



DAVID EVANS  
AND ASSOCIATES INC.

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## Memorandum

**DATE:** September 16, 2013

**TO:** Jana Hanson  
Community & Economic Development Director  
City of Mount Vernon

Gary Christensen  
Planning & Development Services  
Skagit County

**FROM:** Maggie Buckley  
Environmental Planner

**SUBJECT:** Scoping Summary

**PROJECT:** Skagit County Jail

**PROJECT NO.:** COMV0000-0011

**COPIES:** File, Marc Estvold

In accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), scoping for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Skagit County Jail was conducted between July 18, 2013 and August 20, 2013. The intent of scoping is to invite agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public to comment on the scope of the EIS. The Determination of Significance was published on July 22, 2013. A public hearing was held on Tuesday, August 13, 2013, from 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm at the Skagit County Administrative Building. The hearing consisted of a brief presentation by staff from the City of Mount Vernon (City) and Skagit County (County) staff and project consultants, followed by an open hearing. A court reporter was present to record all statements. The hearing was attended by 14 people, 7 of whom provided statements.

### Scoping Comments

In addition to statements provided at the hearing, the City received written comments during the scoping period in the form of emails and letters. All comments received during the scoping period were reviewed for SEPA EIS issues.

The Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation was the only agency to comment. Several comments expressed a preference for one of the two alternative sites. The most common concern voiced at the public hearing and in written comments was related to the potential economic impacts of a new jail. Specific concerns included potential impacts on local employment, sales and property tax revenue, property values, local commerce, and tourism. Other concerns included aesthetics, preservation of night sky, transportation, cultural resources, floodplains, drainage, and soils.



### **Scoping Recommendations: Elements of the Environment**

Land use, aesthetics, cultural resources, soils (including drainage), transportation, floodplains, and hazardous materials will be further addressed in the EIS.

Also, although not required, as a result of comments received during the scoping period, it is recommended that one additional environmental issue be evaluated in the EIS—Economics. Specific issues to be addressed in this analysis include potential impacts on adjacent properties, property values, tax revenue, jobs, local commerce, and overall development potential of the surrounding area. The addition of an Economics element to the EIS will be utilized during the Essential Public Facility decision-making process and respond to the primary concern raised by the community during the scoping period.

### **Scoping Recommendations: Alternatives**

Many comments expressed a preference for one of the two alternatives sites which the EIS will focus on. One comment suggested revisiting a site (Site #9, Butler Hill). The range of alternatives considered, including Site 9, will be described in the EIS.

### **Scoping Recommendations: Mitigation Measures**

Land use and aesthetic impacts were identified as appropriate areas for mitigation. The EIS will address this issue.

Enclosures:     Hearing Transcript, Written Comments, and Index

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CITY OF MOUNT VERNON AND SKAGIT COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEARING ON SCOPE OF EIS  
AUGUST 13, 2013

Commissioner Hearing Room  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, Washington 98273

CORPOLONGO & ASSOCIATES  
114 WEST MAGNOLIA STREET, SUITE 400-110  
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225

(360) 671-6298

Reported by: Deanna Ellis, CCR

1 4:00 p.m.

2

3 MS. HANSON: We're going to go ahead and get  
4 started. Thank you for attending the scoping meeting  
5 for the EIS on the jail siting.

6 I'm just gonna start off with introductions. To my  
7 left is Maggie Buckley with David Evans and Associates.  
8 They are the consulting firm that the City and the  
9 County have hired to take us through this Environmental  
10 Impact Study process.

11 To my right is Gary Christensen, Planning Director  
12 for Skagit County and Marc Estvold, Consultant for the  
13 County that is in charge of the jail siting.

14 So we are going to be here to just give a brief  
15 introduction to the project and explain the process, and  
16 then we would like to hear from all of you, any comments  
17 that you have on the scoping of the Environmental Impact  
18 Statement.

19 So today's meeting is one of the first steps in the  
20 public process that is undertaken for the preparation of  
21 an Environmental Impact Statement. The Washington State  
22 Environmental Policy Act requires environmental review  
23 projects, such as the siting and development of a jail.

24 As the responsible agencies involved with  
25 administering the SEPA, which is the State Environmental

1 Policy Act, the County and City, jointly determined by  
2 the Environmental Impact Statement, also known as the  
3 "EIS," is the appropriate process for reviewing the  
4 environmental impacts for the siting of the jail and  
5 have jointly issued a Determination of Significance  
6 which triggers the EIS.

7 Under State Law, an agency which initiates a  
8 governmental proposal, in this case that would be the  
9 County, such as the county jail, is the lead agency  
10 under SEPA. However, to better serve the public, the  
11 County has requested that Mount Vernon act as a co-lead  
12 on the proposal which is why you will see both of us  
13 representing this project.

14 The EIS process is a tool for identifying and  
15 analyzing probable adverse environmental impacts;  
16 reasonable alternatives; and possible mitigation; and it  
17 provides the public an opportunity to participate in the  
18 development of those strategies designed to mitigate  
19 those impacts and consider the alternatives.

20 Today's meeting is for the purpose of scoping the  
21 EIS. This is the first step in the process. The  
22 purpose of scoping is to narrow the focus of the  
23 Environmental Impact Statement to only those significant  
24 environmental impacts that really matter with this  
25 particular project.

1           So I'm going to now turn this over to Marc Estvold  
2           who's going to explain just the need for the jail and  
3           also describe the two sites that are being considered in  
4           Mount Vernon for the siting of the jail.

5           Following Marc's presentation, we're going to turn  
6           it over to Maggie, and she'll go further into the  
7           process. Then we invite all of you to come up and make  
8           comments.

9           Thank you.

10           MR. ESTVOLD: Thank you, Jana. I'd just like  
11           to give you a quick history on the project. This  
12           started way back in 2002 when the need was realized for  
13           an expansion or an addition to the existing jail and has  
14           gone through many iterations, and as you followed in the  
15           Skagit Valley Herald, a lot of work has gone into this.

16           About a year and a half ago, the County  
17           Commissioners realized that in order to really get this  
18           through, this really had to be a cooperative effort  
19           between all of the cities and the County. It really is  
20           a County facility. So we created the Coordinating  
21           Council which was made up of the mayors, Anacortes,  
22           Burlington, Sedro Woolley, and Mount Vernon, one  
23           commissioner, a couple of judges, and the Sheriff were  
24           on that committee to act as a steering committee to go  
25           through the process and look at all that was involved

1 with the jail.

2 So we started by looking at projected incarceration  
3 rates. We had a firm that does that type of work give  
4 us what they saw as projections, and it really looks  
5 like we're gonna need a facility for around 400 beds in  
6 the next 15 -- we'll grow out of a facility for 400 beds  
7 in the next 15 to 20 years, according to their  
8 projections.

9 So we originally started looking at a 600-bed  
10 facility, but quickly realized the cost of that, the  
11 siting of that right now might be a challenge. So we,  
12 as a group, decided to scale it back to 400 beds. So we  
13 talked about a 400-bed facility.

14 The first thing that we looked at was renovating  
15 the existing building. That seemed like the best thing  
16 to do. It's a jail right now. It's zoned right.  
17 Everybody is used to it being there.

18 So we brought in a firm, DLR Architects, that  
19 specializes in correctional facility design, and we  
20 asked them to look at the existing jail and tell us how  
21 we can expand it to impact 400 today, 600 to 800 out  
22 into the future. They looked at it. They met with our  
23 correctional folks, and they did a thorough study.  
24 Really, that facility maxed out at about 400 or 450  
25 beds.

1           If we expanded to the south and we expanded to the  
2 north, if we moved the Sheriff out of the building, we  
3 could get it up to about 450 beds, but it was still a  
4 two-story building. It had a lot of inefficiencies  
5 built into it because it's a remodel. So we realized  
6 very quickly that that was not the route to go because  
7 we'd be right back here in 15, 20 years with nowhere to  
8 expand and looking for a larger facility.

9           So with renovation taken off the table, we looked  
10 at outsourcing, the idea of taking our inmates and  
11 shipping them out to available beds up and down the I-5  
12 Corridor. Yakima at the time had a number of available  
13 beds. There's beds at Snohomish County and other  
14 locations. We looked at that. We actually had Jack  
15 Bach come in and make a presentation to us on what they  
16 could provide for us.

17           Then we looked at our facility. We took a day in  
18 time in January. We just absolutely took every file  
19 from every inmate in the jail, and we looked. Would  
20 they be available for outsourcing? Could we put them on  
21 a bus and send them off to another jail somewhere else?

22           It turned out about 30 percent of the inmates in  
23 the facility on that given day were eligible to be  
24 outsourced. The balance of the inmates either had a  
25 pending court date -- if they had a pending court date,



1 we couldn't have them in Yakima. We needed them back  
2 here -- there was something about their classification  
3 that wouldn't allow them to be shipped out; they were a  
4 trustee, so they actually worked in the jail, in the  
5 laundry, in the kitchen, that type of thing. There were  
6 a number of reasons.

7 Then in order to actually accommodate that kind of  
8 outsourcing, our existing facility was not set up for  
9 that. So we would have to do a fairly significant  
10 renovation of the facility just to create that kind of a  
11 shipping in and out.

12 If you can imagine bringing ten inmates in on a bus  
13 and shipping ten inmates ten out and all the staging.  
14 That became quite a challenge. So we realized that  
15 wouldn't work as well. So we really zeroed in on a new  
16 facility. That's what really made sense. Again we were  
17 looking at 400 beds, about 90,000 square feet.

18 There is a facility down in the Des Moines area  
19 that we toured, the SCORE facility. It's currently 800  
20 beds, but we're looking at a scaled down version of  
21 that.

22 Within the jail, we'd have the administrative  
23 facilities. We'd have a medical facility within the  
24 jail, not a hospital, not an urgent care clinic, but an  
25 area where we can treat and diagnosis inmates. We'd

1 have program areas. That's one of big drawbacks right  
2 now with the existing facility. There is no place to do  
3 programming so that we can bring folks in and offer  
4 alcohol treatment and drug treatment, GED, and that type  
5 of thing.

6 Also we're going to include in the new facility a  
7 courtroom. The idea of the courtroom, it's an  
8 arraignment courtroom. It's a first time courtroom so  
9 that would happen in the facility as well.

10 Then obviously we'd have the associated parking for  
11 both staff and visitors of the facility.

12 Then we understand that this facility, based on our  
13 incarceration rate projections, will need to be expanded  
14 in the not too distant future. So we have shown and  
15 talked about, all along, an additional 400 beds on the  
16 facility. So you'll see in a minute -- and this site  
17 plan that you see in front of you, both of them,  
18 demonstrate an 800 bed facility. I'll get to that a  
19 little more in a second.

20 So since 2006 when this project really got  
21 momentum, the County has looked at 13 sites for the  
22 facility. Some of the criteria that we've looked at in  
23 evaluating the sites is distance from services. It  
24 would be ideal to be right next door to a police station  
25 in case there was ever a backup needed or a fire

1 station, next to a hospital, next to the courthouse.

2 All of these things are a benefit to the facility. We  
3 also need to have quick access for the cities that bring  
4 their inmates to our jail so they're not driving all  
5 over trying to get to the jail.

6 We looked at the size of the sites, the  
7 availability of the sites. Are they for sale? If  
8 they're for sale, are they priced reasonably? What kind  
9 of support do we think we can get from agencies and the  
10 public on these? Are utilities available? That can be  
11 a huge thing.

12 We were looking at one site that we learned had to  
13 have a water line, major water line upgrade to that  
14 site, so that deal went into the mix, as far as  
15 consideration.

16 So we narrowed from the 13 sites that we looked at.  
17 Some of them we didn't look out very closely because we  
18 found obvious problems right off. Some we looked at  
19 quite closely, actually did a site plan to see how the  
20 building would fit on that plan.

21 We narrowed it down -- here's actually a graphic  
22 that shows the 13 sites. This is downtown Mount Vernon.  
23 I apologize. It's a little difficult to read it to  
24 scale, but in the upper right-hand corner you see a dot.  
25 That's to indicate Butler Pit. We looked as far north

1 as north of Burlington, the Butler Pit Site. Then in  
2 the center, as you see this dot right here. It's the  
3 old Wal-Mart store. We looked at the possibility of  
4 that. Down here is the Truck City Site. So that far  
5 south we looked at. Then a number of sites more in the  
6 downtown Mount Vernon area. So the two sites that we've  
7 narrowed it down two are the Alf Christiansen Seed Site  
8 and the Truck City Site.

9 You can see to the left part of the screen here,  
10 actually within the red boundary, is an indication of  
11 the area that we're purposing to purchase from the  
12 owners of that site. It's made up of many different  
13 parcels. It's approximately 8.2 acres in size.

14 You can see we've laid out an example plan over the  
15 top of this site, with this being the courtroom --  
16 excuse me. The courtroom area would be this area right  
17 here. There would be an entry lobby; administration in  
18 this area; then we have medical; we have a sally port.  
19 We will take advantage of the fact that we've got new  
20 construction, and we'll use all the capabilities the  
21 internet will allow us with internet arraignment,  
22 internet visitation, those types of things.

23 Then the support area over here, you can see in the  
24 original plan this would be a 400-bed area back here.  
25 There is actually 8 pods that would make up 400 beds,

1 and then we're indicating a future pod with another 400  
2 beds on the same site. So you can see what we  
3 anticipate as final build out 20, 30 years out into the  
4 future, but for right now, we would just build this  
5 400-bed pod and the support facilities here with  
6 associated parking and site circulation. That is the  
7 Alf Christiansen Seed Site.

8 The Truck City Site is similar in size. A little  
9 bit larger. It's actually 10.4 acres. And you can see,  
10 again, we've outlined the area that we have in a  
11 purchase and sale agreement with various owners. We're  
12 purchasing roughly two-thirds of the actual Truck City  
13 Site. Then we're purchasing from two separate owners to  
14 the south of that.

15 One of the significant things that we have to have  
16 in this facility, we have to have two access points. We  
17 have to have access to two different roads. On the Alf  
18 Christiansen piece, we are talking about our main  
19 circulation out onto Kincaid to the north, and then an  
20 emergency access only to the south back in the  
21 neighborhood.

