of our community in Walla Walla.

I can assure you that this type of development will have an impact on tourism; over time, the charm we're used to in our city will dim.

Should we really start the process of ripping out wheat fields and vineyards without giving real thought to the impact? If so, get used to corner strip malls popping up on the corner of Cottonwood and Reser and Langdon roads.

While a development plan will be submitted to the city and will begin a process for approval, I would encourage you to voice your opinions as members of this community and participate in this petition and a public hearing to be announced in the coming weeks.

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Walla Walla

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