

Martin E. Fortin, Jr.
588 Silverbrook Road Randle WA 98377
fortinm71@gmail.com 360-791-0387

Lewis County Board of Commissioners
2025 NE Kresky Ave.
Chehalis, WA 98532
November 1, 2022

The purpose of this letter is to support the YMCA proposal for an overnight camp at Mineral Lake. I spent 27 years as the director of the Cispus Learning Center. During those years I worked with many outdoor learning centers across the State of Washington, including several of the YMCA camps. I have witnessed the value of an overnight outdoor experience in enhancing the social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual growth in our youth. Those experience are truly life changing for many of the participants. Periodically I would ask former “campers” about their experiences. Here’s a sample of the responses I received:

“As a teacher and parent, I see the most positive effects of going to outdoor education camp among the campers that have never spent a week away from home. These children/teenagers come back from the outdoor experience with a stronger sense of self and a greater amount of self-confidence.”

“Little did I know the end of my quest for self-worth would begin in the middle of the woods. In less than a week, I learned more about myself and my role in this world, than I had imagined was possible. 16 summers later I still make the annual trek to Camp, this time as a counselor, helping to ensure the next generation can influence that kid who’s struggling to find their worth in this world, to turn him/her into an innovator, a servant, a mentor, and most of all a leader.”

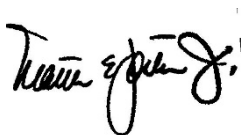
“Camp has changed my life because it allowed me to be myself for the first time. For most of my teenage days, I only had interactions with teachers until coming to camp. I’ve learned to not be afraid of branching out with other people and understand people will have my back through thick and thin. I can never thank the camp staff enough because they mean the world to me and will always cherish each moment I’ve had there.”

“The challenge course provided team bonding and leadership development that benefited our Wrestling team throughout the entire season. The work that was accomplished on one Saturday was more than I could have done in an entire season.”

“I changed the entire focus of my science classes to teach more ecology because of my time at camp. I love what outdoor education did for my students.”

I believe that the camp is transformational. More than ever our youth need that experience. We need more of these facilities across our state. Finally, it is my experience that camps are good neighbors, too. I highly endorse the Y’s request for a rezone.

Sincerely,



Martin E. Fortin, Jr.

November 1, 2022

Lewis County Board of County Commissioners,

As a property owner in the town of Mineral, I am strongly opposed to the proposed YMCA Rezone Proposal. This proposal represents textbook spot zoning and is classic urban sprawl. The Washington State legislature adopted the Growth management Act (GMA) in 1990 to avert urban sprawl and the associated insidious effects of urban sprawl.

The overwhelming majority of people who live in the community of Mineral do not support or want this urban rezoning. Mineral is one of the most serene and remote locations in Lewis County. Urban zoning and any associated development projects will not provide any long-term benefits to Mineral. Quite the opposite will occur. It will eviscerate the very essence of Mineral.

Current best practices regarding community planning provide transitional zoning as you move away from the Interstate-5 transportation and urban corridor. Intense urban use should gradually transition to less intensive urban use, to suburban use, to rural use, and finally remote use. The YMCA rezoning proposal drops urban use into the middle of remote use with no transition and absolutely no infrastructure.

Over the past several years there have been a number of in-person and remote meetings regarding the YMCA Rezone Proposal. During these meetings the applicant, Lewis County representatives and staff have all advocated for the proposal. Yet, not one of these people live anywhere near Mineral. In fact, the Planning Commission members refused to take the time to conduct a community meeting in Mineral in order to familiarize themselves with the area and the associated community.

The applicant, Lewis County representatives, and Lewis County staff have not been transparent, forthcoming, or objective with information that has been provided regarding the impacts of the proposed rezoning. When community members of Mineral have asked specific questions regarding adverse impacts of the proposed rezoning, the respondents have deflected and focused their responses on the financial windfall the rezoning would have on the community or how the rezoning will support a project that will help educate the children of King County.

First, there is no objective evidence to indicate a resort zone in an area without appreciable services or infrastructure is going to be a financial benefit to anyone. Secondly, an urban youth education problem (the YMCA's own words) is not Lewis County's or Mineral's responsibility to resolve. The theorized educational value of a camp pales when compared to the irreparable environmental degradation required to develop and sustain the site.

Information regarding the Rezone Proposal has been, and continues to be, tailored by the applicant and Lewis County staff to support one outcome: the authorization of a resort in the remote community of Mineral.

I expect the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners to support the taxpayers of Mineral and NOT the special interests of those who live 30, 50 or even 80 miles away from Mineral. Based upon the overwhelming community sentiment of Mineral, the YMCA Rezone must be denied/ rejected.

Eric Waters, 164 Mineral Hill Road, Mineral, WA 98355

October 28, 2022

Lewis County Community Development
c/o Mindy Brooks, Senior Long Range Planner
2025 NE Kresky Ave., Chehalis, WA 98532

Dear Ms. Brooks,

I am writing to express my support for the YMCA of Greater Seattle's project to design and build a camp at Mineral Lake. The outdoor experiences a camp can bring for not only for children who attend camp as campers but for families as well.

