



## League of Women Voters® of Mason County

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March 15, 2021

City of Shelton Council  
525 West Cota Street  
Shelton, WA 98584

Dear Mayor Kevin Dorcy and City Council Members:

This letter is in regard to the recent proposed sale of Brockdale Road/Island Lake Drive property to Equity Plus LLC, for the purpose of constructing 400 modular homes to provide affordable rental housing.

The League of Women Voters of Mason County appreciates that the City has rejected this plan. The City Council showed great wisdom in slowing down the process and allowing time for public input.

The LWV Washington has taken a position on climate change. The League believes that climate change is one of the most serious threats facing our community, state and planet. The League believes that development plans need to be made with the "lens of climate change" firmly in place. Actions should ensure a stable climate system for future generations.

We agree that there is a definite need for local affordable housing. However, the area in question is part of an historic prairie area which includes endemic flora and fauna, notably *Incisalia erephon sheltonensis*, the Shelton Elfin, endemic to the woods opposite Shelton High School, where students in recent years have been able to study this rare butterfly. Maintaining the biodiversity of this site precludes logging and development.

This forested area also affords esthetic, recreational and health benefits, adding to the quality of life in Shelton.

In particular, the Climate Change Committee would like to note that a housing project of this density would eliminate a significant stand of timber just approaching maturity. Across the country and worldwide, cities are initiating green belts and planting street trees for carbon sequestration. The 90-acre stand on this property would sequester about 220 tons of carbon dioxide annually. The carbon sequestration rate for standing forests increases with age.

We need to be forward-thinking as the world warms. We hope you, as council members, will consider the climate benefits of a forest along one entry to the city, and find other ways to encourage affordable rental housing scattered through the community.

With best regards,

Sherri Dysart  
Climate Change Committee chair