22 On this site, we'd have accesses both out onto 99  
23 and on to Suzanne Lane, so that gives us the two  
24 accesses we need to meet code.

25 Again, 400-bed facility with associated parking for

1 staff and visitors to start with, but we're also showing  
2 what another 400 beds would look like at a future date  
3 on the same site.

4 We are also providing, because we're land-locking  
5 the, would be the east third of this Truck City Site, we  
6 will provide City approved road access through the east  
7 side of our site, right here, to give access to that  
8 parcel of property so that that is still a usable piece.

9 With that, I'd like to turn it over to Maggie.

10 MS. HANSON: Before Maggie starts, for those  
11 of you who have not signed in, if you could please sign.  
12 This allows us to make sure that we've got everybody's  
13 information. We'll send out to you future notices of  
14 the meetings that will be held.

15 Also, if you're interested in getting a transcript,  
16 were having this reported today. If you'd like to let  
17 me know, I'd be happy to provide that to you.

18 MS. BUCKLEY: Thank you, Marc and Jana.

19 In order for this proposal to move forward, the  
20 County is actually gonna have to navigate three  
21 different land use processes which are identified on the  
22 slide there; that is, complying with the SEPA process,  
23 going through a change in land use designation, and the  
24 essential public facility process.

25 I'll give you all a brief overview of each one of

1 those, but if you're interested in more detail, the City  
2 has actually put together a really nice handout. It's  
3 on the back table, if you're interested and want to dig  
4 in a little bit more.

5 So Jana provided a little bit of an overview on  
6 SEPA, but for those of you that may have missed it, I  
7 just want to point out a few key things about SEPA.  
8 That it's really a policy that requires agencies to  
9 consider the environment in their decision-making  
10 process before they take action on a proposal.

11 In this particular case, as Jana mentioned, there  
12 are two decision makers involved. The City and the  
13 County have agreed to be co-lead agencies under SEPA,  
14 which means together they're going to make sure that we  
15 comply with procedural requirements of SEPA.

16 And as they've already decided, we think that there  
17 is a possibility that this proposal could have  
18 significant adverse environmental impacts, and because  
19 of that, we're going to prepare an EIS to evaluate that  
20 further.

21 The EIS, I guess just to give a little more  
22 context, is really a tool that they're going to use. It  
23 will identify the alternatives. It will evaluate  
24 impacts. It will discuss mitigation measures. All of  
25 that information together is going to help both the City

1 and the County make the best decision on how to move  
2 forward, which is essentially what alternative should  
3 they go with.

4 The next process is a change in land use  
5 designation. So both of these sites are currently  
6 designated and zoned for some sort of commercial use.  
7 In order to build a jail on either of these sites, that  
8 will need to be changed to a public designation, which  
9 is really the appropriate type of zoning and  
10 comprehensive plan designation for this type of  
11 facility. So we'll have to go through a comprehensive  
12 plan amendment and a rezone for either of these sites,  
13 if they're selected.

14 The County has actually already submitted an  
15 application to get that process going. After SEPA has  
16 been completed, we'll kind of pick up the process on  
17 whatever site is chosen and complete that land use  
18 change.

19 Finally, after the land use charge is completed,  
20 we'll go through the essential public facility siting  
21 process. For those of you that might not know what an  
22 essential public facility is it's really a facility that  
23 serves the public and is typically really difficult to  
24 site. Those are things like jails, hospitals, airports,  
25 solid waste facilities. And often times because these



1 are difficult to site, agencies will set up a separate  
2 process before they will approve them. The City has  
3 done just that, and their process is really based on  
4 asking the community for input and making sure that we  
5 can identify and minimize our impacts as a result of  
6 that development.

7 A jail is considered a conditional use on a piece  
8 of land that is designated for public use. And  
9 associated with that, there will be a conditional use  
10 permit required, and there will be an open-record  
11 hearing associated with that permit. That will be an  
12 additional opportunity for the public and agencies to  
13 come and provide input on the process. From there, the  
14 hearing examiner will gather all of the information to  
15 date and will make a recommendation to the City Council.  
16 The City Council will really be the final decision maker  
17 there.

18 That's one thing I want to point out that's shown  
19 on the slide, is for SEPA, the decision makers are the  
20 City and County, but for the two other processes the  
21 City alone is the sole decision maker. That's because  
22 both of these sites are located within the City limits.

23 This graphic provides a little bit more information  
24 on each of these processes. What's good to point out  
25 here in the timing column is that these three processes

1 are going to happen consecutively. So the change in  
2 land use isn't going to happen until SEPA is completed,  
3 and the EPF process won't happen until the land use  
4 change has been completed.

5 So we are here at our EIS public scoping hearing.  
6 After today, we'll complete the scoping period. It ends  
7 next Tuesday, August 20th at 5:00 p.m. From there,  
8 we'll start evaluating the potential impacts of this  
9 proposal. All that information will be presented in a  
10 Draft EIS which we hope to present in December of this  
11 year. We'll circulate that Draft EIS for public  
12 comment. We'll take some time to respond to all the  
13 comments that are submitted and hope to issue a final  
14 EIS about February of 2014.

15 The land use change process will happen after that.  
16 That should take about four months, and EPF process will  
17 also take about four months. So to get through all of  
18 these processes, we're looking at September 2014.

19 So with all of that background and context, let's  
20 finally get to the reason that we're here today. We  
21 want your input on the scope of the EIS that we're  
22 writing. So what that means is we're looking for input  
23 on really three specific portions of the EIS. The first  
24 is the range of alternatives that we're evaluating. The  
25 three that we have currently identified are a no-action

1 alternative which means that we would just continue  
2 using the existing jail facility, and nothing new would  
3 be built. Then the other two alternatives are to build  
4 a new expanded jail on the two sites that Marc described  
5 for us.

6 I do also want to mention that the EIS, we'll have  
7 a discussion of all of the other sites that were  
8 considered and eliminated for one reason or another. So  
9 that rational will be in the EIS.

10 The areas of impact, these are the elements of the  
11 environment that will be evaluated in the EIS, and  
12 you'll probably hear us refer to this documented as  
13 Limited Scope EIS. What that means is we're trying to  
14 narrow the focus of this document to only those elements  
15 of the environment that we think could be significantly  
16 impacted, so things that might not be relevant to this  
17 site, because these are more urban sites, like wetlands  
18 or plants and wildlife, we don't think those are  
19 significant issues for either of these sites, so we  
20 don't plan to evaluate them.

21 The areas that we have identified here on the slide  
22 are what we think are most significant. And, again,  
23 we're looking for your input. You know, are we missing  
24 something? Do you know something about either of these  
25 sites that is important that might not be apparent at

1 first glance? That's your opportunity to provide that  
2 feedback now.

3 The last area we'd like your input on are possible  
4 mitigation measures. We want to make sure that we  
5 consider all reasonable measures that can reduce or  
6 eliminate our environmental impacts, so we'd certainly  
7 like to hear what you have to say in those areas.

8 Again, the whole purpose of tonight is to get your  
9 comments to help us scope this EIS, so I want to make  
10 sure that everybody is clear on how you can comment.  
11 There is really three different ways. The first is  
12 after this presentation we'll invite people to come up  
13 and make a verbal statement. So if you can come up to  
14 the podium and state your name and address and provide  
15 any input that you may have for us, it will reported  
16 with a transcript.

17 If you prefer to do things in writing, there is  
18 comment sheets on the back table. So you can write out  
19 your comment and drop it in the box on the back table as  
20 well. If you're like me and you like to mull things  
21 over, you're welcome to take those comment sheets home  
22 and send in any comments that you may have by the end of  
23 the scoping period which is next Tuesday, and Jana is  
24 our point of contact for that.

25 So with that, I'll turn it over to you all. Again,

1 we sincerely want your input. We'd love to hear that.  
2 We'll open the floor.

3 MS. HANSON: We'll also have a copy of this  
4 presentation on the City website. So if you want to be  
5 patient and wait until tomorrow, we'll have that up in  
6 case you wanted to view it.

7 Also, just a point of clarification, as Maggie  
8 mentioned, there are three processes that we're going  
9 through. The decision makers being the County and the  
10 City on the SEPA process. That doesn't necessarily  
11 determine the final site. That is a City Council action  
12 only, and that will go through the comp plan amendment  
13 and the use plan process that will follow the SEPA  
14 process, and then finally the essential public  
15 facilities.

16 It could be that through the SEPA process one site  
17 rises to the top, but that final decision on which site  
18 is selected will lay with the City Council.

19 Okay, thanks.

20 MR. ESTVOLD: Not everybody at once.

21 MR. NORD: My name is Dick Nord. I am a  
22 builder/developer in the area and also a real estate  
23 broker. I have lived in the area for about 20 years. I  
24 have been building and developing properties for my  
25 entire life, and that's been a long time. I live at 107

1 South Third in La Connor, and I have properties in Mount  
2 Vernon that I own.

3 I'm concerned about the site. The reason I'm  
4 concerned about the site is that I'm -- let me back up.  
5 It should be -- it shouldn't be in the downtown area. I  
6 really would have a problem with it being right by the  
7 freeway. And the concern I have is that I'm a developer  
8 and a builder. And I have been working for sometime on  
9 a piece of property along the riverfront.

10 Now, the City has been kind enough and have been  
11 working hard enough to develop that riverfront, and  
12 they've spent like short of \$30 million on that or they  
13 will spend short of \$30 million on that riverfront. And  
14 to take a piece of property that could be an incredible  
15 welcoming location to the downtown area of Mount Vernon  
16 and use it for a jail, I think is a terrible thing.

17 Jails have, unfortunately, some bad vibrations.  
18 They have a bad aura about them. If you don't think I'm  
19 speaking the truth, please go and talk to the people in  
20 Monroe. They're trying to get as far away from that  
21 jail on the hill as they possibly can. If you go to  
22 Monroe, you'll see that all their building is being done  
23 on -- their new construction is being done on the north  
24 side of Highway 20, simply because they don't want to  
25 expand in the other way. The people that are closer to

1 the prison are not doing well. Granted, that's a  
2 different ball game and a different prison.

3 I can understand the people that would like to have  
4 the jail there simply because of the convenience of the  
5 jail to the courthouse and to the downtown area, but  
6 believe me, it's going to affect the property value  
7 dramatically.

8 I was unable to do a project because the river got  
9 higher and expanded due to the Corps of Engineers  
10 evaluation change. A lot of people lost money during  
11 the last few years because of that change.

12 I'm concerned that a stigma of similar style will  
13 take place if you decide to build the jail in that  
14 location where Christiansen's is, only because it will  
15 become a monolith instead of an entry to Mount Vernon.

16 If we could do anything, we should plant more  
17 Tulips, and we should invite people in to that location  
18 because La Conner -- and I believe in the next few years  
19 you're going to see an incredible resurgence in the  
20 downtown area thanks to some of the work that's been  
21 done over the last few years. I'm sure there's other  
22 people that will testify to that, too.

23 That's my experience level, and I appreciate you  
24 allowing me to share it.

25 MR. CHRISTENSEN: If I can remind you that

1 before you speak if you would state your name and your  
2 address for the benefit of the court reporter, then we  
3 can be sure to tie the comments to the speaker.

4 MR. SPRANER: I'm Paul Spraner. (Phonetic  
5 spelling.) My address is 1008 Apache Drive in Mount  
6 Vernon. I'm here speaking as the president of the  
7 Downtown Association.

8 We had many discussions about the jail being at  
9 both sites, the pluses and minuses. The Association  
10 basically feels that it's better off at the Truck City  
11 location for many of the same reasons as stated earlier.

12 So I think it is a stigma issue that the businesses  
13 do receive from the jail being downtown.

14 So that's it. Thanks.

15 MS. KELTZ: Hi. I'm Kristen Keltz with the  
16 Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce, 517 South 38th Place,  
17 Mount Vernon.

18 Just quickly, our board does want to recognize the  
19 hard work that the City and the County have done -- the  
20 City and the County have gone through to get this done.

21 Obviously we've seen our community does realize  
22 that there does need to be a new jail. Not having  
23 enough beds is a huge economic impact to our community  
24 and to our businesses, so this is definitely an  
25 important issue.



1           Our Board of Directors also had many, many  
2       discussions on both sides. They really looked at both  
3       components and both properties and felt very strongly  
4       that the Truck City Site would be more appropriate, as  
5       to not have a jail at the front entrance of our city.

6           As been stated, the great waterfront redevelopment  
7       project, there is so many opportunities and  
8       possibilities for our downtown. They just felt it would  
9       be more appropriate down in the southern part.

10          Thank you very much.

11                MS. KOETJE: I have a bit of a statement.  
12       Balisa Koetje. My address is 507 South Waugh Street,  
13       Mount Vernon. I'm a commercial real estate broker with  
14       Windermere Commercial Real Estate.

15                First of all, I want to thank you for the  
16       opportunity to be here this evening and voice our  
17       opinion on this project. We have a very, very important  
18       decision in front of us. Fortunately, the bond passed,  
19       that we can now build that jail, and now it's time to  
20       site the location of the jail.

21                Today I'd like to address the jail situation from a  
22       personal standpoint and from a professional standpoint.  
23       Personally, my husband Jim and I have owned commercial  
24       real estate in the downtown area for the past 30 years.  
25       The City, downtown property owners, and business owners

1 worked diligently to develop a plan for our community  
2 that will greatly enhance Mount Vernon. It is very  
3 exciting for us and for those involved in the downtown  
4 community to be a part of this downtown revitalization  
5 program.

6 We are now in Phase 2 of a \$27.3 million project  
7 that not only protects downtown with a floodwall, but  
8 we're building a community along the river that will  
9 support a pedestrian walkway along the river, a  
10 courtyard that will give way to businesses, retail,  
11 bistros, cafes, offices, and eventually condominiums.

12 This project will attract both patrons and property  
13 owners. We are already seeing renewed interest in  
14 buying downtown properties. Two have told in the last  
15 three months. Two more are under contract. The  
16 questions being asked by investors coming into town, Is  
17 the jail really going to be built at the entrance of  
18 Mount Vernon?