One of the greatest barriers to enjoying the outdoors is access to the outdoors. Those who regularly have access to the outdoors do not know the barriers others face. I know as a child, I was incredibly lucky to grow up in the mountains where I was raised by the dirt under my feet and the trees I would hide among. I have taught in the outdoors for 15 years and have watched children meet their first squirrel and stare at it with wonder and amazement or use a bow and arrow for the first time. It is lifechanging.

The YMCA bringing a camp to Mineral Lake will allow countless children and families access to the outdoors where they can receive the benefits the outdoors has to offer. Time with family and friends, their first boating experience in a canoe or kayak, their first time away from home but in the safety of people who care for them, the chance to learn skills you might not otherwise have the chance to experience.

Access to the outdoors for all children and families is the key to continued care and love for our natural environment. We cannot expect the next generation to give time and attention to the earth, if they have not experienced its wonders and what it can bring to them physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Creating a fun and engaging outdoor environment at Mineral Lake will allow for the earth to speak to children in families and continue to foster those who love and care for the natural world we all need.

The outdoors has given me so much respite, care, fun, excitement, and joy in my lifetime. I hope for us all, the camp project at Mineral Lake will move forward, allowing so many to experience what I have in being outdoors. Camps help to bridge the gap for those who have not experienced the wilderness and are looking for a way to start to learn what the forest, trees, and water can do for them.

I am excited to see this project come to life and for children and families to experience the lifechanging benefits the outdoors can bring to them.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Daniela D. Barron

11/2/2022

Dear Ms. Brooks,

I am writing to offer my support for the YMCA's proposed overnight camp at Mineral Lake, and to urge your approval of the proposed rezone and comprehensive plan amendment.

As a youth, I greatly benefited from the YMCA overnight camp program. At eleven, my older sister had an opportunity to attend a camp on the East Coast. I remember dropping her off and being in awe of the camp – the cabins, community, and the beautiful lake it was built on. My mom found me crying by the lake and I had to explain to her that I wasn't sad because my sister was going to camp; I was sad that I wasn't! From there I spent 13 years at that camp, growing as a leader from a camper who felt overwhelmed by the task of setting tables by myself, into a seasonal staff member, leading trainings for other staff. I grew in confidence, became more outgoing, and gained an appreciation for being outdoors in a respectful way.

The demand for summer camp and outdoor education is growing. Washington state recently passed legislative to provide access to an outdoor education experience to a larger number of youth. This is creating a higher level of demand, and many schools being turned down for a trip because locations are at capacity. Mineral Lake will help to increase the number of students that are served throughout the area.

This increase is even more important as we look forward from Covid. Schools and parents will be looking for the next 10+ years to make up for the Social Emotional Learning that was lost from two years of virtual learning. An outdoor experience with peers, whether it is overnight camp or outdoor education, provides a safe environment to take risks and practice communicating in a healthy way.

This project will also ensure that the land is used as a teaching tool to help youth understand the impact we have on the environment. Outdoor education facilities focus on teaching about composting, leave no trace principals, and learning about the ecosystems in the area. Overnight summer camp programs provide opportunities to put those teachings into practice by spreading the responsibility of keeping camp beautiful throughout the summer culture. Using this space, we can encourage the community to be respectful of the land in all of Washington, and create stewards of the environment for years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the YMCA's proposed camp at Mineral Lake as an integral part of our community.

Sincerely,

Ashley Gibson

From: [Dick and Paula Hopkins](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: Proposed YMCA Camp at Mineral
Date: Wednesday, November 2, 2022 4:31:59 AM

Ms Brooks:

Please incorporate these comments into the official comments for the proposed YMCA Camp at Mineral.

1. The YMCA proposed camp will have little impact to the Mineral area.
 - A. Environmental impacts will be negligible.
 - B. Aquifer issues are not yet assessed, but deep wells should have little impact on neighbors' wells.
 - C. Wildlife will not be affected.
 - D. Noise will be no worse than the drunken fishermen on opening weekend.
 - E. County roads will be impacted less than log trucks and commercial trucks that regularly operate.
2. Positive impacts.
 - A. Kids and adults will have Forestry education and outdoor experiences.
 - B. Donations by YMCA of volunteer assistance, of fish into the lake, and financial contributions.
 - C. Revenue to the local store, merchants, and contractors.
3. Mineral Fire Department Concerns.
 - A. The proposed first-decade infrastructure creates no logistical or transportation issues for emergency vehicles.
 - B. Despite Mineral Fire Department's claims, Mineral Fire regularly travels on logging roads built exactly the same as what exists at the YMCA property.
3. Mineral was founded on mining, followed by logging and saw mills, then became services resources and assets and recreation. NOTHING STAYS THE SAME. With each of these changes, the population worried, fretted and opposed change, but the town is still moving into the next century.

Dick & Paula Hopkins

External Email - Remember to think before you click!

This message may contain links with malware, viruses, etc. Please ensure the message is legitimate before opening it.

To: Mindy Brooks
Ref: YMCA Camp at Mineral Lake

11/2/2022

Hello Mindy, I am delighted to express my support for the YMCA Camp at Mineral Lake. As I stated in my letter dated 6/17/2022, having the YMCA build a camp at Mineral Lake is the best thing that has happened to Mineral and Lewis County in years. The Y has a great record of being a supportive neighbor, a steward of nature, and supporting the development of young people.

