



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Growth Management Hearings Board Invalidates Urban Center Designation for Point Wells

Shoreline, WA – April 26, 2011 - The Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board issued a decision yesterday invalidating Snohomish County's designation of Point Wells as an "Urban Center." The Growth Management Hearings Board is a State Board charged with hearing cases concerning compliance with the goals and requirements of the Growth Management Act and related provisions of the State Environmental Policy Act. The Central Puget Sound Hearings Board is a three-member panel of land use experts.

Following extensive briefing and a hearing on the merits, the Board agreed with Petitioners Save Richmond Beach, City of Shoreline and the Town of Woodway that Point Wells is not an appropriate site for an "Urban Center," and invalidated the Snohomish County ordinances designating it as such.

The Board noted that adequate urban services and infrastructure are not currently available or planned for Point Wells, making it inappropriate for Urban Center development. Among other problems with the proposed scale of development, the Board noted: serious deficiencies in road and intersection capacity along the access road; lack of transit access or transportation links to the regional network; and lack of adopted plans for the necessary water and sewer infrastructure. The Board also agreed with Petitioners that Snohomish County's environmental review for the project was inadequate, and remanded the project back to the County for further environmental review in accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act.

Point Wells is situated adjacent to the City of Shoreline and the Town of Woodway. It is currently accessible only via one small access road through Shoreline. When the County designated this area for Urban Center development, Woodway, Shoreline, and Save Richmond Beach, each sought review by the Growth Board.

The Board's decision is a victory for Save Richmond Beach, Shoreline and Woodway, who had opposed the Point Wells Urban Center designation based on the limited access, lack of mass transit, and conflicts with neighboring communities.

Following the hearing on the merits, but before the Hearings Board could issue its decision invalidating the "Urban Center" designation, the developer submitted a project application to Snohomish County to build a densely-populated Urban Center at Point Wells, with approximately 3100 housing units, several 18-story towers, and more than 100,000 square feet of commercial space. In Snohomish County such a dense scale of development is only allowed in an area appropriately designated as an Urban Center.

With the Board's invalidation of an Urban Center designation for Point Wells, Save Richmond Beach calls upon Snohomish County and the developer to abide by the Board's decision and to halt the proposed Urban Center development until an adequate environmental review is conducted and a lawful and appropriate project scale is identified.

Save Richmond Beach is a community-driven non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Richmond Beach and surrounding neighborhoods through responsible and sustainable planning. For more information please visit www.saverichmondbeach.org.