19 I have present with me a letter drafted and signed  
20 by the Mount Vernon Downtown Association that Paul just  
21 referred to. A quote -- just to give a little more  
22 detail of the letter that they presented states,  
23 "Downtown Mount Vernon is formally recognized as a  
24 top-tier Main Street community, one of only 13 across  
25 our state. The Alf Christiansen Site is some of the

1 most highly regarded and valuable commercial real estate  
2 in downtown Mount Vernon. There is tremendous potential  
3 for this site, from hotels to restaurants to retail  
4 development. The Revitalization Project has the  
5 potential to transform downtown Mount Vernon into one of  
6 the finest tourist destinations in our state. We are  
7 concerned that the jail if located on Alf Christiansen  
8 could become doorstep to our community."

9           Professionally speaking, do you know Mount Vernon  
10 is unique, as it is one of the only cities west of the  
11 Mississippi and north of San Francisco that within a 100  
12 mile radius can draw from an estimated six million  
13 people.

14           I have also present with me a letter signed by the  
15 Commercial Brokers Association. This association is  
16 represented by commercial real estate brokers along the  
17 I-5 corridor from Snohomish County, Skagit County, and  
18 Whatcom County. I quote: "The Alf Christiansen Site is  
19 zoned Commercial II. It is some of the most valuable  
20 real estate in downtown Mount Vernon, and it's current  
21 zone allows for future hotels, restaurants, and retail.  
22 If allowed to optimize its highest and best use, it will  
23 generate both property and sales tax to support the  
24 jail.

25           Developing the Truck City Site, which is zoned

1 commercial, light industrial, uses a site that  
2 demographically does not have ability to generate future  
3 sales tax or property tax comparable to the Alf  
4 Christiansen Site. However, building a site in south  
5 Mount Vernon will generate traffic which will jump start  
6 the development of business in south Mount Vernon, and  
7 this is an area that the City of Mount Vernon has been  
8 trying to develop.

9 A very important issue is at hand: Where do we  
10 want the jail? Aesthetically, what is there about a  
11 county jail that says welcome Mount Vernon? We are  
12 investing millions in revitalizing our riverfront.  
13 Let's be smart about our front door."

14 Thank you for your time.

15 MR. PAPADOPLUI: My name is Pete Papadoplui.  
16 I live at 1121 South Second Street in Mount Vernon. I'm  
17 a commercial real estate broker with about 30 years of  
18 experience in that around the country.

19 On the EIS, I would like to see it expanded to  
20 include the economic impact of the different sites.  
21 Economically, while it may seem to me intuitively  
22 obvious that having a jail at your front door, I'd like  
23 to see the numbers. That's why I would like to see the  
24 impact and the analysis, the scope of it broadened.

25 The kinds of impacts that I'd want to look at is

1 what happens to the values of the properties near a  
2 jail? What other experience is there that we can draw  
3 from on that. What's the impact on Kincaid Street of  
4 having access to Kincaid and the access through town?  
5 Does that diminish people's desire to come into  
6 downtown? I don't know that. I'd like to see that.

7 The tax revenues that Balisa mentioned, the  
8 difference in tax revenues, that should be included in  
9 the economic impact.

10 In general, I think if we took all of the comments,  
11 really the question is we do need to broaden the scope  
12 to include the economic impact in a myriad of ways,  
13 looking at both sides and saying what are the economic  
14 impacts. And not just for the next five years, but for  
15 the next generation. You are talking about this being  
16 expandable to the next 400 beds. So we're not talking  
17 15 to 20 years. We're talking possibly up to 40 years.  
18 So we're talking about generations. So I'd like to see  
19 the scope broadened.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. BOWYER: Good afternoon. My name is  
22 Richard Bowyer. I live at 310 South Ninth Street in  
23 Mount Vernon, and I have a question about if we have  
24 questions, how will we get them answered?

25 MS. HANSON: You can direct them to me,

1 Richard, and I'll do by best to answer them as soon --

2 MR. BOWYER: We will not get them answered  
3 today then, even a simple yes or no?

4 MS. HANSON: Possibly. Yes, you can ask  
5 questions.

6 MR. BOWYER: Some questions have come up in my  
7 mind and other people I have talked to. One of them is  
8 it's my understanding, the project, the way it's going  
9 forward now will be subject to the laws that include --  
10 and I wish I could tell you the exact name of the law  
11 that says best available wage because there is  
12 government money included; is that correct?

13 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Prevailing wage.

14 MR. BOWYER: Thank you very much. My  
15 apologies for that. So it is correct. The prevailing  
16 wage law will be in affect in the creation of this jail,  
17 and thus will jack up the price on it?

18 MR. ESTVOLD: I don't necessarily agree with  
19 the fact it will raise the price, but, yes, it will in  
20 fact be required, prevailing wages.

21 MR. BOWYER: Okay. Well, I am hard pressed to  
22 see how it will lower the price in any way.

23 I seldom agree with developers, even on the time of  
24 day type thing, but Mr. Nord is correct. This is really  
25 an inappropriate place to put that jail, if you decide

1 on the Alf Christiansen Site. It's the entrance to the  
2 City of Mount Vernon. Of all the places it could be  
3 put, it does not make sense to put it there and take so  
4 much prime land out of the taxable table type of thing  
5 when businesses could go in there, and what have you.

6 I think the questions I have, I've had some  
7 informal answers to it, but I have not yet seen a really  
8 valid answer that I considered that answered the  
9 question. Why are we not looking at the opportunity to  
10 have a private facility built that in turn is leased  
11 back and is owned by the County in the 30 year time  
12 period? I have heard some allusions to something, but  
13 I'd like to have a hard, solid answer as to why that  
14 option won't work or why it has been taken off the  
15 table.

16 My understanding is that there is some kind of a  
17 law, but laws can be changed. Just because we have  
18 voted a law that says we'll be taxed for it doesn't mean  
19 that tax needs to be implicated.

20 It seems to me that here is an opportunity to, one,  
21 if a private company comes in and builds it, we don't  
22 have to build. We don't have to pay the taxes. We will  
23 get taxed -- be able to tax that private company for the  
24 use of their property, and in 30 years it reverts back  
25 to the ownership of the County, is my understanding of

1 the way it works.

2 Now if I'm in error on that, I'd be happy to be  
3 corrected on that. It seems to me that's an option that  
4 needs to be thoroughly looked at, and I have not heard a  
5 really valid answer as to why it hasn't been yet.

6 Also it seems to me that if we can do something  
7 that would preclude a higher price for that as taxpayers  
8 because we have to go with prevailing wage-type laws, it  
9 makes sense to look at it because they will have the  
10 option -- a private firm will have the option to build  
11 that under their auspicious and probably not have to  
12 deal with that.

13 The other thing that does seem to me is that we the  
14 citizens will be paying for this. We will be paying for  
15 it for a very long time. If we have another economic  
16 downturn, like we had in 2008, and sales taxes fall off,  
17 which you're relying on to pay for this thing, there is  
18 no choices than to go back to the funds the cities have  
19 and dip into those to meet those obligations to pay for  
20 those bills that we run up by the building of this jail.  
21 I have some concerns that that could happen also,  
22 particularly if we go with the program we're going with  
23 now as opposed to somebody will build it for us and then  
24 turn it back over to the County in 30 years.

25 Thank you very much.



1                   MS. HANSON: Okay. Once again, we have the  
2 flow charts showing the processes on the back table.  
3 You're welcome to take them if you would like. Also, if  
4 you are part of an organization, take as many as you  
5 would like and share those. We will have a recording of  
6 this available in 14 days. We will make that available  
7 to anybody that would like.

8                   I do need to have your contact information. Please  
9 sign in, if you haven't already. A copy of the  
10 Powerpoint presentation will be available, as well, on  
11 the City website and likely the County's website.

12                   Feel free to come in, ask questions, call, email,  
13 whatever is easiest for you. We'll do our best to  
14 answer questions.

15                   This does go until 6:30, so there may be other --  
16 we're waiting on other folks coming in to make comments.  
17 You're welcome to stay.

18                   Thank you.

19                   MR. SULLIVAN: My name is John Sullivan. My  
20 address is 20366 Eric Street in Mount Vernon. The City  
21 of Mount Vernon touches our backyard, so we live in  
22 Skagit officially, in the County.

23                   Do you want me to continue?

24                   MR. CHRISTENSEN: Yeah.

25                   MR. ESTVOLD: Please.

1           MR. SULLIVAN: In the scoping process, in the  
2 Environmental Impact Statement creation, one of the  
3 things that I would like to see addressed is lighting at  
4 night. Now, I say that on two levels. Number one, from  
5 a personal standpoint, what I have seen happen in the  
6 south Mount Vernon area, particularly with the advent of  
7 a new RV dealer on old 99, when they went in and they  
8 light their lot up all night long, the amount of light  
9 that goes up into the air is huge. It could have been  
10 addressed easily using night friendly lighting.

11           It changes the nature of things out there. It's  
12 still pretty dark. So that's the second place I'm  
13 addressing, that my comments come from. I'm the  
14 astronomy teacher at Mount Vernon High School, and I'm  
15 concerned that my students are unable to see the  
16 nighttime sky unless they're in the Planetarium, which  
17 is the thing that I run at the high school, beside  
18 teaching there.

19           So any time we as a community can do anything to  
20 preserve the darkness that we have still here in Skagit  
21 County, we should. Certainly in this project, being  
22 that it's a County-wide project, as far as I'm  
23 concerned, because it's all the cities involved, then  
24 let's do what we can to use night-friendly lighting,  
25 which is effective, not only effective, it's cost

1 effective but it also preserves the darkness as we can.

2 I'm happy to describe a couple of projects that  
3 I've seen where it has worked, and it's been beautiful.  
4 I have already mentioned the one. The other project  
5 that I would say has really decimated nighttime sky out  
6 in that area is just a single light from Gordon  
7 Trucking, Incorporated who on the east side of Cedardale  
8 Road have a storage lot for their trailers. And with  
9 that one single light, they are blasting their lot, I'm  
10 sure thinking it's good for security, but the light  
11 blasts the people that live up on Skyridge. So once  
12 upon a time they could look out across the valley and it  
13 would be dark. With that one single lamp and that one  
14 single pole, they have been blinded. So that's the  
15 number one concerns I have.

16 Secondly, as far as siting in town versus out at  
17 Truck City, I have talked to my own kids about that. I  
18 have a couple of teenagers at home. They don't really  
19 have any comment about it. For me I see two problems.  
20 Number one is the nature of a project which I'll look at  
21 the design which I see you have up there.

22 The nature of the project at Truck City doesn't  
23 seem like anything else that's out there. Maybe that's  
24 the future, would be changing. Once the jail was built  
25 there, that the rest of the neighborhood would change

1 too. So it seems a little different, as far as the  
2 neighborhood use goes. But the flip of that and putting  
3 it at Alf Christiansen, you have all the adjoining  
4 neighborhoods, and some of those neighborhoods are where  
5 my students live. So flip a coin in that sense. In  
6 some way it's going to affect somebody. That I realize.  
7 I'm just pleased that there are two sites chosen, that  
8 the vote has been taken, and we're moving forward,  
9 bottom line.

10 Now, if you have any questions for me, I'd be happy  
11 to take them as well.

12 MS. HANSON: Thank you so much.

13 MR. SULLIVAN: Can you tell me if that becomes  
14 part of the environmental impact concerns. Once I put  
15 it in record, then it obviously is.

16 MS. HANSON: Yes. Yes. We will address that.

17 MR. SULLIVAN: And before that?

18 MS. HANSON: What we will be doing is  
19 compiling all the information and comments that we've  
20 received today and addressing the elements that we've  
21 already identified that would be addressed with the  
22 Limited Scope EIS, compiling those, doing the analysis,  
23 the review, creating reports, and then those go into the  
24 Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

25 MR. SULLIVAN: And your time lines are by

1 December?

2 MS. HANSON: Yeah, we have to have them out --

3 MR. SULLIVAN: That's really great.

4 MS. HANSON: And we'll have another public  
5 meeting in December.

6 MR. SULLIVAN: The final?

7 MS. HANSON: The draft, and then the final  
8 should come out in February.

9 MR. SULLIVAN: Takes a long time, doesn't it?

10 MR. WEND: Yes, it does.

11 MR. ESTVOLD: We want to be very thorough.

12 (Whereupon the meeting was concluded at 6:30 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF WASHINGTON )  
2 COUNTY OF SNOHOMISH ) ss: CERTIFICATE

3  
4 I, DEANNA M. ELLIS, a certified Court  
5 Reporter in and for the State of Washington do hereby  
6 certify;

7  
8 That the foregoing is true and correct  
9 transcript of the proceedings held on August 13, 2013.

10  
11 In WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set  
12 my hand and affixed my seal this 27th day of August,  
13 2013.