In regards to any environmental issues, the Y has over a hundred years experience in the Camp Ground business. They also have a back ground in teaching young people about nature, and respect for the environment. The experience the Y is offering, is something that is not taught in a public school class room. Hopefully the Y experience may direct some of the participants to become natural resources workers, or forestry, or fish and wildlife personnel.

As I stated in a previous letter, Mineral needs an anchor, the Y will be that anchor. It will be a great start for future growth. Lewis County should consider this YMCA request as a great long term partnership. In closing I want to let some people know; that the YMCA is not a new START-UP business, they are not going out of business in a few years. They are offering an opportunity, not an untried plan. (177 years of experience)

Thank You

Gary Johnson

November 2, 2022

Lewis County Board of Commissioners
BOCC@lewiscountywa.gov

Subject: Opposition to rezoning 500 acres of Mineral Lake for use as a YMCA of Greater Seattle camp

Commissioners:

I am writing in opposition to the rezoning of property in Mineral for use by the YMCA of Greater Seattle for a youth camp. Unfortunately the YMCA of Greater Seattle is not the Young Men's Christian Association many of us over the age of 60 remember. The YMCA of Greater Seattle is another example of a woke institution, using its resources and activities, including youth camps, to promote an agenda that does not align with the beliefs of millions of Americans, including what I believe is the large majority of Lewis County residents.

A simple review of the YMCA's vision and mission clearly reflects their goal and intent. From their website and listed below are a sampling of their policies.

VISION 2025

Our vision is to advance equity and justice for all through whole person health with a trauma-informed wellness approach, taking into account a person's past and present life experiences, to promote healing and belonging. We hypothesize that by taking a holistic approach to individual health for all, centering ourselves to become an antiracist organization, and driving necessary systems change (starting with ourselves), we can produce more equitable outcomes for all, especially Black, Indigenous & People of Color (BIPOC), as well as, other marginalized youth, families, older adults and communities, to develop their full potential.

EQUITY STATEMENT

The Y actively promotes a culture free from bias and injustice. We are dedicated to removing institutional and systemic barriers that result in oppression and racism. We will be accountable to marginalized communities for creating equitable and sustainable environments where social justice is woven into every facet of our programs, and by caring for our communities in a culturally versatile and respectful manner.

People all across our nation, including in Lewis County, have shown up at school board meetings and elsewhere to oppose Critical Race Theory and its philosophies and approach to oppressors and the oppressed. This has no place in our county or at a summer camp that is promoting the fact that they are providing outdoor education. I believe it is clear that the YMCA of Greater Seattle has a different agenda.

In the Frequently Asked Questions section about summer camps and housing the below statement is included:

For traditional campers, sleeping groups, will be single gender. For teen programs, they may be mixed gender. I am greatly opposed to this.

I am not in opposition to outdoor education for young people. After several years of lock downs, they most certainly could benefit from outdoor activities. But the YMCA is not the group to manage or lead the effort. It is also important that the people of Mineral and East Lewis County have a role in determining use of resources in their area.

I urge you to deny the zoning changes for this property. Do not allow the Greater Seattle YMCA to impose their philosophies on the residents of Lewis County.

Thank you for your consideration,

Laura Price
Centralia, WA

November 3, 2022

Re: YMCA Mineral Lake Rezone

Dear Ms. Brooks:

I am writing to offer my support for the YMCA's proposed overnight camp at Mineral Lake, and to urge your approval of the proposed rezone and comprehensive plan amendment.

My name is David Affolter and I have worked with YMCA Camp Orkila on Orcas Island for 20 years. I now serve as the Executive Director. I believe camp and community go hand in hand. From growing up at day camp, learning to swim in our pool, attending school in our classrooms and joining community dinners in our dining hall, most locals have an Orkila connection.

The pandemic illuminated the power of camp and community connection. In June of 2020, we were quick to open our doors to community, pivoting our operations away from summer camps, and offering affordable and reliable childcare to working families.

Keeping the momentum of in-person learning, while other schools in Washington returned to the classroom virtually, Camp Orkila worked with Orcas Island School District to create an outdoor learning program for all elementary and middle school students. For the 2020-2021 school year, classes were online and outdoors at Orkila, with camp staff providing weekly, in-person, outdoor education to students. In addition, for families needing online-school support, Orkila offered opportunities for kids to learn at camp.

Additionally, Camp Orkila teamed up with a local food bank and assisted with food storage and preparation to meet the needs stemming from rising food insecurity in the Orcas Island community. Camp Orkila also partnered with local non-profits to provide temporary options for people without housing.

Community is critical for camp. At it's best, I believe camp is a community hub. A place where a neighbor can learn to swim and be picked up by a parent who was at an event at camp earlier that day. Camp's a space where we can partner with communities to fill emerging needs. I believe the public benefit of a Y camp at Mineral Lake would be tremendous.

For these reasons, I urge your approval of this rezone and comprehensive plan amendment. Thank you.

Sincerely,



David Affolter

Executive Director

daffolter@seattleyymca.org

YMCA Camp Orkila

From: [Marc Romagosa](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: YMCA Mineral Lake Rezone
Date: Thursday, November 3, 2022 3:12:01 PM

Dear Ms. Brooks,

Hello! I'm writing to show support for the new YMCA camp proposed at Mineral Lake. I think you should approve the rezone and comprehensive plan amendment.

