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By Mollie Hurt at 11:57 am, Mar 26, 2024

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Purpose of checklist:

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants:

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. **You may use “not applicable” or “does not apply” only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown.** You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

The checklist questions apply to **all parts of your proposal**, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

Instructions for Lead Agencies:

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B plus the Supplemental Sheet for Nonproject Actions (Part D). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in "Part B - Environmental Elements" – that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

A. Background

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Riverside

2. Name of applicant:

Merrlawski Investments, LLC

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Merrlawski Investments, LLC
Attn: Chris Merritt
209 Crescent Beach Dr.
Packwood, WA 98361
(360) 870-2561

4. Date checklist prepared:

March 15, 2024

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Lewis County, WA

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

It is anticipated the project will be completed in one phase with substantial completion by spring 2025. Timing of individual lot development is currently unknown.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

None at this time

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

Geotechnical hazard evaluation (slopes, erosion), channel migration zone report, critical aquifer recharge area report (CARA), cultural resource assessment, critical areas report

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

Buidling permit application for proposed single-family residence on future Lot 9.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

Preliminary Plat, Construction Permits (stormwater, grading), Group B Public Water System, Final Plat

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.

Subdivide 12.8-acre parcel into 9 single-family residential lots with associated private roadway, utilities, and storm drainage improvements.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you

are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

107 Riverside Dr., Packwood, WA 98361
SE ¼ of NE ¼ of Section 10, Township 13N, Range 9E, W.M.
Parcel Number 035067002003

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

a. General description of the site:

The site is flat but generally slopes down to the southeast towards the Cowlitz River.

(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other _____

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

Approximately 38% (embankment slope along Cannon Rd.)

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

Sandy Loam per septic soil logs. No anticipated long-term commercial agriculture significance.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

None per the geotechnical evaluation and review of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources online Washington Geologic Information Portal.

e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

Approximately 1,900 cubic yards of grading will be required to construct the proposed private roadway and utility improvements over an area of approximately 35,000 square-feet (generally the proposed roadway easement area). Any fill material needed will be obtained from on-site and approved off-site sources (off-site source unknown at this time).

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

Erosion can occur during construction of the roadway, utilities, and individual lot development improvements.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

It is anticipated that approximately 10% of the gross parcel area will be covered with impervious surfaces (e.g. private roadway, roofs, driveways, walkways, patios).

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

An erosion and sedimentation control plan and Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared meeting Lewis County requirements and Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented during and after construction to prevent and control erosion. These may include, but are not limited to, silt fencing, temporary construction entrance,

mulching, preserving natural vegetation, temporary and permanent seeding, plastic covering of stockpiles, and dust control.

2. Air

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

Emissions from typical construction equipment and dust during construction; emissions from vehicles after the project is completed. Quantities are unknown.

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

None based on multiple site visits by consultants and owner.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

Short term: Construction vehicles will meet any emission standards that may be required and construction hours will be limited to county approved hours.

Long term: None.

3. Water

- a. Surface Water:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

Yes. The Cowlitz River is located just off the southeast side of the subject parcel. A small on-site wetland is located along the northeasterly property line as mapped by Land Services Northwest (see Critical Areas and Shoreline Assessment Report, dated November 13, 2023).

- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Development of Lot 3 may occur within 200-feet of the on-site wetland but any improvements will occur outside of the wetland buffer and associated construction setback.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

None

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

No

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

Yes, the easterly portion of the parcel is located in Zone A4 (100-year floodplain per FEMA FIRM 5301020360B, dated December 15, 1981).

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

No

- b. Ground:

- 1) Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Yes, groundwater from an onsite Group B public water system (well has recently been drilled) will be withdrawn to provide water to the project. Quantities are unknown, but the maximum withdrawal will be limited to less than 5,000 gallons per day, per WSDOE requirements. Water will not be directly discharged to groundwater.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

Septic systems are proposed on each lot they and will meet Lewis County and Washington State requirements. Per the Hydrogeologic Assessment prepared by Insight Geologic, dated September 22, 2023, "the proposed project does not appear to present potential adverse effects to the regional groundwater quality or quantity in the area from nitrate contributions". Based on the single-family residential nature of this project, no other waste material is anticipated.

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

Stormwater runoff from the proposed private roadway is proposed to be dispersed and infiltrated over vegetated areas adjacent to the roadway.

It is anticipated that stormwater runoff from the future individual lot driveways will be sheet flow dispersed over adjacent vegetation and stormwater runoff from the future roof areas will be routed to individual lot downspout infiltration trenches and/or sheet flow dispersed over adjacent vegetation.

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.
Not likely.

- 3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.
No.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

Stormwater improvements will meet Lewis County requirements and it is anticipated that newly created stormwater runoff will be fully contained on-site. Any existing natural drainage patterns will remain as-is.

