

Patti Gearhart

From: Marilyn Burwell <mburwell@riousa.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 12:36 PM
To: City of Ferndale Comments
Cc: City Council
Subject: comments for the Planning Commission

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Dear Planning Commission,

I was notified yesterday that no public testimony will be taken at the Planning Commission meeting on Wed., Jan. 28th. I was disappointed, as we had more to say. I hope this decision to close public testimony means good news for our neighborhood. [Our boundaries are Viewpoint Way (north), Mountain View Road (south) and Church Road (south).]

As you know Western WA U's Planning Studio did a series of public meetings and then some reports for Ferndale's 2025 Comp Plan. I attended many of those meetings, but I missed two meetings in the summer of 2025. Looking at my calendar, one of those important meetings was on June 11, 2025. The June 11th meeting was the most crucial, as the Planning Studio presented their recommendations for rezoning areas of Ferndale. The meeting was on my calendar, but I realize now that I missed it, because I broke my left foot and severely scraped my right arm on June 9th. I stumbled and fell outside the Ferndale Post Office. I was housebound, just resting, for over a week.

Having missed those summer meetings, I was surprised in the Fall of 2025 to learn how seriously the city of Ferndale would be taking those student recommendations. I thought it was just an exercise to help WWU train planning students, and that their recommendations would not be used without a great deal of supervision by the city of Ferndale.

Here is the Planning Studio powerpoint from your June 11, 2025 Planning Commission meeting:

[June-11-Final-Presentation](#)

Please open the powerpoint and look at pages 21-35, this section represents our neighborhood along with some nearby neighborhoods referred to in the report as "Mountain View" or "West Node." West Node is a larger area than our neighborhood, but here are the numbers of housing types the Planning Studio wanted to put into it: 112 single family, 292 townhomes, 420 multi-family, 770 apartments. Note the graphic entitled "Design Styles" on page 33. This is a photo of a giant shopping center backed by a long line of four-story apartments. This depiction is, definitely, not what my neighbors want for our future. Had the students interviewed us, we could have told them that.

At an earlier public hearing of the Planning Commission a woman, who was raised in Ferndale, but who now lives in Bellevue, said something close to this: Be careful; housing density does NOT equal housing affordability. The state's mandate for current comp plans is based on cities needing to have certain percent of housing for each of about five income levels. That's how the state is defining housing affordability. I believe I heard a staff person at the Jan. 21st meeting say that Ferndale's state requirements could be met by what is in the plan for the Portal Way neighborhood.

I am sorry that I did not raise my objections sooner. – Marilyn Burwell, 2456 Viewpoint Way, Ferndale