Outdoor education and camping in general is a hugely important thing for kids to get, especially these days with the weather changing and too many kids not learning anything about how our state naturally works outside of cities. I always figured this was true based on working with kids, but also the Legislature recently found that there just aren't enough camps for all the K-12 students to be taught properly, and lots of kids don't have the benefit of parents who are able to teach them this kind of thing.

I grew up mostly with boy scout camps, but although there's things that I think BSA still does best, Y camps are much more accessible to the general population. Also, I've been to both YMCA camp Colman and Orkila and they are both very good. Camp Colman just had a Halloween thing on Sunday that was free to the general public and it would be good to have more things like that in the community. Maybe if there's concerns that the camp won't do enough for the community, and also I think it's important that it be developed in an ecologically friendly way without disrupting water or spreading invasive species. I know that they're having to change that at Camp Colman now because it was built before people thought about that kind of thing. But those are just things to discuss, they shouldn't derail the whole project.

In short, please approve the rezone and comprehensive plan amendment. It will be good for Lewis County people and for kids all over the state.

Sincerely,

Marc Romagosa
Phone: 707.761.2668
Email: marc.e.romagosa@gmail.com

External Email - Remember to think before you click!

This message may contain links with malware, viruses, etc. Please ensure the message is legitimate before opening it.

Steven Craig
621 Oakland Ave
Centralia, WA 98531

November 4, 2022

Lewis County Commissioners
351 NW North Street
Chehalis, WA 98531

Re: Mineral Lake rezoning

I wish to convey our opposition to rezoning of Mineral Lake. My wife's family has property on the lake, property that has been in her family for two generations. We feel rezoning will bring negative consequences that will not surface until a rezoning request has been approved. Other concerns would be the large influx of visitors to the area thereby creating a need for the county to spend money necessary for road improvements to accommodate the traffic.

I would also be concerned about tribal financial interest. Similar to the Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound, should the tribe obtain a 51% ownership, that property will then be taken off Lewis County tax rolls, not to mention the loss of any county governmental control on what can be built.

It's something to think about. Mineral Lake is a beautiful lake with pristine forests surrounding the area. We would hate to lose that to development.

Steven and Rachel Craig
(Captain, USCGR Retired/ Postmaster Oakville Retired)
SCraig7001@gmail.com
360.480.7764

November 3, 2022

To Lewis county Board of Commissioners

BOCC@lewiscountywa.gov

Concerned Citizens in Opposition to rezoning the 500 acres of Mineral Lake for use as a YMCA of Greater Seattle camp

Commissioners:

After reading in the Chronicle about the rezoning proposal for Mineral Lake for use as a YMCA of Greater Seattle youth camp, my attention was captured and I decided to research the Y MCA of Greater Seattle. I grew up seeing the YMCA as a trusted organization whose mission statement was "To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all". I totally support that Mission.

However, after reading their website, I am concerned about the direction the Y of Greater Seattle is moving. Presently, there is a Mission and Equity statement with a troubling progressive slant. Taken alone, the Mission statement, " Building a community where all people, especially the young, are encouraged to develop their fullest potential in spirit, mind and body ", is rather benign. On the other hand, the added Equity statement tells much more about the agenda of the Y in this cultural moment.

"The Y actively promotes a culture free from bias and injustice. We are dedicated to removing institutional and systemic barriers that result in oppression and racism. We will be accountable to marginalized communities for creating equitable and sustainable environments where social justice is woven into every facet of our programs, and by caring for our communities in a culturally versatile and respectful manner."

Even more troubling than this equity statement, is their Vision 2025 statement outlining what they seek to do in the future (underlining I have added):

1. We actively promote a culture free from bias and injustice - we are committed to becoming an anti-racist organization and centering our work around active and disciplined efforts to disrupt multi-dimensional aspects of racism, starting with ourselves.
2. We embrace and deploy a holistic approach to health and wellness, and integrate our programs and services to address all aspects of health to include physical, mental & emotional, social/relational, spiritual/cultural, and community well-being.
3. We drive systems change through our programs and advocacy by removing barriers to access and creating enabling conditions for the communities we serve. We seek to disrupt and re-imagine systems that have produced harm and inequitable outcomes, particularly for BIPOC and other marginalized and underserved communities.

- 4. With the context of the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism and the clarion call for equity and justice for all, we will approach our financial, programmatic, and organizational recovery grounded in the needs of our diverse and varied communities.**

This may be the vision for the Greater Seattle YMCA but this certainly does not fit with the value system and the community vision in Lewis County. By rezoning the 500 acres of Mineral Lake to build the Youth camp for YMCA of Greater Seattle we are importing Progressive values into East Lewis County and foisting upon its residents a decision that many of them are against.

Please vote against this rezoning effort.

Sincerely,
Linda and Steve Wilcox
Centralia WA

November 3 2022

Lewis County Board of County Commissioners
351 NW North St.
Chehalis, WA 98532

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the YMCA of Greater Seattle, I want to thank you for your consideration of our application to redefine the use of 500 acres that the Y owns at Mineral Lake. I also want to express our appreciation for the thorough review and assessment conducted by the Lewis County staff and Planning Commission, which led to their unanimous recommendation for approval.