14  
15  
16  
17 \_\_\_\_\_  
18 Deanna M. Ellis, CCR 2511  
19 In and for the State of  
20 Washington, Residing in  
21 Marysville  
22  
23  
24  
25

**SKAGIT COUNTY JAIL EIS - COMMENTS RECEIVED**

<b>Name Provided on Comment</b>	<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Page No.</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
Skagit County Real Estate Brokers	March 6, 2013	0001 to 0004	Comments received before scoping period commenced on July 18, 2013.
Mount Vernon Downtown Association	March 21, 2013	0005 to 0006	
Rosenfeld, Dan J	May 30, 2013	0007	
Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors	June 27, 2013	0008 to 0010	
Rosenfeld, Dan J	May 30, 2013	0011	
<hr/>			
Spanovic, Tony	July 25, 2013	0012 to 0014	Comments received during scoping period between July 18, 2013 and August 20, 2013.
Scott, Nate	August 9, 2013	0015	
Department of Archaeology (Gretchen Kaehler)	August 13, 2013	0016 to 0017	
Mehler, Cathie	August 14, 2013	0018 to 0019	
Hixson, Matthew	August 14, 2013	0020 to 0021	
Sebers, Ed	August 14, 2013	0022 to 0023	
Griffith, Jason	August 15, 2013	0024	
Franklin, Bill & Deena	August 15, 2013	0025	
Gear, Lindsey	August 16, 2013	0026	
Dahl, Sonya	August 16, 2013	0027	
Melton, Ray & Roberta	August 19, 2013	0028	
Nelson, Ray	August 20, 2013	0029	
Holder, Mary Ruth	August 20, 2013	0030 to 0035	
Powers, Jason	August 20, 2013	0036 to 0042	
Costeck, Ron			
Stensland, Alicia			
Clark, Brian			
Howson, Jenifer			
Howson, Roy			
Clark, Tina			
Voight, Virginia			
Masonholder, Megan			
Franulovich, Rachel			
Bahr, Debbie			
Carr, Cassandra			
Waldron, Heather			
Free, Piet			
Cammock, Craig			
Running, Cythnia			
<hr/>			
Nord, Dick	August 13, 2013	0043 to 0044	Comments received at scoping public hearing (transcribed by Court Reporter)
Keltz, Kristen		0045	
Koetje, Balisa		0046 to 0047	
Papadopulos, Pete		0048	
Bowyer, Richard		0049 to 0050	
Sullivan, John		0051 to 0052	
<hr/>			
Taylor, Paul	August 21, 2013	0075 to 0076	Comments received after scoping period ended on 8.20.13
Winslow, Michael	August 22, 2013	0077 to 0078	

**SKAGIT COUNTY COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL  
REAL ESTATE BROKERS**

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1030 East College Way  
Mount Vernon, WA

March 6, 2013

Contact: Balisa Koetje  
Phone: 360-424-4901  
Cell: 360-421-4111

Mr. Ron Wesen  
Skagit County Commissioner  
District 1  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Mr. Ken Dahlstedt  
Skagit County Commissioner  
District 2

Ms. Sharon Dillon  
Skagit County Commissioner  
District 3

Ms. Jill Boudreau  
Mayor  
City of Mount Vernon  
910 Cleveland Street  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Mr. Dale Regan  
MV City Council  
Council At Large

Mr. Joe Lindquist  
MV City Council  
Ward 1

Mr. Ken Quam  
MV City Council  
Ward 1

Mr. Gary Molenaar  
MV City Council  
Ward 2

Mr. Mike Hulst  
MV City Council  
Ward 2

Mr. Bob Fiedler  
MV City Council  
Ward 3

Mr. Mike Urban  
MV City Council  
Ward 3

Ms. Jana Hanson  
Director  
City of Mount Vernon  
Economic Planning and Development  
910 Cleveland Street  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

RE: PROPOSED JAIL SITES

Dear Commissioners Wesen, Dahlstedt, Dillon, Mayor Boudreau, Councilmen  
Regan, Lindquist, Quam, Molenaar, Hulst, Fiedler, Urban and Director Hanson:



## SKAGIT COUNTY COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE BROKERS

---

1030 East College Way  
Mount Vernon, WA

Contact: Balisa Koetje  
Phone: 360-424-4901  
Cell: 360-421-4111  
balisa@vwindermere.com

In regards to making a decision on which site will best serve our community several factors need to be taken into consideration:

- 1) What is the Highest and Best use of each site?
- 2) Which site has the highest potential to generate income from future development in the form of property tax and sales tax to help fund the jail, if it is not the jail site?
- 3) Which proposed jail site will attract other businesses to develop around it, generating additional property and sales tax.

It is our opinion the proposed jail site at Kincaid and I-5 aka Alf Christianson site would take away some of the most highly regarded and valuable Commercial Real Estate in Downtown Mount Vernon. The Alf Christian site has tremendous potential for future hotels, restaurants and retail. Developers have shown interest in the past and as the economy continues healing we will see this interest renew. The development of this site to a jail will remove some of the most valuable commercial real estate in Skagit County from the property tax rolls and eliminate the generation of future sales tax.

It is our opinion that if the "Truck City" site along Highway 99 in south Mount Vernon is the best site. If selected it will:

- 1) Use a site that does not demographically have the ability to generate future sales tax or property tax comparable to the AC site.
- 2) Generate traffic which will jump start the development of other businesses in south Mount Vernon.
- 3) Allow the AC site to be developed commercially which will generate future sales tax and increased property taxes.

As the "Downtown" advances with the "Revitalization Project" it is Imperative that the site selected for the jail is not a deterrent to future developers, business owners and visitors.

## SKAGIT COUNTY COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE BROKERS

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There is a wonderful vision for downtown Mount Vernon. Placing the jail in the best location is imperative to fulfill this vision.

1030 East College Way  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Thank you for your time.

Contact: Balisa Koetje  
Phone: 360-424-4901  
Cell: 360-421-4111  
balisa@windermere.com

Sincerely,

Jim Scott.	Owner	Windermere Real Estate/SV
Josh Scott	Broker/Owner	Windermere Real Estate/SV
Jim Koetje.	Commercial Broker	Windermere Real Estate/SV
Balisa Koetje.	Commercial Broker	Windermere Real Estate/SV
David Patterson	Commercial Broker	Windermere Real Estate/SV
Dick Nord	Commercial Broker	Windermere Real Estate/SV
Jim Glackin	Commercial Broker	Windermere Real Estate/SV
Nate Scott	Broker/Owner	Windermere Real Estate/Anacortes
John Mitzel	Commercial Broker	Windermere Real Estate/Whatcom
Walt Meagher	Commercial Broker	Fidalgo—Commercial
Allen Stockbridge	Commercial Broker	Sperry Van Ness
Greg Martineau	Commercial Broker	Saratoga Commercial Real Estate
Brian Finnegan	Commercial Broker	WestCom Properties
KC Coonc	Commercial Broker	Windermere Real Estate/Whatcom
LaDon Torset	Commercial Broker	Homes4U
Megan O'Brien	Realtor	Windermere Real Estate/SV
Elizabeth Miller	Realtor	Windermere Real Estate/SV

**SKAGIT COUNTY COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL  
REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND OFFICE OWNERS**

1030 East College Way  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**SIGNATURES**

**PRINT NAME AND OFFICE**

Contact: Balisa Koetje  
Phone: 360-424-4901  
Cell: 360-421-4111  
balisa@windermere.com

*[Handwritten signatures]*  
 Josh Scott  
 Jim Scott  
 Richard Norman  
 G. Walter  
 Allen Stockbridge  
 John Metzger  
 Greg Martineau  
 Brian Finnegan  
 LA Dora Torsset  
 Michelle Torsset  
 KC Connor  
 Rob Washburn  
 Nate Scott  
 Jim Glackin  
 Elizabeth Mellier  
 Megan O'Bryan  
 Koetje, Tim  
 Dalisa Koetje

*[Printed names and offices]*  
 Josh Scott WRE/SV  
 Jim Scott WRE/SU  
 Richard Norman sr. WRE/SV  
 G. Walter Metzger Fitch/go - Commercial  
 Allen Stockbridge Sperry Van Ness  
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 KC Connor WINDERMERE WHATCOM INC  
 Rob WASHBURN WRE BELLINGHAM  
 Nate Scott WRE Anacortes  
 Jim Glackin WRE/SKagit Valley  
 ELIZABETH MELLIER WRE/SKAGIT VALLEY  
 Megan O'Bryan WRE/SKagit Valley  
 Koetje, Tim WRE/SKAGIT VALLEY  
 DALISA KOETJE WRE/SKAGIT VALLEY



it's happening!

March 21, 2013

**Skagit County Commissioners** Ron Wesen, Ken Dahlstedt, Sharon Dillon  
**Mount Vernon Mayor** Jill Boudreau  
**Mount Vernon Councilmembers** Joe Lindquist, Ken Quam, Mark Hulst, Gary Molenaar, Bob Fiedler, Mike Urban, Dale Ragan

**RE: Proposed Jail Sites located in Mount Vernon**

Honorable Commissioners, Mayor, and Council members---

On behalf of the Mount Vernon Downtown Association and our membership, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed jail sites within the City of Mount Vernon.

It is our understanding that there are currently two sites being reviewed for a proposed jail within our city limits:

- 1) Westernmost frontage of Hwy 99 Truck City site
- 2) Former Alf Christianson site at the downtown Kincaid Street Exit

Partnering together, we have invested a significant amount into downtown with a \$27M waterfront revitalization project. We remain very excited about the future of this project as it is our hope this will revitalize the business atmosphere while preserving the historical character of our downtown. This project has the potential to transform downtown Mount Vernon into one of the finest tourist destinations in our state. As such, we are concerned about efforts to locate a jail facility so close to the waterfront revitalization, and essentially at the doorstep to our community.

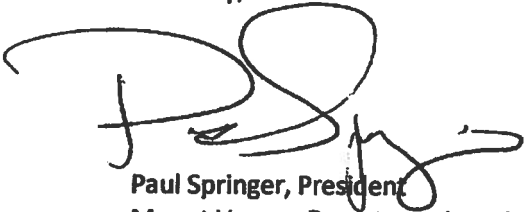
The Alf Christianson site in some of the most highly regarded and valuable commercial real estate in downtown Mount Vernon. There is tremendous potential for this site, from hotels to restaurants to retail development. When the waterfront project is complete and the downtown is essentially removed from the 100-year floodplain, we remain hopeful that this property will serve as a catalyst for significant downtown investment. Utilizing the Truck City site for a jail will allow the very valuable Alf Christianson site to stay on the property tax rolls and increase the likelihood of significant future sales tax revenue for our county and city.

We understand that the process of siting a jail can be a complex and difficult. We certainly understand the need for essential public facilities, and are thankful that there appears to be an alternative site which appears to be adequate and will likely have significant cost savings to taxpayers, that being the Truck City site. We have all partnered together for so many years and have created a downtown that is

formally recognized as a top-tier Main Street Community, one of only 13 across our state. We have all shared this vision of a revitalized downtown and waterfront for nearly a decade and remain hopeful that we can all continue to work together to insure that the downtown core remains family, tourist, and business friendly for all.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any questions. We thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Springer', with a large, stylized initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

Paul Springer, President  
Mount Vernon Downtown Association

**From:** "DanJRosenfeld@aol.com" <DanJRosenfeld@aol.com>

**Date:** May 30, 2013, 11:35:06 AM PDT

**To:** Council <Council@mountvernonwa.gov>

**Subject:** Placement Of Future Jail Facility

Council Members:

I write to urge the Council to vote against the conversion of the land currently occupied by Truck City truck stop to a jail.

I am a long distance semi-truck driver, and I rely on Truck City as my base of operations. I am a solo owner/operator, with no employees. When I come home, I need a place to park my truck, buy fuel, weigh my loads, and obtain repair services.

There are many local businesses that would also have to cease operation or reduce their work forces to compensate for the loss of customers. Welfare and unemployment rolls would grow.

Local agricultural shippers would find themselves having to pay more for shipping their food supplies to their customers, as would ALL local business establishments that rely on trucks to provide the merchandise they sell. In short, without trucks, Mount Vernon might not exist. I myself might have to chose between leaving town or being unemployed.

As you engage in your deliberations, please consider the potential unintended consequences of your action.

Thank you,

Dan Rosenfeld  
DOM Trucking Inc.



**From:** kristenkeltz11 @mail.com [mailto:kristenkeltz11 @mail.com] **On Behalf Of** Kr'sten Keltz  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2013 11:55 AM  
**To:** Boudreau, il  
**Cc:** Hanson, Jana  
**Subject:** Fwd Proposed Jail Site Letter

Mayor Boudreau,

Please see attached letter regarding the siting of the new jail location. The Mount Vernon Chamber Board of Directors feel it would be in the best interest of our community to have the jail sited at the South Mount Vernon location that has been identified.

Please let me know if you need any further information.

Thank you

Kristen Keltz, IOM

President/CEO

Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce



**Skagit County Commissioners**

Commissioner Ron Wesen, Commissioner Ken Dahlstedt, Commissioner Sharon Dillon

**Honorable Mayor of Mount Vernon**

Mayor Jill Boudreau

**Mount Vernon Councilmembers**

Councilman Joe Lindquist, Councilman Ken Quam, Councilman Mark Hulst, Councilman Gary Molenaar, Councilman Bob Fiedler, Councilman Mike Urban, Councilman Dale Ragan

**RE: Proposed Jail Sites located in Mount Vernon**

Honorable Commissioners, Mayor, and Council members,

On behalf of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors we want to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed jail sites within the City of Mount Vernon.

We understand that there are currently two sites being reviewed for a proposed jail within our city limits:

Westernmost frontage of Hwy 99 Truck City site

Former Alf Christianson site at the downtown Kincaid Street Exit

Over the last several years, there has been a significant amount of investment into our downtown area through the \$27M waterfront revitalization project. It is our hope that this will revitalize the business atmosphere while preserving the historical character of our downtown. We are concerned however, about efforts to locate a jail facility so close to the waterfront revitalization, and essentially at the front door to our community.

While both sites would be taken out of the tax rolls for the city, we feel the Alf Christianson site is a valuable piece of freeway visible commercial real estate at the entrance of our downtown. We feel there is tremendous potential for the Alf Christianson site for commercial development. We hope once the waterfront project is complete, this property will serve as a catalyst for significant downtown investment.

We understand the process of siting a jail can be a complex and difficult, however utilizing the Truck City site for a jail will allow the very valuable Alf Christianson site to stay on the property tax rolls and increase the likelihood of significant future sales tax revenue for our county and city.

*As a regional Chamber we serve and promote our members and actively encourage economic growth.*  
P.O. Box 1007 • Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
phn: 360.428.8547 • fax: 360.424.6237 • web: [www.mountvernonchamber.com](http://www.mountvernonchamber.com)



Serve & Promote



We certainly understand the need for essential public facilities, and are thankful that there appears to be an alternative site which appears to be adequate and will likely have significant cost savings to taxpayers, that being the Truck City site. We have all shared this vision of a revitalized downtown and waterfront for nearly a decade and remain hopeful that we can all continue to work together to insure that the downtown core remains family, tourist, and business friendly for all.

We thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely  
The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Kristen Keltz  
President / CEO

April Axthelm  
Axthelm Construction ACI

David Lindsey  
Action Pages

Laura McDaniel  
BEST WESTERN PLUS CottonTree Inn

Bob Lama  
PROforma Creative Printing Solutions

Kelly Schols  
CPI Plumbing & Heating

The Tattered Page Bookstore

Bruce Thomson  
Solid Project Services

Kristin Garcia  
Port of Skagit

Rob Martin  
Chinook Enterprises

Carol Lawson  
State Farm Insurance

Jay Wilms  
Darlena J's Gourmet Nuts LLC

Cory Ertel  
Puget Sound Energy

Kyle Heberle  
Draper Valley Farms

Steve Brown  
Group Benefits Northwest

David Cope  
Business Bank

**From:** DanJRosenfeld aol.com [mailto:DanJRosenfeld aol.com]

**Sent:** Saturday, July 20, 2013 1:05 PM

**To:** Beacham, Linda

**Subject:** Your message about the Jail Hearing

Thank you very much for letting me know when the jail location will be considered by the council.

