

Project No. BFS 329
May 22, 2006

Ms. Bridget Schwarz
Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association
2110 NW 179th Street
Ridgefield, Washington 98642

SUBJECT: Review and Comment on Various Traffic Items Currently Tied to Proposed Big Box
Salmon Creek Site

REFERENCE: Proposal for Big Box Salmon Creek Site

Dear Ms. Schwarz,

Review of various items submitted by the Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association (FGNA) to this office has been completed per your request. Attached Table 1, summary of reviewed submittals provides a listing of elements of those items that are discussed in this letter report.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Based on a review of the various documents, reports, road modifications and addendums that were furnished by FGNA the following observations have been made,

1. The project area that was evaluated apparently was the area south of NE 134th Street, EAST NE 29th Avenue and north of NE 129th Street.
2. What started out as a short-plat for four parcels with a proposed development on one parcel involving 125,000 sq. ft. shopping center, 3,500 sq. ft. drive-in Bank and convenience store with 8 gas pumps that was studied based on 2003 traffic counts evolved into and changed originally proposed land uses a number of times
3. The originally proposed project then evolved, in 2003, into a larger 135,000 sq. ft. shopping center, 3,500 sq. ft. drive-in Bank and convenience store with 8 gas pumps and added a 4,000 fast food restaurant. This of course increased the traffic generated.
4. In March 2005 the project again changed not only configuration but also size with the substitution of a Shopping Center for the entire site that had a total area of 177, 000 gross square foot.
5. Later in 2005 KAI proposes to revise the site land use again to a big box commercial stand alone store with 176,671 gross square feet on the site.
6. Access to the site has generally remained as a single right turn off and on driveway to NE 134th Street and driveways accessing NE 129th Street.

7. Road Modification has been proposed for the delivery driveway sight distance deficiency that is in violation of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
8. Data used in the base analysis of the original 2003 parcel short plat land use for the one site appears to be in violation of Clark County Concurrency practices and standards.
9. How was traffic that was generated by the Defrees Commercial Center and Legacy Emmanuel Salmon Creek Hospital that traveled through study area intersections accounted for in the analyses conducted for the dynamic and changing commercial land uses proposed at the site?
10. Why do some engineering firms not have to stamp their work in Clark County and others do?
11. The orientation of the Vancouver Wal-Mart driveways noted in the KAI July 18, 2005 memorandum does not match the reality of actual field conditions. Is it correct to use this count data if the site driveway orientations are toward a freeway direct connection and into subdivision?
12. What of the moratorium on development in the Salmon Creek area? Does this project comply with the moratorium requirements?
13. The proposed driveway on 134th Street will result in a number of unnecessary u-turn movements on NE 134th Street east of the site by motorists that are confused by the correct exit route from the site. This will be an ongoing headache for FGNA, Clark County staff and a potential safety issue. .

DISCUSSION

The apparent current project on the mostly vacant 12.2 acre parcel between NE 134th Street and NE 129th Street east of NE 27th Avenue has evolved from a site related commercial development that had a TIA developed in 2003 with an assumed build out year of 2005. The same traffic engineering firm, Kittelson & Associates, Inc. (KAI) did the traffic work on ALL of the items that were furnished by FGNA to this office.

The first traffic work furnished was a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) that developed by KAI (KAI project no. 6180.00) and furnished to Clark County in October 2003 for the Salmon Creek Commercial Center. The **Center as proposed was to be built out in 2005** and to include,

1. 125,000 sq. ft. Shopping Center
2. Drive-in Bank with 3,500 sq. ft.
3. Convenience Market with 8 fueling pumps

Based on a review of that TIA there were questions as to how the internal trips were determined for the proposed site identified land uses. The base total trips estimated for the Convenience store with fueling positions is low.

In September 2004 KAI (KAI project no. 6853.0) submitted an Addendum to the TIA. KAI stated in this Addendum that “Based on current market conditions, Ossey Development Corporation is proposing to expand the commercial center ...”. The revised project was expanded and restructured to include the following,

1. 135,000 sq. ft. Shopping Center
2. Drive-in Bank with 3,500 sq. ft.
3. Convenience Market with 8 fueling pumps
4. Fast Food Restaurant with drive-up window 4,000 sq. ft.