The issue before you concerns a change in the land use designation for this private property now owned by the YMCA. We recognize there are many questions about the project, as evidenced by comments at the Nov. 1 hearing. While these project-level issues will need to be resolved before the binding site plan is approved, they do not determine whether or not the proposed overlay is an appropriate land use for the site under state and county guidelines.

As a nonprofit organization, we have a responsibility to operate for the benefit of the broader community. We meet that responsibility by providing opportunities for youth to learn, grow, and thrive, and the proposed camp at Mineral Lake will be a new setting to offer those opportunities.

A project like the one we are proposing for Mineral Lake requires both significant investment and a long-term commitment. Our existing camps have operated in their current locations and maintained strong local community relationships for more than 100 years apiece. So the proposal at Mineral Lake is not something that we enter into lightly or take on without conducting research and due diligence to ensure that the project is viable. In identifying our Mineral Lake property, we spent more than five years analyzing other potential sites throughout western Washington for their capacity to accommodate the building and operation of a new youth overnight camp and outdoor education facility.

The application and review process has clearly demonstrated that the proposed use of the property for a youth camp is a viable use for this property and meets the criteria for approval for the proposed overlay. It will provide the youth and families of Lewis County, as well as from other parts of western Washington, with new camping and outdoor education opportunities. It also will help the state meet its goal of providing high-quality outdoor education experiences to all 5th and 6th grade students.

I encourage you to review the entire application and supporting materials we have provided throughout this process. It is also important to remember that the draft ordinance before you contains clear boundaries and restrictions. It would exclude the development of most of the

allowed uses within the “master planned resort” designation. The remaining narrow segment of facilities that would be allowed by the ordinance are consistent with the type of low-impact youth camp we are proposing, assuring that the bulk of the property is preserved in its natural state.

We also know that any creation of a new camp will require answers to additional questions that you and the community may have. While we have begun work in some areas and shared initial data gathered, the more detailed process and formal presentation of the answers to questions on water, septic treatment, transportation, and other issues will begin after an affirmative decision on the current land use question, as they would for any other land use project.

There were questions regarding the education aspect of the youth camp. The curriculum for Mineral Lake will be developed in conjunction with local educators, the Nisqually Indian tribe, and other subject matter experts. The curriculum includes hands-on, experiential learning opportunities that align with state standards for 6th grade science, incorporate specific attributes of the site, and foster an appreciation and love for the outdoors. The Y currently works with a number of schools across Washington to deliver outdoor education.

While we might not have all the answers to questions at this point, our ongoing commitment is to continue to involve the community, because as land owners in Mineral we want to continue to be good neighbors. We will keep reaching out and embrace open and respectful dialogue. We are confident that we can simultaneously meet our mission to serve youth, protect the beauty and natural environment of Mineral Lake and its surrounding forest land, and contribute to the health of the Mineral community.

There is a lot of work to be done before this camp can come to life. There are many questions that must be answered to your satisfaction before the binding site plan is issued and the physical work to create the actual camp can begin. The first step is to confirm that a youth camp is a viable use for this private property, as prescribed by state and county guidelines.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gwen Ichinose Bagley
SVP, Youth Development Officer
YMCA of Greater Seattle

From: [Tammy Martin](#) on behalf of [BOCC](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: FW: Lewis County YMCA Camp Concerns
Date: Friday, November 4, 2022 12:24:27 PM
Importance: Low

From: Angie Creel <Angella.creel@outlook.com>
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 12:09 PM
To: BOCC <BOCC@lewiscountywa.gov>
Subject: [Spam?] Lewis County YMCA Camp Concerns
Importance: Low

BOCC,

I am writing to you today to express my concerns regarding the application of YMCA to install a camp in Lewis County.

The YWCA website states it's Mission and Values as:

The Y is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Guided by our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, the Y is dedicated to giving people of all ages, backgrounds and walks of life the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity.

My key concern is related to their statement of "putting Christian principles into practice." While I agree that treating all people with dignity and grace is certainly a Christian principle, I find the YMCA's stand on LGBTQ+ issues is not consistent with the truth of the Bible which governs the Christian faith.

As depicted on the page [Affirming LGBTQ+ Communities with Pride | YMCA of the USA](#), the YMCA (Home> Affirming Equity for All > Affirming LGBTQ+ Communities with Pride), the Y is not only making their facilities a safe place for all, but appear to be promoting the LGBTQ+ lifestyle. The photo includes a rainbow flag with "the Y Pride" printed on it. Additionally, it states "Ys across the country take part in and host Pride events and activities, often led by their own LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) that are supported by YMCA of the USA's National LGBTQ+ ERG." This seems to be blatantly out of line with their mission of putting Christian principles into practice.

Their website places great influence on educating children, which is admirable, but I think we as a community need to take a closer and guarded look at what exactly is being taught. As noted above, the Y's stance on LGBTQ+ crosses the line between accepting and including people and that of promoting a lifestyle of gender dysphoria. It is especially concerning to me that they have gone so far as to create Employee Resource Group dedicated furthering the LGBTQ+ agenda and actually hosting Pride events and activities.