I am a professional, long-haul truck driver with my own one-man company, and the preservation of the Truck City Truck Stop is vital to my ability to make a living. If the Truck City location is selected, I might well have to live in public housing and drawing Social Security and Food Stamps.

I will not be able to attend the hearing because of my work schedule. I wonder, therefore, if it would be in order for me to prepare a short statement that could be read into the record of the hearing.

Again, thank you for your consideration.

Dan Rosenfeld  
DOM Trucking Inc

Director, Community and Economic Development  
910 Cleveland Avenue  
Mount Vernon, Wa 98273

Hello Jana,

Thank you for your phone response and nice meeting you on Tuesday evening. Having some feeling that a lot of the beaurocrats have given up on trying to be one of the most desirable towns to live in in the USA? It might be only anecdotal evidence, but I can tell you I haven't talked to a "regular" citizen yet who thinks the jail should be down town. Pretty much universally they say... "It's a County Jail...put it over there in the county" .... Truck Site.

If not why is putting a huge jail in the middle of down town even being considered?

A huge jail within a few short walking blocks of the areas of downtown that make Mount Vernon (such an attractive destination).... the new interest and efforts for a river front...river walk.

Having the jail be the first major structure seen when exiting the freeway at Kincaid seems to

go against all the thinking and efforts to continue a theme of catering to tourism no matter

what the season. A jail downtown years ago might have been appropriate in 2013 it doesn't seem

to have any relationship to the tulip town America themes.

All of this ,in spite of Mr. Holloran's contention that setting back the jail complex from Kincaid

so folks won't know it's the COUNTY jail? Of course, everyone will know it's the County Jail!!!

He can't have it both ways.... Setting back the jail so know one will know it's a jail...then telling us

residents/voters on the south side we don't need a set back because we won't know it's a jail!!! Hilarious!!!

I've been around a long time expressing concerns in and about communities I resided in.... began as a

grassroots organizer many years ago long before it became a dirty word, Mr. Hollorans was simply

exercising his right to make political double talk. I wasn't the only one at that meeting who might have

thought his apparent interest in the downtown location was obvious.

I've been trying to make contact with some of my immediate neighbors on this subject and will continue those efforts and on the adjacent two blocks also. There have been some genuine attempts (mine a work in progress) on the part of property owners and residents to spruce up this neighborhood on this side of the tracks.

I am so eager to get my yard done and new exterior paint both my immediate neighbors have done so and some interior remodeling. I only moved in a matter of weeks ago and am very fond of my little bungalow.

So far, from what I can tell, many of us are seriously interested in sending the COUNTY jail to

the Truck Site..more towards the County, if you will.

We're working on a poster that graphically might express these feelings too.

Something using **JAILZILLA** perhaps looming over sweet Mount Vernon and children with tulips.... ??.

It daily amazes me that any city fathers or long time residents or people with common sense would

be in favor of putting the COUNTY jail in quaint downtown Mount Vernon...you can bet it wouldn't

happen in most other "quaint" cities in this county.

Just across the river (Burlington) is a perfect example of what can happen to a town when no thought,

planning and attention to architecture are evident except those for use by beaurocrats and corporations.

Burlington could be any town in California's valley sprawls. Ugly!!!

Am looking forward to visiting the Democrat's office in town as soon as I'm able am curious about the voting

trends in my neighborhood too.

Will continue efforts to contact and speak with my neighbors over here re:

Jailzilla... :-)

What does your job with the City of Mount Vernon require of you Jana? The title makes it sound like a

balancing act. A bit of a dichotomy, perhaps?

Please excuse the shouted capitals on County....it's so hard to resist sorry. And please excuse

the dark sunglasses at the meeting....they are prescription and I had left my regular glasses home

Maybe one last question is the county administrator an elected position?

Jana, there was a "packet" of material available at the meeting and I failed to get my hands on one.

Do you know if that information is still available?

Having little to no knowledge about protocols, am sending a copy of this to Mayor Boudreau also, and hope that's an okay thing.  
Respectfully, and thank you for listening....

Tony  
Anthony Spanovic  
1106 Railroad Avenue  
Mount Vernon, Wa 98273  
206 200 9169  
[monashka.mountain@yahoo.com](mailto:monashka.mountain@yahoo.com)

cc: Mayor Jill Boudreau

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**From:** Nate Scott [mailto:nscott@windermereanacortes.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 09, 2013 10:44 AM  
**To:** Hanson, Jana  
**Subject:** Thank you

Jana,

I didn't get a chance to meet you the other morning when you gave a presentation to the commercial real estate group out at the airport, so I wanted to send a note of thanks – it was a great presentation with some good info. I was also supposed to let you know my dad had to run my mom to Seattle that morning or he would have been there to hear from you as well. He wanted me to make sure you knew he had an “excused” absence and wasn't playing hooky.

In any case, thanks for the info and please do keep in touch regarding public comment times on the location of the jail, as I'm sure you gathered at the meeting we are fairly passionate about the location of the jail – or at least which location wouldn't work for the community.

Thank you!

Nate Scott  
Owner/Broker  
Windermere Real Estate/  
Anacortes Properties  
360-293-8008





Allyson Brooks Ph.D., Director  
State Historic Preservation Officer

August 13, 2013

Ms. Jana Hanson  
Director  
Mt Vernon Community Planning  
910 Cleveland Ave  
Mount Vernon WA 98273

In future correspondence please refer to:

Log: 081313-12-SK

Property: City of Mount Vernon DNS, NOA, EIS Scoping for Skagit County Jail Replacement

Re: **Archaeology – EIS Scoping Comments**

Dear Ms. Hanson:

Thank you for contacting the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). There is a high potential for the project area to contain precontact and historic archaeological sites. Therefore we request that cultural resources, including historic building and structures and archaeological resources be added to the list of area for evaluation and discussion in the EIS. We also have the following comments:

**Please be advised that DAHP will need to see the original cultural resources survey report in addition to the summarized version of the survey that will become part of the EIS.**

**Complete cultural resources survey reports should be sent to DAHP and the affected Tribes prior to the final EIS, and prior to any ground disturbing activities commencing, on any part of the project.**

**Archaeological site inventory forms must be submitted to DAHP in advance of the final report, and Smithsonian trinomial (site numbers) must be incorporated into the final report text.**

**DAHP will review the report(s) and inform the applicant when an excavation permit from this office is required.**

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Gretchen Kaehler  
Assistant State Archaeologist  
(360) 586-3088  
[gretchen.kaehler@dahp.wa.gov](mailto:gretchen.kaehler@dahp.wa.gov)

cc. Scott Schuyler, Cultural Resources, Upper Skagit Tribe  
Lena Tso, THPO, Lummi Tribe  
Jackie Ferry, Archaeologist, Samish Tribe  
George Swanaset Jr., THPO, Nooksack Tribe  
Tara Duff, Cultural Resources Director, Stillaguamish Tribe  
Kerry Lyste, GIS Analyst, Stillaguamish Tribe  
Larry Campbell, THPO, Swinomish Tribe  
Richard Young, Cultural Resources, Tulalip Tribe





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**From:** Cathie Mehler [mailto:[cemehler@gmail.com](mailto:cemehler@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 14, 2013 12:38 PM  
**To:** Hanson, Jana  
**Subject:** Re: Jail Location

Cathie Mehler  
519 E. Washington St.  
MV 98274

Thanks!

On Wed, Aug 14, 2013 at 12:13 PM, Hanson, Jana <[janah@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:janah@mountvernonwa.gov)> wrote:  
Thank you Cathie,

I will include your comments in the record. Would you mind sending me your address so we can insure you receive notices?

Thank you.

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE DROID

Cathie Mehler <[cemehler@gmail.com](mailto:cemehler@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hi Janah,

I live in Mount Vernon and I just read the article in the Skagit Valley Herald about the potential location for the new jail. I agree with the comments concerning the Alf Christianson Seed site. It is not a good entrance for our special city. I am hopeful that the Truck City site will be chosen instead.

Thank you for efforts and consideration during this process.

Cathie Mehler

[www.goskagit.com/all\\_access/concerns-voiced-about-siting-jail-at-mv-s-front-door/article\\_36456827-1cd5-5e8b-acd2-0fba92188f1c.html](http://www.goskagit.com/all_access/concerns-voiced-about-siting-jail-at-mv-s-front-door/article_36456827-1cd5-5e8b-acd2-0fba92188f1c.html)<[http://www.goskagit.com/all\\_access/concerns-voiced-about-siting-jail-at-mv-s-front-door/article\\_36456827-1cd5-5e8b-acd2-0fba92188f1c.html](http://www.goskagit.com/all_access/concerns-voiced-about-siting-jail-at-mv-s-front-door/article_36456827-1cd5-5e8b-acd2-0fba92188f1c.html)>

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Hanson, Jana  
Wednesday, August 14, 2013 2:54 PM  
**To:** 'Matthew Hixson'  
**Cc:** Beacham, Linda  
**Subject:** RE: new jail siting should not be in the downtown Mount Vernon area

Sure, we can do that.

Jana Hanson, Director  
City of Mount Vernon  
Community & Economic Development Department PO Box 809 / 910 Cleveland Avenue Mount Vernon,  
WA 98273-0809  
Phone: (360) 336-6214  
Fax: (360) 336-6283

-----Original Message-----

From: Matt Hixson [mailto:mhixson@gmail.com] On Behalf Of Matthew Hixson  
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2013 2:42 PM  
To: Hanson, Jana  
Subject: Re: new jail siting should not be in the downtown Mount Vernon area

Thanks, Jana. Would your office be able to send those notices to me via email? I'd much rather receive them that way and you can use this email address.

Thank you,

-Matt

On Aug 14, 2013, at 2:39 PM, "Hanson, Jana" <[janah@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:janah@mountvernonwa.gov)> wrote:

> Thank you Mr. Hixson.  
> I will record your comment for the record. May I have your address so that my office can send you notices of hearings and decisions?

>

> Thank you again.

>

> Jana Hanson, Director  
> City of Mount Vernon  
> Community & Economic Development Department PO Box 809 / 910 Cleveland  
> Avenue Mount Vernon, WA 98273-0809  
> Phone: (360) 336-6214  
> Fax: (360) 336-6283

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Matt Hixson [mailto:mhixson@gmail.com] On Behalf Of Matthew  
> Hixson  
> Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2013 2:18 PM  
> To: Hanson, Jana  
> Subject: new jail siting should not be in the downtown Mount Vernon  
> area

>

> I'd like to voice my support for not siting the new jail in the downtown Mount Vernon area. It should not be visible from downtown, nor take up any valuable business properties where the city is working on its waterfront plans.

- > Thanks,
- > -Matt Hixson
- > Mount Vernon, WA

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**From:** Ed Sebers [mailto:[rettech07@comcast.net](mailto:rettech07@comcast.net)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 14, 2013 9:42 AM  
**To:** Hanson, Jana  
**Subject:** comment for new jail

Dear Janah,

I would like to comment on the siting of the new jail. And that is I've not read anywhere to date that the court system would also move to the new jail site. It make more sense to consider moving the courts along with the new jail, and thus reducing the cost of transporting prisoners back and forth. Also the truck city site could be looked at more closely as the new jail site.

Thank You

Ed Sebers

[rettech07@comcast.net](mailto:rettech07@comcast.net)

**From:** Ed Sebers [mailto:rettech07@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 14, 2013 2:43 PM  
**To:** Hanson, Jana  
**Subject:** Re: comment for new jail

Jana, would you please send me updates on future decisions for the new jail to my e-mail address.

Thank you  
Ed Sebers  
[rettech07@comcast.net](mailto:rettech07@comcast.net)

**From:** [Hanson, Jana](#)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 14, 2013 12:46 PM  
**To:** 'Ed Sebers'  
**Cc:** [Beacham, Linda](#)  
**Subject:** RE: comment for new jail

[Mr. Sebers,](#)

[May we get your address so we can send you notices of meetings and decisions in the future?](#)

[Thank you.](#)

[Jana Hanson, Director  
City of Mount Vernon  
Community & Economic Development Department  
PO Box 809 / 910 Cleveland Avenue  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273 0809  
Phone: \(360\) 336-6214  
Fax: \(360\) 336-6283](#)

**From:** Ed Sebers [mailto:rettech07@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 14, 2013 9:42 AM

**From:** Hanson, Jana  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 15, 2013 8:15 AM  
**To:** 'Jason Griffith'  
**Cc:** Beacham, Linda  
**Subject:** RE: Potential jail site south of town is better

Thank you so much for your comment Mr. Griffith. We will keep your comment as part of the project record and your contact information will be included in the list of parties of record so you will receive all notices and decisions.

Thank you again for your comment and interest.

Jana Hanson, Director  
City of Mount Vernon  
Community & Economic Development Department PO Box 809 / 910 Cleveland Avenue Mount Vernon,  
WA 98273-0809  
Phone: (360) 336-6214  
Fax: (360) 336-6283

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Jason Griffith [mailto:jkgriffith@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 14, 2013 4:46 PM  
**To:** Hanson, Jana  
**Subject:** Potential jail site south of town is better

The seed plant site is not a good choice for the new jail for a whole host of reasons, please consider siting it south of town. Thanks!

-Jason Griffith  
127 N. 7th Street  
98273

Mr. Franklin,

Thank you so much for your comments. I will include this email as part of the record and you and the copied individual will be considered parties of record for future notices on this matter.

Thank you again for the thoughtful comment and for your interest and involvement.

Jana Hanson, Director  
City of Mount Vernon  
Community & Economic Development Department  
PO Box 809 / 910 Cleveland Avenue  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273 0809  
Phone: (360) 336-6214  
Fax: (360) 336-6283

**From:** William Franklin [mailto:wdavfrankln@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 15, 2013 8:35 AM  
**To:** Hanson, Jana  
**Cc:** mruthholder@gmail.com; Marie Erbstoeszser  
**Subject:** Location of jail

Dear Jana Hanson,

I travel through the city of Monroe on Hwy 2 twice a day, 5 days a week, 9 months a year. I have done this for 20 years.