Based on a review of that TIA there were questions as to how the internal trips were determined for the proposed site identified land uses and how the percentage of pass-by trips was determined for the Fast Food Restaurant with drive-up window. The base total trips estimated for the Convenience store with fueling positions still remained low. This unstamped letter report focused on year 2005 conditions. **Noted in the above paragraph the original project had a build out year 2005 traffic conditions.**

In March 2005 KAI (KAI project no. 6716.00) submitted a Transportation Assessment Letter (TAL) that dealt with the original 12.2 acre site that now had a revised land use which was an exclusive Shopping Center. KAI in the TAL on the 177,000 sq. ft. Shopping Center briefly discusses the estimated PM Peak Hour trip generation and distribution for the proposed second revision of land use on the site. KAI cites a reduction in Shopping Center trips to the site of 35% for pass-by and diverted trips. **A reduction is NOT ALLOWED for diverted trips.** *Reference 2 states that, "Diverted linked trips are often difficult to identify. Therefore, diverted linked trips should be treated similarly to primary, ..."* Diverted trips should not be considered as a reduction in trips.

The Clark County Pre-Application Conference Pre-Application Preliminary Report, Case Number PAC2005-00075, on page 3 under item 9 stated, "Transportation Concurrency: a traffic study will be required for concurrency. See Staff's comments and CCC 40.350.0320." The attached staff memo states that an addendum report will be required which will require new trip generation and distribution due to the now proposed large format store. KAI (KAI project no. 6716) unstamped letter report discusses trip generation of the proposed unidentified Big Box stand alone 177,000 sq. ft. store that is the fourth land use for the site. The KAI letter makes reference to a trip estimate work that was completed by DKS Associates. Again KAI incorrectly subtracts diverted trips from the total trips generated by the Big Box store. KAI relies in 2005 on the vested trips as a result of 2003 TIA for a different land use configuration, which was to be built out in 2005.

ESTIMATED TRIP GENERATION OF LATEST SITE PROPOSED LAND USE

Apparently the size and type of commercial development has been decided with the latest latest submission by the property developer. Based on the information that FGNA furnished it is understood from KAI updated traffic generation report of July 18, 2005 that the site will be occupied by a 176,671 sq. ft. Big Box discount retailer.

Based on Table 2 Trip Generation Estimates two commercial alternatives were evaluated as potential for being developed are,

1. Free-Standing Discount Superstore, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Land Use: 813
2. Free-Standing Discount Store, ITE Land Use: 815

The reason for the evaluation as two separate ITE Land is relatively simple. The KAI has for the developer since 2003 has proposed FOUR different land uses on the same site. The two land uses are the closest to meeting what appears to comply with the latest proposed land use. Both of these land uses are stand alone Big Box type developments.

A review of Table 2 indicates that depending on which of the land uses is implemented there will be a significant increase in the estimated total and net trips to be generated by the latest rendition

of alternative land use that could be developed on the site. Specifically in both land use cases the estimated total trips reduced for Pass-by Trips exceed the trip estimates previously submitted by the developer for vested trips.

PROFESSIONAL STATE of WASHINGTON ENGINEERS STAMP ON ENGINEERING WORK for THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Enclosed in Appendices A, B and C are copies of excerpts from the State of Washington RCW, Clark County Concurrency Manual and Clark County Code Chapter (CCCC) 40.350.020 respectively.

RCW in Appendix B states that the use of the term “engineer” shall mean a “professional engineer”. Typically an individual using the abbreviation PE after their name implies that they are a professional engineer. The excerpt under RCW 18.43.070 states in part “...reports prepared by the registrant shall be signed, dated, and stamped with said seal...”. Under RCW 196-23-020 which deals with when a professional engineers stamp shall be used states “(1) Final documents are those documents that are prepared and distributed for filing with public officials ...etc”

Clark County Concurrency Administrative Manual states under the background information that, “Current Washington PE stamp and signature is present”. CCCC 40.350.020D. Transportation Impact Study 3. “A transportation impact study shall be prepared by and/or under the supervision of a registered professional engineer in the state of Washington.” CCCC 40.350.020D. Transportation Impact Study 4. “A transportation impact study shall be based on traffic counts obtained within twelve (12) months of the fully complete date of the development application.”