Today, our children are being forced to address issues that are completely outside of what they can handle developmentally when it comes to gender and sexuality. They are being indoctrinated in public schools, the media and politics, and it should be noted that none of these influences claim to promote Christian values. The last thing we need in Lewis County is a program that touts itself as upholding Christian values while at the same time promoting or affirming ungodly principles when it comes to gender and sexual identity.

Furthermore, I am a long-time resident of Lewis County having been raised here. After spending fifteen years living in Pierce County, I moved back here because I was drawn to the small town, conservative values and a family friendly community. Allowing YMCA to have a foothold in our hometown opens the door for them to influence our children and neighbors with their big city “progressive” agendas, and the last thing our children need is one more influence on a subject that should be addressed in the home with their parents.

I thank you for your consideration.

Angie Creel

326 Dieckman Rd

Chehalis, WA 98532

Angella.Creel@Outlook.com

External Email - Remember to think before you click!

This message may contain links with malware, viruses, etc. Please ensure the message is legitimate before opening it.

From: [Tammy Martin](#) on behalf of [BOCC](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: FW: YMCA camp in Lewis County
Date: Friday, November 4, 2022 12:41:25 PM

From: Loretta <famoneill74@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 12:36 PM
To: BOCC <BOCC@lewiscountywa.gov>
Subject: YMCA camp in Lewis County

November 4, 2022

Lewis County Board of Commissioners

Commissioners:

I am writing to urge you to reconsider a plan to rezone property in Mineral, east Lewis County to be used as a youth camp by the YMCA of Greater Seattle. When I heard of this plan, I wanted to learn more about the Y.

I read their Equity Statement and Vision Statement. A quote from the Vision Statement declares: *"We hypothesize that by taking a wholistic approach to individual health for all, centering ourselves to become an antiracist organization, and driving necessary systems change (starting with ourselves), we can produce more equitable outcomes for all, especially Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), as well as, other marginalized youth, families, **older adults** and communities, to develop their full potential."*

I came across a situation that did not have a good outcome for one older adult woman. Julie Jaman, an 80-year-old resident of Port Townsend, Washington swam nearly every day at the town's Mt. View Pool (jointly run by the city and YMCA). One day after a swim, Julie found a man wearing a women's swimsuit in the ladies' dressing room. Appalled and horrified, she sought help from the staff to get him out. To her dismay, she learned that the man was, in fact, on staff and, according to the YMCA's policies, she was the one not welcome at the pool. Julie Jaman has been banned forever from using the town's pool because she could not agree to the Y's version of "equity and respect". (Port Townsend Free Press August 2, 2022)

I do not believe that the values and policies of today's YMCA are healthy for communities.

Thank you for considering this point of view,

Loretta O'Neill

**External Email - Remember to think before you click!
This message may contain links with malware, viruses, etc. Please ensure the
message is legitimate before opening it.**

From: [Tammy Martin](#) on behalf of [BOCC](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: FW: [Spam?] Mineral Rezoning
Date: Thursday, November 3, 2022 8:03:14 AM
Importance: Low

Forwarding

From: Debbie MacInnis <macinnisclan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022 7:58 AM
To: BOCC <BOCC@lewiscountywa.gov>
Subject: [Spam?] Mineral Rezoning
Importance: Low

November 2, 2022

Lewis County Board of Commissioners,

Today I read in the Chronicle that the rezoning issue in Mineral is once again on the table, to be dealt with in a hearing next week.

Within this issue, there are two things of concern to me as a citizen of Lewis County.

First, while I am not a resident of Mineral, I greatly sympathize with those who live there and wish to have their town left unscathed by the monumental change the rezoning and YMCA camp would cause their community.

Second - and because I am not a resident of Mineral - more important to me is the concern over the influence that the YMCA would bring to Lewis County and the children who would attend the camp.

In perusing the YMCA website, it is clear that the organization is no longer what it once was regarding Christian principles. Its support of Black Lives Matter - the stated goal of which is to destroy the nuclear family - is in opposition to foundational Christian and societal principles which are still intact in Lewis County. Its statements of diversity, equity and inclusion have an inordinate focus on gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation and the LGBTQ+ community. On the [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) page of their website, there is a prominent video featuring a lesbian couple and their 3 children extolling the virtues of being welcomed and included at the Y. There are multiple displays of the same type of information throughout the site. I also found that the stated purpose of the YMCA is to create "changemakers" who will, assumedly, promote these ideologies.

While I seek to treat all people with respect, I am not in favor, in fact strongly oppose, the propagation of such ideologies in a summer camp for children in Lewis County.

Taking into consideration both areas of concern, I strongly encourage you to deny the rezoning request.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie MacInnis
679 Highway 603
Chehalis, WA

360-219-6547

External Email - Remember to think before you click!

This message may contain links with malware, viruses, etc. Please ensure the message is legitimate before opening it.