There is never a moment in that time that I am not visually and psychologically aware of the prison that sheds its negative shadow over Monroe, and of the prison that gets negative coverage in the media.

The instinctive impulse is to keep moving, and avoid stopping in Monroe!

If Mount Vernon is to be 'sentenced' to a similar fate, the least damaging of the 2 unfortunate location choices is the

South Mount Vernon location. This gives the downtown merchants a fighting chance, the waterfront renovation a slightly better chance of fulfilling its 'raison d'être' and making the MV transportation hub less accessible to a prison population right at its doorstep.

*Bill (and Deena) Franklin*  
*101 So 5th St*  
*MV*



To the city of mount Vernon, I Lindsey gear who owns property at 1118 s 6<sup>th</sup> st Mount Vernon, Wa fully support the Alf Christenson site for the New Jail. Though the walls will house those who victimize, vandalize, and burglarize the fine people of Skagit county! The exterior Architecture can be designed to be inspiring to all those who visit our fine city, not to mention the entire judicial system including all those who prosecute and defend are centrally located with in minutes of the proposed site. Balisa Koetje along With Dick Nord? Are dead wrong and have not done there home work! Attempting to state that the 6<sup>th</sup> st area would be better suited commercial?? Are you kidding me? There is only one small access in and out of the proposed site, and that is section street!! And there is not even a remote chance that someone would be crazy enough to buy the property, demolish the property, and go through all the environmental processes on the hopes of putting up some commercial retail space!! Are you kidding me!! We are swimming in vacant commercial space that thought is absolutely the stupidest thing I have heard in along time. The residents and property owners alike on 6<sup>th</sup> st have been kicked around, long enough. The vacated property along with boarded up houses has been a welcome mat for gang. And drug activity for years, along with arson, and burglary. Check with the chief of police on that one! 2 vacant houses alone have been set on fire alone this year, one right across the street from my property. I just love Koetje's comment, eventually Bistro' condos and office space should grace the area?? What cloud does she live on? Yea im going to invest 10 million dollars on some condo's and office space 12' from the second longest railway in North America. And hope someone opens up a soup and sandwich shop?? The city of Mount Vernon has an excellent opportunity to have a beautiful 60 million dollar project constructed on a site that has no other viable use. As a resident and property owner of property located just a couple hundred yards away please support the Alf Christenson site

Sincerely Lindsey Gear



8-14-2013

RECEIVED  
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

AUG 16 2013

C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

## Sonya Dahl

---

**Cc:** Sonya Dahl (s.dahl@dalcousa.com)  
**Subject:** MT. Vernon Jail scoping due by Aug 20

Jana Hanson  
City of Mount Vernon  
Comments follow:

1. Concerned that S. 6<sup>th</sup> will become a busy access road and ruin homeowner quality of life. Lots of children play in that neighborhood. Need a frontage road for jail traffic.
2. Please drive down Old 99 South of Anderson and you will be hard pressed to find any storm drainage along the road. The road drains into farmer's fields and into private detention systems. Drainage is a huge problem and needs to be addressed. Old 99 should drain into storm drains and not onto private property. Developing a jail will make problem much worse so add storm drains to development plans.
3. Drive down Old 99 and open your windows and listen for the ka-whump ka-whump as your vehicle can't avoid the numerous manhole covers placed directly in the driving lanes. I believe these covers are a huge stressful nuisance and are at constant risk of coming loose and rolling out so vehicles get to drive into open manholes. Someone is due for a terrible car accident. Jail traffic will increase city's risk from this poor road design. Manholes need to be moved out of wheel lanes.

*Sonya Dahl*

Office Manager

Dalco, Inc.  
(360) 428-3850  
3010 Old Hwy 99 S Rd  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273



RECEIVED  
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

AUG 16 2013

C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

AUG 19 2013

C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

August 15, 2013

Director Jana Hanson  
Community and Economic Development  
PO Box 809  
Mount Vernon WA 98273

Re: Our New Jail

It sounds as if the only people that want the new jail in Mount Vernon are judges, lawyers, the sheriff and others in that close circle.

The Butler Hill site which is already owned by Skagit County (72 acres) was briefly discussed. The reasons for taking this site out of consideration were:

1. The fill location for excess fill the Skagit County Public Works generates - 72 acres minus 10 for the new jail. Have your engineer calculate how much fill can be stored on 62 acres.
2. Driving distance for cities to bring prisoners - looking at the map Mount Vernon would be the only one to drive further. Sedro Woolley, Burlington and Anacortes are a straight shot to Butler Hill with no city traffic.
3. Not convenient for judges and lawyers - newspaper articles have mentioned a court room in the new jail. This is a great idea - no transport of prisoners, just a short walk down the hallway. The judges and lawyers can drive to work like all the other working people in Skagit County.

Let's consider the possible upside to a jail out in the county:

1. Skagit County already owns the land- big savings.
2. Much less red tape involved in building permits, rezone and environmental impact statement process.
3. The jail built out in the county could look more like the institution that it is - the merchants are already complaining about what the impact would be if a jail is the first thing you see on entering town.
4. It would not need the large set back that has already been mentioned - you wouldn't have to purchase parking space.
5. There is room to expand - 62 acres already owned by the County.
6. This property is out of the floodway - where will you put 400 prisoners during a flood?

First and foremost, this jail should be functional, not a place you want to go visit and look at in awe. Dollars would be saved with tilt wall construction, plus faster to build and less maintenance. Skagit County taxpayers will be paying for this jail - build it with them in mind - land you own, a practical and functional building equals dollars saved.

This common sense approach would put more police on the streets rather than transporting prisoners back and forth to the court house. One other note - an option to a new jail was outsourcing. Why turn these offenders loose? Let's outsource them until the new jail is built and make a statement to criminals of Skagit County. I bet the citizens will be willing to pay for law and order.

Thank you.



Ray and Roberta Melton  
Punkin Center

Mr. Ray P. Nelson

Jana Hansen,

I guess it will get my two bits worth in about the new Jail, I haven't heard much about parking space, which I think is a big factor. I think the one by the Court House is too close, too much traffic. The one down on 9th & 99 would be a much better place, more room easier to get to, and probably more parking space. Thank you.



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks  
of the United States of America

Ray Nelson

RECEIVED  
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

AUG 20 2013

C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

Ray Nelson  
2419 N. 19th Pl  
MV 98273

RECEIVED  
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON  
AUG 20 2013  
C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

Ms. Jana Hanson  
Director, Community and Economic Development  
[janah@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:janah@mountvernonwa.gov)

Re: Scoping Comments for Skagit County Jail EIS

Dear Ms. Hanson:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments for purposes of determining the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement for consideration of two sites for the new Skagit County jail.

My husband and I have lived in Mount Vernon since 2005. We chose to live in Mount Vernon because of its beautiful historic downtown that offers a special sense of community and history. We visit downtown Mount Vernon nearly every day. We are keenly interested in the health of the downtown businesses and economy and are enthusiastic about the downtown flood control/revitalization project. We believe this project has great potential to bring new businesses, residents and visitors to downtown Mount Vernon.

It is my understanding that a new 90,000 square foot Skagit County jail would be expected to accommodate 400 inmate beds, administrative facilities, facilities to treat and house inmates with minor medical issues, inmate rehabilitation programs, and a courtroom. It is my further understanding that the site would also accommodate future expansion of 400 additional beds based on incarceration rates and policy changes.

I submit these comments addressing the two sites in Mount Vernon currently under consideration – the Alf Christiansen Seed site and the Truck City/Suzanne Lane site (“the two sites” or “the sites”) – but reserve my right to comment on additional sites if these are considered in the future. It is my understanding that at present 11 additional potential sites are no longer under consideration and that this EIS process is applicable only to the two sites.

**Cultural Resources/Aesthetics** Mount Vernon is part of the National Trust Main Street Program and the Washington Main Street Program Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, “Washington’s Main Street Communities” (site visited August 19, 2013) <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/main-street-programs>, revitalization programs based on the unique heritage and attributes of the Mount Vernon’s historic downtown. Two of downtown Mount Vernon’s historic buildings, the President’s Hotel and the Lincoln Theater, are on the National Register of Historic Places. Other downtown buildings, although not currently on the National Register of Historic Places, meet at least one of the criteria (and some buildings meet more than one of the criteria) for listing on the register, in that they are more

than 50 years old. Of course many of the historic buildings in Mount Vernon are much older than 50 years. The City of Mount Vernon has invested considerable effort and public monies on a Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan to revitalize its historic downtown and celebrate its heritage on the Skagit River, <http://wa-mountvernon.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=124> . In addition, Mount Vernon serves as a gateway to the Skagit Valley via State Highway 536 (Kincaid Street) where special events and community activities such as the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival and farmland tours bring thousands of visitors to Mount Vernon and through Mount Vernon to the farmlands in the Valley each year.

The Christiansen site sits at the entrance to Mount Vernon via I-5; as some have said, this is Mount Vernon's "front door." First impressions of a city are important in promoting tourism and inviting people to visit, establish new businesses and reside here. My husband and I have traveled by car through rural communities in central and west Texas where new small prisons sit prominently along the highway leading into towns. We never stopped in these places for gas, food or lodging. The prison set the tone for the town and made the place uninviting. We likely would not have chosen to live in Mount Vernon if we had been greeted by a 400-bed or more jail at Mount Vernon's entrance. My concern is that a large jail facility located at the Christiansen site would have significant adverse impacts on Mount Vernon's historic downtown and the city's investment of public monies in the Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan to revitalize the downtown.

It is reasonably foreseeable that locating the jail on the Christiansen site will impact a variety of cultural/aesthetic resources in Mount Vernon. Please describe in the EIS the likely height of the new planned 90,000 square foot facility and how the facility will appear from all directions (that is, would it tend to dominate any view for travelers coming towards Mount Vernon from any direction?). Please include in the scope of the EIS comprehensive studies concerning direct and indirect impacts of locating the large new jail on the Christiansen site on Mount Vernon's status as a U.S. and Washington State Main Street community, on tourism (including cultural heritage tourism) in Mount Vernon and throughout the Skagit Valley, and on the ability of the city to attract new businesses and new residents.

Please include in your analysis a study of the impact on the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival and other tourist and cultural events and festivals both within Mount Vernon and in the Skagit Valley. Please also include a review of the impact on downtown businesses and their customers and on the Lincoln Theater (that is, would a large jail located prominently at the main entrance to Mount Vernon deter patrons?). Please also determine whether and how locating a jail at the Christiansen's site would directly or indirectly impact the quality of life enjoyed by Mount Vernon's citizens, particularly those who frequent downtown businesses or live in residents nearby? Please also include in the EIS an analysis of whether a large jail at this



location would directly or indirectly affect Mount Vernon's image, identity and reputation? Please also analyze the impact of a jail in this location on the city's investment of public monies in the Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan.

Please include in the EIS an analysis of whether the planning, design and financial commitment for this large jail would be adequate to ensure an architectural style wholly consistent with existing buildings (for example, brick and mortar style, like the Lincoln Theater) that support Mount Vernon's status in the national Main Street program and attract visitors here. Would visitors to Mount Vernon be greeted by colorful seasonable flowers hung from the jail's eaves or tulips planted in containers along its length as are found downtown? Not likely. The impacts on Mount Vernon's cultural and aesthetic resources based upon its unique history and location are not likely to be mitigated.

The Truck City site is located in a primarily industrial area not reliant on tourism or recognized for its historical significance. Why or why not would a jail at the Truck City site be more appropriate from a cultural resources or aesthetic standpoint given the industrial surroundings of that site? Please study and compare the cultural resources/aesthetic impacts of the two sites.

**Transportation** Please ensure that the EIS will include a comprehensive review of transportation efficacies and impacts for each of the two sites. The August 13, 2013 presentation on the jail sites, "Public Hearing on Scope of Environmental Impact Statement," contained maps and draft plans for each of the two sites. The draft plan for the Alf Christiansen site showed a main entry for the site off Kincaid Street in downtown Mount Vernon. Kincaid Street (State Highway 536) of course, is a heavily used major route into and through Mount Vernon and into the Skagit Valley beyond. When traffic is heavy along Kincaid Street (for one example, during the annual Tulip Festival and other such events), traffic can even be backed up on I-5. It is reasonably foreseeable that a jail at the Christiansen's site will result in more traffic along Kincaid St. I am concerned that the addition of traffic, particularly traffic heading west along Kincaid St. from a jail of the size needed for Skagit County, and located at the Christiansen site, would likely have significant adverse impacts on traffic flow in downtown Mount Vernon and perhaps on I-5.

Please determine the number of daily vehicle trips to and from the Christiansen site heading along Kincaid St. both to the east and to the west (for example to the Skagit County courthouse) from the proposed main entrance. Please include in your analysis the number of the trips during demolition of the existing facility, construction of the new facility, and operation of the facility at 400 inmate beds (and at any and all future anticipated numbers of beds).

Please include in the scope of the EIS the answers to the questions that follow. How would the trips to and from this site impact the flow of downtown traffic at all hours of the day and night and during special events such as the Tulip Festival? How would vehicles to and from this site impact traffic on or exiting from I-5 under the conditions mentioned in the previous sentence? How would the impact of this traffic affect the use of Kincaid St. as State Hwy 536; that is, how would this traffic affect the flow of traffic and movement of people and goods along the state highway west into the Skagit Valley?

Please also study whether jail-associated traffic for the Christiansen site would impact downtown businesses (including their employees, customers and deliveries), existing jobs, and tourists traveling to downtown and Skagit Valley destinations as well as emergency services downtown under the conditions described above. Would the jail traffic from this site affect the efficiency of Skagit Transit? What would be the impact of jail traffic on the City of Mount Vernon's investment in its Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan?