Table 1 which lists the various publications reviewed by this office only the original October 2003 TIA for the first project was ever stamped by a professional engineer licensed in the State of Washington. A number of the reviewed items listed various individuals that used the abbreviation “PE” after their name or the term Engineer, however NONE of the reviewed items, Transportation and/or traffic related and road modifications had State of Washington professional engineer’s stamps or seals affixed.

Why would individuals that indicate they are Professional Engineers not stamp or seal their work? Who was in responsible charge of the various forms of engineering work that was conducted related to this proposed development? Is the potential for liability for a professional engineer’s work an issue? What was the quality of the work? Or do some engineers and/or engineering firms not have to stamp their work in Clark County? Are these engineering firms above State of Washington law and Clark County Code?

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed project has gone through a name of twists and turns with transportation related issues from the October 2003 until now in May 2006. The FOUR proposed alternative land uses although ALL apparently complying with the current zoning have resulted in different land uses with different but similar trip generation characteristics. **Diverted trips in the trip estimation**

calculations have been subtracted when they should have been considered as primary trips. There is a question as to whether and if the traffic generated by the new Emmanuel Legacy Salmon Creek Hospital and the Drefrees Commercial Center were properly accounted for in the background traffic.

The original TIA for the project was developed based on traffic counts counted in 2003 with an estimated build out of 2005. It is 2006 and the earliest that the project if construction started immediately would be finished would be in late 2007, two years after it was suppose to be built out. The project that was originally conceived for the site bears little if any resemblance to the originally commercial project that had a TIA developed for it. What about the moratorium on development in the Salmon creek area?

Based on the review of various transportation and/or traffic engineering documents furnished by FGNA the following conclusions have been derived,

1. The proposed signage solution for inadequate sight distance at the 129th Street driveway in the Road Modification is in violation of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
2. Due to the differences in land use evaluated and correct accounting for diverted trips it has been determined that actual new trips adjusted for Pass-By trips are higher than originally estimated by KAI.
3. The 2003 TIA conducted by KAI for the original site development assumed that the proposed project would be built out in 2005. That build out year of 2005 has come and gone with NO PROJECT.
4. The traffic counts and original TIA were conducted in October 2003. Relying on a TIA that is 3 years out of date with three subsequent land use changes is in violation of Clark County Code.
5. The accounting for traffic from Emmanuel Legacy Salmon Creek and unoccupied portion of Defrees Commercial Center was not dealt with in the TIA or other various traffic studies submitted by the developer.
6. Based on ALL of the above, given the Salmon Creek development moratorium due to traffic loads on area roads and the traffic data submitted it is reasonable to conclude that the development issue involving traffic from the proposed development has NOT been dealt with adequately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the original TIA was based on counts conducted in 2003 with a project build out of 2005, there is significant question as to what the actual land use for the site is actually proposed to be, questions about the trip generation estimates and whether the transportation/ traffic engineering and road modification applications were actually developed under the direction professional engineers licensed in the State of Washington it is recommended that the proposed development be denied due to traffic issues.

Should you have any questions please contact this office.

Respectfully submitted

Bruce F. Schafer, PE

References

1. Trip Generation 7th edition 2003 Institute of Transportation Engineers
2. Trip Generation Handbook October 1998 An ITE Recommended Practice

References (continued)

3. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, 2003 edition
Federal Highway Administration

Enclosures

1. Table 1, Summary of Items Reviewed
2. Table 2, Trip Generation Estimates
3. Appendices
 - A. Excerpts from Washington State , RCW A
 - B. Excerpts Clark County Concurrency Adm. Manual B
 - C. Excerpts Clark County Code 40.350.020 C
 - D. Background Bruce F. Schafer, PE D

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