November 4, 2022

To: Mindy Brooks (Lewis County Planning)
Gwen Ichinose Bagley (YMCA)

My name is Jane Hodges and I divide my time between Seattle and Mineral, where I have been a part-time resident since 2013, when I bought the town's surplus elementary school at 114 Mineral Road South from the Morton School District. I founded the nonprofit overnight artist residency program we call Mineral School, which since 2015 has operated in the space; I also was the first person to operate an Airbnb in Mineral, during dates residency was not in session. Whether you love or hate Airbnb (and its cousin HipCamp), it is a viable, low-impact way for property owners in rural places like Lewis County to become hospitality entrepreneurs and create labor for cleaners, landscapers, and income for area grocers, propane and wood suppliers, etc. I recently sold the building (closing was September 30, 2022), but negotiated a five-year (minimum) lease with the property's new owners for the nonprofit's continued operation at the building at least one-third of the year, so I remain a stakeholder in the community via the nonprofit I started and that I will continue to operate there as a part-time resident hosting overnight visitors.

I've spent a paragraph explaining my relationship to Mineral because I am conscious that I am not from the town and I live there part-time rather than year-round; many "long timers" think their voices are the only ones that should count in the conversation about the property the YMCA is purchasing and the plans the YMCA intends to pursue in partnership with the Nisqually Indian Tribe. I understand that County Commissioners collect public comment to inform their decision-making regarding whether or not proposed projects serve both a local and broader public good. Regarding the local public good, there is a demonstrated need for more activities specifically for children and families to enjoy the outdoors in the Mineral area. The newly-formed Mineral Community Center group (consisting of multiple folks who have arrived in Mineral within the past five years) has begun offering "trunk or treat" at Halloween, affordable holiday meals, and outdoor movies for families, while a local parent who works full-time runs a private group called "Community Roots" where parents and children gather and learn practical and useful outdoor skills ranging from cutting trees to beekeeping to meeting with forest and wildlife professionals to hear about their jobs. These organizations do good work but since they are volunteer-run they are somewhat opaque in terms of leadership, funding, and business structures, and thus it is not always possible for someone from outside the immediate area to find out about their existence or engage with them. A YMCA presence could easily provide an abundance of new space, program amplification, and collaborative backbone for these community-driven projects, not to mention staff or shared resources so that working parents wouldn't have to always volunteer-lead kids' activities.

Regarding the broader public good, at the state level Washington has identified reduction of screen time and more outdoor access as healthy necessities for the children who live here. Access to an additional in-state YMCA camp, and one that is within two hours of several major population centers, would bring new energy into the Lewis County economy, likely improve outdoor programming and leadership options for students at local K-12 school districts, and would create possible career training or job opportunities for locals via Centralia College East or

Work Source. The YMCA's camp proposal calls for low-impact design which would preserve much of the site in a natural state, and my understanding is that the local public would have access on designated days (or perhaps continuously) to trails. While I know there is a group of locals who "simply don't want the site to ever change," I think we can agree it's childish and unrealistic to demand that a logging company landowner never sell surplus property because some folks have grown accustomed to sylvan views. Many of the "No YMCA" signs are in the yards of folks who neither live in Mineral full-time, if at all, nor work in Lewis County.

Also, regarding the broader public good, I think it's important for commissioners to consider that Mineral is at an economic turning point and that it needs external, bigger-picture leadership (given we have no official local government, although the Lions Club and fire department may function as under-funded and non-representative stand-ins) to prevent it from proceeding on a path to economic suicide. Mineral is in crisis — at a turning point — and there is a "battle for the narrative" of the town and its future. Following on the heels of the COVID-19 crisis, major changes to the Lion's Den campground business model, the YMCA's entry to the community, several businesses and properties changing hands, and an aging and declining population, emotions are running high. However, I don't think the solutions the community can conjure on its own are big or wise enough to set the table for a vibrant and growing local economy.

As county commissioners, it is your job to make decisions that position the county for success, and not let the loudest voices from a small community shout the local economy into a grave. Due to demography (an aging population) and industry (a shrinking logging employment base, the train's closure, attrition), the Mineral population has shrunk from a few thousand to only 135 residents. Indeed, this demographic data set (<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/mineral-wa>) notes that between 2019 and 2020, Mineral's population fell 34% from 205 to 135. Of those 135, only 52 are employed and 42% of the population lives in poverty. The median age is 62. The short version is that Mineral's economy consists of people who are low earners (average income \$18,100) or who have entered retirement and are living on Social Security, hobby income, or other retirement assets. These conditions create fear — Will my taxes go up? Does my voice matter? Poverty is a legitimate concern, and there are many resources (such as a well-stocked food bank) at local churches and among citizens to care for those in need. There are few efforts, however, at actual economic development, i.e. bringing in employers, supporting the self-employed or telecommuters, or teaching people job skills (taxes, basic professionalism) to move off welfare/underbanked living onto the economic grid.

When I listen to opposition to the YMCA project, arguments tend to stem from poverty-informed fear or white entitlement-related concerns with themes of "inconvenience" and "discomfort" that folks with lakefront and lake view homes don't want to experience. Inconvenience, discomfort, and disorientation are all symptoms of the process of education that accompanies necessary social change. Once upon a time, inconvenience and discomfort were excuses for why women didn't have the right to vote or own property or play sports, and yet most of us got over it. Unfortunately, the naysayers do not own the property that a logging company has the right to sell to a party of its choosing, and pandering to their selfish resistance cuts off Mineral's nose to spite its face. To me, it seems short-sighted and irresponsible to deny a low-impact environmentally-conscious project that would offer educational resources to children (often economically

disadvantaged children), create jobs, and enhance community resources in a town that has shrunk from a population of several thousand to only 100 or so local residents.