Please also study the potential traffic congestion along Kincaid St. and throughout downtown from additional vehicles associated with the Christiansen site, factoring in the impacts of the nearby BNSF rail line. It is reasonably foreseeable that additional traffic from a jail at the Christiansen site will add to traffic delays and congestion already resulting and anticipated to result from rail traffic near this site. At present some 15 trains a day pass over the Kincaid at-grade crossing daily. Pacific International Terminals Inc. has a permit application pending with Whatcom County for a coal and other bulk products export terminal to be constructed at Cherry Point near Ferndale Washington. Applicants state that at full build out of that terminal, 18 additional mile and a half long trains will travel across the Kincaid St. crossing on their way to and from Cherry Point. Table 4-5, p. 4-53 GPT's Project Information Document dated Feb. 28, 2011, <http://www.coaltrainfacts.com/docs/PID-comprehensive.pdf>.

In addition, there are current applications and plans in Skagit (Tesoro and Shell) and Whatcom (BP and Phillips 66) Counties to increase the numbers of 100-car long tanker trains carrying Bakken shale oil to refineries. Tesoro Refinery has already received a permit from Skagit County and has already increased the number of oil tanker trains traveling to that facility. Although this writer requested information from Skagit County about Shell's plans for a permit for a facility to accept Bakken crude oil (and requested to be a party of record), the writer has received no response from the County. Nevertheless, increased rail traffic from such additional facilities in Skagit and Whatcom Counties is reasonably foreseeable. Eric de Place, Sightline Institute, "The Northwest's Pipeline on Rails" (June 24, 2013, updated August 2013) [http://www.sightline.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/07/crude-oil-by-rail\\_August-Update.pdf](http://www.sightline.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/07/crude-oil-by-rail_August-Update.pdf) and Floyd McKay, "Coming soon: Oil trains. All the risk, fewer regulations" (July 25, 2013) <http://crosscut.com/2013/07/25/coal-ports/115690/pipelines-rails-danger-ahead/>.



Finally, it is reasonably foreseeable that the Tethys project in Anacortes will add rail traffic through Mount Vernon and across the Kincaid St. crossing.  
<http://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/ComPlan2011-12Docket/petitionPL12-0258.pdf> (Also, recently Tethys was listed as grantee for UGA Petition-Related Parcels in Skagit County Records).

Please study the cumulative impacts on traffic in downtown Mount Vernon from all current and reasonably foreseeable future rail traffic across the Kincaid St. at-grade crossing and associated with a jail of the size needed by Skagit County now and in the future at the Christiansen site. Please also study these cumulative impacts on downtown businesses (including their employees, customers, and deliveries), visitors and emergency services. Please also study these cumulative impacts on the efficiency of Skagit Transit. Please also study these cumulative impacts on the City of Mount Vernon's investment in its Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan. And please study the impacts of current and increasing rail traffic as described above on the efficiency of the proposed facility, if located at the Christensen site, including timely transfer of prisoners to and from the Skagit County courthouse for judicial proceedings or other processing.

I am concerned that development and operation of a large jail at the Christiansen site will have transportation impacts that cannot be mitigated because of the unchangeable locations of I-5, the railway line and downtown Mount Vernon.

Traffic impacts for the Truck City site should also be studied as part of the EIS analysis and a comparison made of the traffic impacts for the two sites. While an at-grade rail crossing also lies between the Truck City site and the courthouse in downtown Mount Vernon, would this site also cause similar traffic delays and congestion and impacts on businesses (including their customers, employees and deliveries), commuters, visitors and emergency services in downtown Mount Vernon and the Skagit Valley, and the timely and effective transport of prisoners?

**Economy**                      Although SEPA does not provide "economic impacts" among its separate categories of study covered by an EIS, it is my understanding that if economic consequences could follow from an adverse environmental impact, such as an impact on transportation, an economic impact can be considered within the EIS scope. Based upon the above-described likely significant adverse impacts upon cultural resources/aesthetics and transportation, please also include a study of the economic impacts on downtown Mount Vernon businesses and the Skagit Valley for the Christiansen site. Please include a study of direct and indirect impacts on property values (for both the short term and long term) for commercial and residential property located within the vicinity of a proposed jail at the Christiansen site. Please also study the Truck City site for economic and property value impacts and compare the two sites.

**Soils** Please include within the scope of the EIS a determination of whether the soils or geologic or seismic feature(s) at either of the two sites would present special engineering, materials or safety challenges or increase costs of the facility's construction, maintenance or operation.

**Alternatives** Based upon the foregoing and the need for a larger jail to accommodate Skagit County's inmate population, the Truck City site is the only reasonable alternative between the two sites. Another of the 11 additional sites eliminated from consideration might also provide a reasonable alternative, particularly when conflicts between jail traffic and at-grade rail crossings may be avoided altogether. Please briefly summarize the reasons why these 11 potentially alternative sites were eliminated from discussion and why any of them would not provide a reasonable alternative.

Please include me as a "party of record" in this matter. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,  
Mary Ruth Holder  
1319 Digby Pl  
Mount Vernon, WA 98274  
mruthholder@gmail.com

August 20, 2013

RECEIVED  
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

AUG 20 2013

C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

Jana Hanson  
Director, Community and Economic Development  
P.O. Box 809  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Re: PL13-060 – Skagit County Public Safety Facility

Dear Ms. Hanson:

I am strongly in favor of locating the new public safety facility at the former Alf Christianson Seed site in downtown Mount Vernon. The downtown location is a much better location for this new facility than the other proposed site.

A new public safety facility located in downtown Mount Vernon will keep approximately 75 full time county employees active in the downtown area. Retention of this employment base is important to the health and economy of downtown Mount Vernon. These employees shop and dine in downtown and are part of the critical mass of customer base necessary for downtown businesses to not just survive but thrive. Downtown Mount Vernon suffered from the loss of employees related to the relocation of the Skagit County Commissioner's offices and Planning Department. The economic health of downtown Mount Vernon would suffer further from the loss of public safety facility employees if the facility was located elsewhere.

In addition, the construction of a new public safety facility at the downtown site will eliminate the unattractive, run down warehouses that currently occupy the property. The downtown site and surrounding neighborhood will greatly benefit from the improvements planned as part of the new public safety facility. The public safety facility and the future commercial development fronting on Kincaid Street will greatly enhance the attractiveness and appearance of the Kincaid Street corridor.

The traffic that will be generated by public safety facility staff, law enforcement, attorneys and visitors to the public safety facility will be minimized by locating the facility at the downtown site. The downtown site is within close walking distance to restaurants, bus connections, attorneys' offices, bonding companies, the courthouse and other related locations. If the public safety facility is located elsewhere, all of these trips will occur by car thereby increasing traffic counts, parking requirements and general congestion.

The downtown site is not currently generating any economic activity or revenue base for the City of Mount Vernon. A new public safety facility at that location would not displace any existing business activity. The downtown property is not as likely to attract economic activity and/or tax revenue producing activities in the future as the alternate location.

Sincerely,

  
Signature

Jason H Powers  
Print Name

309 Pine St  
Address

Mount Vernon WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

  
Signature

Ron Costeck  
Print Name

309 PINE STREET  
Address

MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

  
Signature

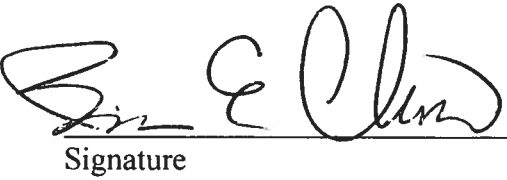
Alicia Stensland  
Print Name

~~309~~ 309 Pine Street  
Address

Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

  
Signature

Brian E. Cline  
Print Name

227 FREEWAY Dr. STE B  
Address

Mount Vernon, WA  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

J Howson  
Signature

Jennifer Howson  
Print Name

415 Pine Street  
Address

Mount Vernon WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

[Signature]  
Signature

Roy Howson  
Print Name

415 Pine St.  
Address

Mount Vernon WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Tina Clark  
Signature

TINA CLARK  
Print Name

1807 Jordan Ln.  
Address

Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

[Signature]  
Signature

[Blank]  
Print Name

[Blank]  
Address

[Blank]  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Jorgineap. Voigt  
Signature

Virginia S. Voigt  
Print Name

306 S. 6<sup>th</sup> ST -  
Address

Mount Vernon, Wa. 98274  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Megan Masonholder  
Signature

Megan Masonholder  
Print Name

15198 Summers Dr.  
Address

Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Rachel Franulovich  
Signature

Rachel Franulovich  
Print Name

2101 E Avenue  
Address

Ancorites, wa  
City/State/Zip 98221

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Debbie J. Bahr  
Signature

Debbie J. Bahr  
Print Name

17693 Shalyce Place  
Address

Mt. Vernon, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Cassandra Carr  
Signature

Cassandra Carr  
Print Name

14429 McLean Road  
Address

Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Heather Waldron  
Signature

HEATHER WALDRON  
Print Name

1419 Eaglecrest Pl  
Address

Mt Vernon WA 98274  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Piet Free  
Signature

Piet Free  
Print Name

18468 Torget Road  
Address

Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

Craig Cammack  
Signature

Craig Cammack  
Print Name

227 Freeway Drive Suite B  
Address

Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer



Cynthia Running  
Signature

Cynthia Running  
Print Name

117 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Address

MT Uverton, WA 98233  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

I am:

- employed downtown
- a downtown business owner
- a downtown property owner
- a downtown customer

## Skagit County Jail, EIS Scoping Hearing on August 13, 2013

Transcription by Deanna Ellis of Dick Nord's comments at this hearing:

My name is Dick Nord. I am a builder/developer in the area and also a real estate broker. I have lived in the area for about 20 years. I have been building and developing properties for my entire life, and that's been a long time. I live at 107 South Third in La Connor, and I have properties in Mount Vernon that I own. I'm concerned about the site. The reason I'm concerned about the site is that I'm -- let me back up. It should be -- it shouldn't be in the downtown area. I really would have a problem with it being right by the freeway. And the concern I have is that I'm a developer and a builder. And I have been working for sometime on a piece of property along the riverfront.

Now, the City has been kind enough and have been working hard enough to develop that riverfront, and they've spent like short of \$30 million on that or they will spend short of \$30 million on that riverfront. And to take a piece of property that could be an incredible welcoming location to the downtown area of Mount Vernon and use it for a jail, I think is a terrible thing.

Jails have, unfortunately, some bad vibrations. They have a bad aura about them. If you don't think I'm speaking the truth, please go and talk to the people in Monroe. They're trying to get as far away from that jail on the hill as they possibly can. If you go to Monroe, you'll see that all their building is being done on -- their new construction is being done on the north side of Highway 20, simply because they don't want expand in the other way. The people that are closer to the prison are not doing well. Granted, that's a different ball game and a different prison.

I can understand the people that would like to have the jail there simply because of the convenience of the jail to the courthouse and to the downtown area, but believe me, it's going to affect the property value dramatically.

I was unable to do a project because the river got higher and expanded due to the Corps of Engineers evaluation change. A lot of people lost money during the last few years because of that change. I'm concerned that a stigma of similar style will take place if you decide to build the jail in that location where Christiansen's is, only because it will become a monolith instead of an entry to Mount Vernon.

If we could do anything, we should plant more Tulips, and we should invite people in to that location because La Conner -- and I believe in the next few years you're going to see an incredible resurgence in the downtown area thanks to some of the work that's been done over the last few years. I'm sure there's other people that will testify to that, too.

That's my experience level, and I appreciate you allowing me to share it.

**Skagit County Jail, EIS Scoping Hearing on August 13, 2013**

Transcription by Deanna Ellis of Paul Springer's comments at this hearing:

I'm Paul Spraner. (Phonetic spelling.) My address is 1008 Apache Drive in Mount Vernon. I'm here speaking as the president of the Downtown Association.

We had many discussions about the jail being at both sites, the pluses and minuses. The Association basically feels that it's better off at the Truck City location for many of the same reasons as stated earlier.

So I think it is a stigma issue that the businesses do receive from the jail being downtown.

So that's it. Thanks.

**Skagit County Jail, EIS Scoping Hearing on August 13, 2013**

Transcription by Deanna Ellis of Kristen Keltz's comments at this hearing:

Hi. I'm Kristen Keltz with the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce, 517 South 38th Place, Mount Vernon.

Just quickly, our board does want to recognize the hard work that the City and the County have done – the City and the County have gone through to get this done. Obviously we've seen our community does realize that there does need to be a new jail. Not having enough beds is a huge economic impact to our community and to our businesses, so this is definitely an important issue.

Our Board of Directors also had many, many discussions on both sides. They really looked at both components and both properties and felt very strongly that the Truck City Site would be more appropriate, as to not have a jail at the front entrance of our city.

As been stated, the great waterfront redevelopment project, there is so many opportunities and possibilities for our downtown. They just felt it would be more appropriate down in the southern part.

Thank you very much.

## **Skagit County Jail, EIS Scoping Hearing on August 13, 2013**

Transcription by Deanna Ellis of Balisa Koetje's comments at this hearing:

I have a bit of a statement. Balisa Koetje. My address is 507 South Waugh Street, Mount Vernon. I'm a commercial real estate broker with Windermere Commercial Real Estate.

First of all, I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here this evening and voice our opinion on this project. We have a very, very important decision in front of us. Fortunately, the bond passed, that we can now build that jail, and now it's time to site the location of the jail.

Today I'd like to address the jail situation from a personal standpoint and from a professional standpoint.

Personally, my husband Jim and I have owned commercial real estate in the downtown area for the past 30 years. The City, downtown property owners, and business owners worked diligently to develop a plan for our community that will greatly enhance Mount Vernon. It is very exciting for us and for those involved in the downtown community to be a part of this downtown revitalization program.

We are now in Phase 2 of a \$27.3 million project that not only protects downtown with a floodwall, but we're building a community along the river that will support a pedestrian walkway along the river, a courtyard that will give way to businesses, retail, bistros, cafes, offices, and eventually condominiums.

This project will attract both patrons and property owners. We are already seeing renewed interest in buying downtown properties. Two have sold in the last three months. Two more are under contract. The questions being asked by investors coming into town, Is the jail really going to be built at the entrance of Mount Vernon?

I have present with me a letter drafted and signed by the Mount Vernon Downtown Association that Paul just referred to. A quote -- just to give a little more detail of the letter that they presented states, "Downtown Mount Vernon is formally recognized as a top-tier Main Street community, one of only 13 across our state. The Alf Christiansen Site is some of the most highly regarded and valuable commercial real estate in downtown Mount Vernon. There is tremendous potential for this site, from hotels to restaurants to retail development. The Revitalization Project has the potential to transform downtown Mount Vernon into one of the finest tourist destinations in our state. We are concerned that the jail if located on Alf Christiansen could become doorstep to our community."

