
Fw: Public Comment — ZON-2026-001, Rezone Request: 201 SW Attwell Road, SR to R-3

From: Bernie Bacon <bernie.bacon@icloud.com>

Sent: Friday, July 10, 2026 9:45 AM

To: Planning <planning@ci.stevenson.wa.us>

Cc: Tony Bacon <ask.the.bacon@icloud.com>

Subject: Public Comment — ZON-2026-001, Rezone Request: 201 SW Attwell Road, SR to R-3

Members of the Planning Commission and Planning Staff,

I am submitting this comment as a nearby resident regarding the proposed rezone of 201 SW Attwell Road from Suburban Residential (SR) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3). Having reviewed both the staff report and the applicant's narrative, I want to raise several points that I believe warrant careful consideration—not to oppose growth or higher density in principle, but to question whether this particular application, in this way, at this time, reflects sound and deliberate planning.

The Comprehensive Plan designation is not the same as a green light.

The staff report notes that the City's Future Land Use Map designates this parcel as Urban Residential—High Density, and the applicant relies heavily on that designation. It is worth being precise about what that means. A Comprehensive Plan land use designation identifies where certain types of development may be appropriate over time. It is a long-range planning tool—not a commitment to rezone individual parcels on demand.

The question before this Commission is not simply whether the designation is generally compatible with R-3 zoning. Rather, it is whether the record demonstrates that rezoning this parcel now advances the City's adopted planning objectives in a coordinated and well-supported manner. Is the City ready—in terms of infrastructure, street capacity, neighborhood transition, and coordinated planning—to begin that transition at this location? The Comprehensive Plan points toward a destination. It does not, by itself, determine the timing or sequence of implementation.

Parcel-by-parcel rezoning is not a planning strategy—it is a reaction to one.

If the area around Attwell Road is genuinely intended to transition toward higher density over time, that transition deserves a deliberate, City-led approach rather than one driven by individual property owners filing applications. Approving this request establishes no framework, creates no coordinated vision for how adjacent properties should transition, and provides no assurance that supporting infrastructure will keep pace.

While each rezone must be evaluated on its own merits, approval of this application will inevitably shape expectations for future requests. Without clearly articulated planning criteria or a broader implementation strategy, it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish future applications in a consistent and principled manner. If the City has an intentional plan for how this corridor will evolve, this rezone should be evaluated within that framework. If it does not, approving individual rezones risks allowing the pattern of development to emerge incrementally rather than by design.

Zoning is permanent. Ownership is not.

Perhaps the most important consideration is the simplest one. A rezone does not belong to the applicant—it belongs to the land. Whatever the current owner's intentions may be, those intentions do not bind future owners. Once this parcel is rezoned to R-3, it remains R-3 regardless of who owns the property, what they propose to build, or whether the surrounding neighborhood has evolved as anticipated.

For that reason, the Commission's decision should be evaluated based on the full range of development the zoning allows—not solely on the project currently being discussed. R-3 zoning permits up to ten dwelling units on this parcel. That long-term entitlement is what the Commission is being asked to approve, and it deserves to be evaluated on that basis.

The Commission's findings matter.

The staff report does not include a recommendation for approval or denial. That suggests this application presents policy questions on which reasonable minds may differ. In those circumstances, it becomes especially important that the Commission clearly articulate the factual and policy basis for whatever recommendation it ultimately makes.

The materials submitted focus primarily on the property's consistency with the Future Land Use Map. I respectfully suggest that consistency alone does not fully answer whether this parcel should be rezoned at this time. If the Commission recommends approval, I ask that its findings explain not only that the Comprehensive Plan contemplates higher-density residential uses in this area, but also why this particular rezone, at this time, satisfies the City's adopted criteria and advances an intentional, coordinated planning strategy.

What I am asking.

I respectfully ask the Commission to evaluate this application on the merits of the zoning change itself—as a permanent land use decision independent of any one owner's plans—and to clearly explain how approval fits within a broader, deliberate vision for the future of this area.

If such a strategy exists and this rezone advances it in a coherent and well-supported manner, that reasoning should be plainly reflected in the Commission's findings. If that strategy has not yet been developed, then it may be more prudent to establish it first, rather than allow individual rezone applications to determine the pattern of future development by default.

Thank you for your careful consideration and for your service to the City of Stevenson.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernie Bacon

85 SW Monda RD Stevenson