I was able to attend day camps where I grew up on the east coast, where I learned to swim, fish, do archery, and hike. My family also traveled to Montreat, where we had family in North Carolina, a Presbyterian community built around a lake and where family activities as well as kids-only hikes, square dances, and lake swims made the outdoors part of my dearest memories of family time. In high school I participated in an extracurricular “outdoors” club where we learned to hike, rock-climb, and kayak as well as in my school’s cross-country running team. These experiences have led me to take respite in the outdoors and to value the environment and geographic diversity in the areas surrounding the cities where I have lived. Children who can experience the outdoors learn to marvel at nature, live in small (if temporary) communities with others, and how to respect and respond to their surroundings — whether that means building fires, packing out trash, or how to navigate encounters with wildlife or surprise weather patterns. Camp builds empathy, curiosity, and fitness for children — and families. It also presents rural living to children who may not otherwise get to experience its beauties and challenges.

Please consider the future of Mineral and your necessary leadership (or potential to fail as leaders) as you think about the feedback you have received regarding the YMCA/Nisqually project. For those of us planning to participate in the community for the long-term (whether as renters or owners, workers or retired), your commitment and decisions deeply influence the future of your county, one of its economically vulnerable communities, and the nourishment of thousands of future children who have no vote in this matter.

Sincerely,
Jane Hodges
Mineral School, PO Box 214, Mineral WA 98355
mineralschoolarts@gmail.com

To whom it may concern,

My name is Grace Martinez and I am a current employee of YMCA Camp Colman. Throughout my life I've been to numerous different camps and have had a unique experience at each one. My days at camp have given me life skills and friendships that I couldn't have gotten anywhere else.

During my middle school years I was attending Girl Scout Camp Cedarledge in Pevely, MO, and I gained leadership skills that have stuck with me to this day. I had a difficult time during the school year due to inconsiderate classmates, and when I went to camp during the summer I was met with people who accepted, supported, and lifted me up. I also gained a love for country music from working at the equestrian barn, which, though maybe humorous, is another camp installation that will stick with me forever and uplifts me daily.

In addition to working for various day camps over the years, my time at YMCA Camp Colman is currently very key in my personal development. I met people who came from many different countries at the beginning of the fall season, and have met people here who will continue to be in my life for many years. It also provided me the opportunity to not only be a mentor to young children but to mentor other adults who I work with, as well as receive support and advice from my colleagues. The Y values are easy to enforce and live by because they are important characteristics for individuals and the community as a whole.

Summer camp in general is an experience every child (and adult) should have. Being out in nature with new friends who become old friends, while challenging yourself and lifting others up is, unfortunately, not something that happens often during the traditional school year. Opening another summer camp at Mineral Lake would allow the YMCA to have even more of an impact on more children and staff, growing a love for nature as well as new experiences, social development, and fun.

As an employee of the Y and an avid camp enthusiast, I strongly support the construction of a new camp. I wish you all the best in the completion of this project and I know that it will create lasting memories for many children and adults alike.

Best,
Grace Martinez

Lewis County Commissioners:

I am devoted to seeing Lewis County continue to be a place where families and individuals can thrive in all different ways of life.

For this community to see the continuation of human flourishing, we must pour our attention on the children of Lewis County. We must be forward-thinking in our efforts to see children succeed. For children to create, innovate, and care for the future of our community, we must be intentional.

With intentionality in mind, I'm particularly hesitant to assert the idea that building a YMCA youth camp in Mineral would benefit children. The reason for my hesitancy stems from the fact that YMCA is an organization that promotes ideals that are highly contentious and problematic.

For example, according to the organization's website, they are focused on "how to undo racism and become "anti-racists" at an individual, organizational, and societal level. We seek to more effectively lead as an anti-racist, multi-cultural organization" [1] While this sounds like a cause worth supporting, we know that such initiatives are spearheaded by a philosophy that is worrisome at best and damaging at worst. A philosophy that is framed by the popular Critical Race Theory. Parents and teachers from different points of view agree that children should not be taught this theory as if it were fact.

Moreover, the YMCA, as an organization, promotes LGBTQ affirmation and education, claiming that they "affirm the LGBTQ+ community with pride." [2] Again, this sounds positive. But unfortunately, taking a definitive stance on this issue cultivates an environment that results in being unwelcoming and hostile for those who do not hold the same position. And plainly, an organization – that bears the name of Christ – should not be teaching children about sexual or gender identity.

We should strive to be a community that genuinely educates – not indoctrinates – our children. It is evident that the YMCA is an organization that promotes ideals that are undoubtedly controversial. Beliefs that I believe are harmful to children. I, therefore, contend that building a YMCA camp on the grounds of Mineral would not be beneficial for the children of Lewis County.

Vance Voetberg,

Chehalis

References:

- [1] “Unlearning Systemic Racism - YMCA.” Accessed November 4, 2022. <https://www.ymca.org/sites/national/files/2021-06/anti-racism-personal-learning-resources.pdf>.
- [2] “Affirming LGBTQ+ Communities with Pride.” *YMCA of the USA*. Accessed November 4, 2022. <https://www.ymca.org/advancing-equity-all/affirming-lgbtq-communities-pride>.