Professionally speaking, do you know Mount Vernon is unique, as it is one of the only cities west of the Mississippi and north of San Francisco that within a 100 mile radius can draw from an estimated six million people.

I have also present with me a letter signed by the Commercial Brokers Association. This association is represented by commercial real estate brokers along the I-5 corridor from Snohomish County, Skagit County, and Whatcom County. I quote: "The Alf Christiansen Site is zoned Commercial II. It is some of the most valuable real estate in downtown Mount Vernon, and it's current zone allows for future hotels, restaurants, and retail. If allowed to optimize its highest and best use, it will generate both property and sales tax to support the jail. Developing the Truck City Site, which is zoned commercial, light industrial, uses a site that demographically does not have ability to generate future sales tax or property tax comparable to the Alf Christiansen Site. However, building a site in south Mount Vernon will generate traffic which will jump start the development of business in south Mount Vernon, and this is an area that the City of Mount Vernon has been trying to develop. A very important issue is at hand: Where do we want the jail? Aesthetically, what is there about a county jail that says welcome Mount Vernon? We are investing millions in revitalizing our riverfront. Let's be smart about our front door."

Thank you for your time.

## **Skagit County Jail, EIS Scoping Hearing on August 13, 2013**

Transcription by Deanna Ellis of Pete Papadopoulos' comments at this hearing:

My name is Pete Papadopoulos. I live at 1121 South Second Street in Mount Vernon. I'm a commercial real estate broker with about 30 years of experience in that around the country.

On the EIS, I would like to see it expanded to include the economic impact of the different sites.

Economically, while it may seem to me intuitively obvious that having a jail at your front door, I'd like to see the numbers. That's why I would like to see the impact and the analysis, the scope of it broadened.

The kinds of impacts that I'd want to look at is what happens to the values of the properties near a jail? What other experience is there that we can draw from on that. What's the impact on Kincaid Street of having access to Kincaid and the access through town? Does that diminish people's desire to come into downtown? I don't know that. I'd like to see that.

The tax revenues that Balisa mentioned, the difference in tax revenues, that should be included in the economic impact.

In general, I think if we took all of the comments, really the question is we do need to broaden the scope to include the economic impact in a myriad of ways, looking at both sides and saying what are the economic impacts. And not just for the next five years, but for the next generation. You are talking about this being expandable to the next 400 beds. So we're not talking 15 to 20 years. We're talking possibly up to 40 years. So we're talking about generations. So I'd like to see the scope broadened.

Thank you.

**Skagit County Jail, EIS Scoping Hearing on August 13, 2013**

Transcription by Deanna Ellis of Richard Bowyer's comments at this hearing:

Good afternoon. My name is Richard Bowyer. I live at 310 South Ninth Street in Mount Vernon, and I have a question about if we have questions, how will we get them answered?

MS. HANSON: You can direct them to me, Richard, and I'll do my best to answer them as soon --

MR. BOWYER: We will not get them answered today then, even a simple yes or no?

MS. HANSON: Possibly. Yes, you can ask questions.

MR. BOWYER: Some questions have come up in my mind and other people I have talked to. One of them is it's my understanding, the project, the way it's going forward now will be subject to the laws that include -- and I wish I could tell you the exact name of the law that says best available wage because there is government money included; is that correct?

MR. CHRISTENSEN: Prevailing wage.

MR. BOWYER: Thank you very much. My apologies for that. So it is correct. The prevailing wage law will be in affect in the creation of this jail, and thus will jack up the price on it?

MR. ESTVOLD: I don't necessarily agree with the fact it will raise the price, but, yes, it will in fact be required, prevailing wages.

MR. BOWYER: Okay. Well, I am hard pressed to see how it will lower the price in any way. I seldom agree with developers, even on the time of day type thing, but Mr. Nord is correct. This is really an inappropriate place to put that jail, if you decide on the Alf Christiansen Site. It's the entrance to the City of Mount Vernon. Of all the places it could be put, it does not make sense to put it there and take so much prime land out of the taxable table type of thing when businesses could go in there, and what have you.

I think the questions I have, I've had some informal answers to it, but I have not yet seen a really valid answer that I considered that answered the question. Why are we not looking at the opportunity to have a private facility built that in turn is leased back and is owned by the County in the 30 year time period? I have heard some allusions to something, but I'd like to have a hard, solid answer as to why that option won't work or why it has been taken off the table.

My understanding is that there is some kind of a law, but laws can be changed. Just because we have voted a law that says we'll be taxed for it doesn't mean that tax needs to be implicated.



It seems to me that here is an opportunity to, one, if a private company comes in and builds it, we don't have to build. We don't have to pay the taxes. We will get taxed -- be able to tax that private company for the use of their property, and in 30 years it reverts back to the ownership of the County, is my understanding of the way it works.

Now if I'm in error on that, I'd be happy to be corrected on that. It seems to me that's an option that needs to be thoroughly looked at, and I have not heard a really valid answer as to why it hasn't been yet. Also it seems to me that if we can do something that would preclude a higher price for that as taxpayers because we have to go with prevailing wage-type laws, it makes sense to look at it because they will have the option - a private firm will have the option to build that under their auspicious and probably not have to deal with that.

The other thing that does seem to me is that we the citizens will be paying for this. We will be paying for it for a very long time. If we have another economic downturn, like we had in 2008, and sales taxes fall off, which you're relying on to pay for this thing, there is no choices than to go back to the funds the cities have and dip into those to meet those obligations to pay for those bills that we run up by the building of this jail. I have some concerns that that could happen also, particularly if we go with the program we're going with now as opposed to somebody will build it for us and then turn it back over to the County in 30 years.

Thank you very much.

## Skagit County Jail, EIS Scoping Hearing on August 13, 2013

Transcription by Deanna Ellis of John Sullivan's comments at this hearing:

My name is John Sullivan. My address is 20366 Eric Street in Mount Vernon. The City of Mount Vernon touches our backyard, so we live in Skagit officially, in the County.

Do you want me to continue?

MR. CHRISTENSEN: Yeah.

MR. ESTVOLD: Please.

MR. SULLIVAN: In the scoping process, in the Environmental Impact Statement creation, one of the things that I would like to see addressed is lighting at night. Now, I say that on two levels. Number one, from a personal standpoint, what I have seen happen in the south Mount Vernon area, particularly with the advent of a new RV dealer on old 99, when they went in and they light their lot up all night long, the amount of light that goes up into the air is huge. It could have been addressed easily using night friendly lighting.

It changes the nature of things out there. It's still pretty dark. So that's the second place I'm addressing, that my comments come from. I'm the astronomy teacher at Mount Vernon High School, and I'm concerned that my students are unable to see the nighttime sky unless they're in the Planetarium, which is the thing that I run at the high school, beside teaching there.

So any time we as a community can do anything to preserve the darkness that we have still here in Skagit County, we should. Certainly in this project, being that it's a County-wide project, as far as I'm concerned, because it's all the cities involved, then let's do what we can to use night-friendly lighting, which is effective, not only effective, it's cost effective but it also preserves the darkness as we can. I'm happy to describe a couple of projects that I've seen where it has worked, and it's been beautiful. I have already mentioned the one. The other project that I would say has really decimated nighttime sky out in that area is just a single light from Gordon Trucking, Incorporated who on the east side of Cedardale Road have a storage lot for their trailers. And with that one single light, they are blasting their lot, I'm sure thinking it's good for security, but the light blasts the people that live up on Skyridge. So once upon a time they could look out across the valley and it would be dark. With that one single lamp and that one single pole, they have been blinded. So that's the number one concerns I have.

Secondly, as far as siting in town versus out at Truck City, I have talked to my own kids about that. I have a couple of teenagers at home. They don't really have any comment about it. For me I see two problems. Number one is the nature of a project which I'll look at the design which I see you have up there.

The nature of the project at Truck City doesn't seem like anything else that's out there. Maybe that's the future, would be changing. Once the jail was built there, that the rest of the neighborhood would change too. So it seems a little different, as far as the neighborhood use goes. But the flip of that and putting it at Alf Christiansen, you have all the adjoining neighborhoods, and some of those neighborhoods are where my students live.

So flip a coin in that sense. In some way it's going to affect somebody. That I realize. I'm just pleased that there are two sites chosen, that the vote has been taken, and we're moving forward, bottom line.

Now, if you have any questions for me, I'd be happy to take them as well.

MS. HANSON: Thank you so much.

MR. SULLIVAN: Can you tell me if that becomes part of the environmental impact concerns. Once I put it in record, then it obviously is.

MS. HANSON: Yes. Yes. We will address that.

MR. SULLIVAN: And before that?

MS. HANSON: What we will be doing is compiling all the information and comments that we've received today and addressing the elements that we've already identified that would be addressed with the Limited Scope EIS, compiling those, doing the analysis, the review, creating reports, and then those go into the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

MR. SULLIVAN: And your time lines are by December?

MS. HANSON: Yeah, we have to have them out --

MR. SULLIVAN: That's really great.

MS. HANSON: And we'll have another public meeting in December.

MR. SULLIVAN: The final?

MS. HANSON: The draft, and then the final should come out in February.

MR. SULLIVAN: Takes a long time, doesn't it?

MR. WEND: Yes, it does.

MR. ESTVOLD: We want to be very thorough.

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BY \_\_\_\_\_  
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C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

August 20, 2013

Jana Hanson  
Director, Community and Economic Development  
P.O. Box 809  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Re: PL13-060- Skagit County Public Safety Building

Dear Ms. Hanson:

I urge you to locate the new public safety facility at the former Alf Christianson Seed site in downtown Mount Vernon. The downtown location is a superior location for this new facility compared to the other proposed site, south of town.

A new public safety facility located in downtown Mount Vernon will keep approximately 75 full time county employees active in the downtown area. Retention of this employment base is important to the health and economy of downtown Mount Vernon. These employees shop and dine in downtown and are part of the critical mass of customer base necessary for downtown businesses not just to survive but thrive. Downtown Mount Vernon suffered from the loss of employees related to the relocation of the Skagit County Commissioner's offices and Planning Department. The economic health of downtown Mount Vernon would suffer further from the loss of public safety facility employees if the facility was located elsewhere.

In addition, the construction of a new public safety facility at the downtown site would eliminate the unattractive, run down warehouse and eyesore that currently occupies the property. The downtown site and surrounding neighborhood will greatly benefit from the improvements planned as part of the new public safety facility. The public safety facility and the future commercial development fronting on Kincaid Street will greatly enhance the attractiveness and appearance of the Kincaid Street corridor.

The traffic that will be generated by public safety facility staff, law enforcement, attorneys and visitors to the public safety facility will be minimized by locating the facility at the downtown site. The downtown site is within walking distance to restaurants, bus connections, attorneys' offices, bonding companies, the courthouse and other related locations. If the public safety facility is located elsewhere, all of these trips will occur by car thereby increasing traffic counts, parking requirements and general congestion.

The downtown site is not currently generating any economic activity or revenue base for the City of Mount Vernon. A new public safety facility at that location would not displace any existing

business activity. The downtown property is not as likely to attract economic activity and/or tax revenue producing activities in the future as the alternate location. I say this not only as a former downtown business owner and property owner, but also as a commercial real estate broker.

Finally, as part of the project the City could plan to construct additional parking that would benefit the entire downtown district. This additional parking would certainly help make up for the parking losses due to the bus/train terminal which remains woefully deficient in parking to support its own requirements.

Very truly yours,



Paul W. Taylor  
PWT:bbs



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CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

AUG 22 2013

C.E.D. DEPARTMENT  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

Winsler Legal Center  
1204 Cleveland Avenue  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
Phone: (360)336-3321  
Mike@winslegal.com

**MICHAEL A. WINSLOW**  
*Attorney at Law, Inc., P.S.*

August 21, 2013

Jana Hanson, Director of Community and Economic Development  
P.O. Box 809  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Re: PL13-060 Skagit County Public Safety Facility

Dear Ms. Hanson:

This letter is written in support of locating the new public safety building at the former Alf Christianson Seed site in downtown Mount Vernon. As a business and property owner in downtown Mount Vernon for the past 23 years, it is my belief that the City would miss a substantial opportunity to redevelop this *no-man's land* between the railroad tracks and Interstate 5 if the choice is made to site the public safety building at the proposed Truck City location. Given the proximity of the railroad tracks and the narrowness of the residential city streets surrounding the Christianson Seed site, it seems rather fanciful to believe that any commercial property developer would ever acquire this area for redevelopment as an office, commercial or retail center. I am persuaded that the only way we will see redevelopment of this site is with municipal dollars provided by local government.

Absent federal funding (which seems extremely remote), it is more likely that this area will simply languish in its current state for years to come unless municipal development occurs.

If a municipal facility is built at the Christianson Seed site, it can be made much more attractive than the current structures, without giving the appearance of a "prison," as argued by many in favor of the Truck City parcel.

While it is understood that municipal facilities do not generate sales tax revenue, the current use of the property is neither generating sales tax revenue nor likely to do so in the foreseeable future. Therefore, there is no loss to the City by developing the public safety building at this more convenient location.

While I do not practice criminal law, based on my discussions with the judges and other people within the criminal justice system, it appears extremely likely that locating the facility at the Truck City site would result in great inconvenience to law enforcement, court staff, judges, attorneys and other County staff. If we are truly attempting to make downtown more friendly to foot traffic and decrease vehicular traffic, then the Christianson Seed site seems much more likely to meet those



Hanson  
August 21, 2013  
Page 2  
goals.

Finally, locating the public safety facility at the Truck City site would draw business away from the downtown corridor. It is my understanding that there are somewhere between 60 and 75 full-time jobs related to the jail facility. While not all of these employees frequent downtown business daily, it seems likely that as the downtown core is rebuilt, these employees would be more likely to eat and shop close to their place of employment. Therefore, siting the jail at the Christianson Seed site would give greater opportunity for patronage of the downtown businesses.

In conclusion, I believe that, with proper planning and appropriate implementation of design standards, the Christianson Seed site can be redeveloped in such a way that those using the Kincaid Street corridor will find an attractive municipal facility. Thank you for your consideration of these thoughts.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Winslow

MAW/pc  
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