4. Plants

- a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

deciduous tree: red alder, big leaf maple, cottonwood

evergreen tree: douglas fir

- shrubs
- grass
- pasture
- crop or grain
- Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.
- wet soil plants: Sitka Willow, Pacific Crab, Salmonberry, Slough Sedge
- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- other types of vegetation

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Pasture grass and scotch broom will be removed as needed to construct the proposed private roadway and utility improvements. Vegetation to be removed in the proposed development areas on the individual residential lots consists of grass and Scotch Broom. Scotch broom will also be mechanically removed across the entire parcel.

c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

None known per site visit and review of the Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) website and associated Data Explorer.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

Approximately 2.67-acres of proposed Lot 3 will be a community open space easement area where native vegetation retention will be encouraged. Approximately 1.78-acres of this open space area is within a Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) "Forestry Riparian Easement", generally encompassing the 150-ft stream buffer area adjacent to the Cowlitz River, which requires this area to remain forested.

e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

The site and surrounding areas contain Scotch Broom. All Scotch Broom located on the parcel will be mechanically removed during site development.

5. Animals

a. List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Hawk, eagle, songbirds, vulture, deer, elk, coyote, skunk, racoon, squirrel, chipmunk, mole, mice, shrew, vole, bat

Examples include:

- birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
- mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: coyote, skunk, racoon, squirrel, chipmunk, mole, mice, shrew, vole, bat
- fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other _____

b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

None known; however, Northern Spotted Owls are known to be within the outlying forested areas.

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

The western portion of the United States, including the subject area, is located in the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds per the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

Maintain DNR Forestry Riparian Easement area. No development will occur within any critical areas or their associated buffers.

e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

None of the invasive animal species listed on the Washington Invasive Species Council website have been observed on or near the site.

6. Energy and natural resources

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Electricity will be used for heating and general electrical needs. Homeowner's may elect to have alternative energy sources, such as solar, installed at the time of house construction.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties?

If so, generally describe.

Not likely due to building height restrictions and proximity/separation of proposed homes to existing homes.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal?

List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

Unknown at this time; however, the proposed homes will be required to meet Washington State Energy Code requirements in effect at the time of building permit application.

7. Environmental health

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

Not anticipated based on the proposal for a single-family residential subdivision.

1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

None known.

2) Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.

None known.

3) Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.

None anticipated.

4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None anticipated.

5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

None

b. Noise

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

Typical noises from adjacent urban residential areas (automobile traffic, pets). The existing noise levels are unknown but are expected to be greater generally from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day of the week.

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

Short-term: Construction equipment noise during county approved construction hours

Long-term: Noises typical to an urban single-family residential neighborhood

- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

Short-term: Construction hours will be limited to county approved hours.

Long-term: Fencing and landscaping may be installed around the lots at the time of individual lot development which would help to block and/or absorb some noise from the proposed subdivision and adjacent areas.

8. Land and shoreline Use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.

The site is currently undeveloped and adjacent uses are developed and undeveloped residential. It is not anticipated that this proposal will negatively affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent parcels.

- b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?

Yes. The subject parcel was previously part of a larger parcel that was used as farmland from approximately the 1960's to the early 1990's. The old on-site farmland area will be converted to single-family residential use. No existing forestland will be converted to another use.

- 1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how:

No

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

None

- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

N/A

- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

RRC-R1, Rural Residential Centers

- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

No assigned designation. The general Packwood area is labeled as "Rural Character" with more intense development in the 2021 Lewis County Comprehensive Plan.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

Rural

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

Yes. The Cowlitz River is located to the southeast of the parcel.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

Approximately 23 people; however, it is anticipated that the majority will be part-time residents for vacation home use.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

None

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

N/A

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

The project will be reviewed by Lewis County and various State agencies for conformance with the current regulations and long range plans. The project is designed to meet current Lewis County code and Shoreline Master Program requirements including, but not limited to, minimum setbacks to structures, maximum building heights, any maximum building and hard surface lot coverages, environmental regulations, and shoreline access.

m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

The existing Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) "Forestry Riparian Easement" located adjacent to the Cowlitz River will be maintained. This easement crosses the adjacent parcel to the north and provides for a contiguous forested easement area.

9. Housing

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

9 middle income houses

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

None

10. Aesthetics

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

A maximum 35-foot building height is allowed per Lewis County code. At this time, it is not known what the exterior building colors, siding types, or roof materials will be or the size, shape, and locations of doors and windows, etc.

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

None anticipated due to building height restrictions and locations of proposed homes relative to existing homes.

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

None.

11. Light and glare

a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

While unknown at this time, typical house lighting (e.g. porch and/or driveway lights) from dusk to dawn is anticipated.

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

Not likely.

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

None.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

None.

12. Recreation

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

Skate Creek Park and Packwood Park are both located approximately 2.7 miles from the subject parcel.

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

No

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

Walking trails and a picnic area will be provided within the proposed community open space easement area.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers located on or near the site? If so, specifically describe.

None listed per the Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation website (WISAARD database).

b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.

None known on the subject site; however, the Packwood area was occupied by the Taidnapam (Upper Cowlitz) tribe (related to both the Cowlitz tribe and tribes of the Yakima Nation). A

Cultural Resource Assessment has been prepared by Antiquity Consulting, dated November 29, 2023.

- c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.

Review of the WISAARD database. The WISAARD Predictive Model indicates a very high risk for encountering archaeological items. A Cultural Resource Assessment has been prepared by Antiquity Consulting, dated November 29, 2023.

- d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.

None at this time. If any cultural resources are uncovered during site development, all work will stop immediately in compliance with RCW 27.53. An Inadvertent Discovery Protocol (IDP) has been included in the Cultural Resource Assessment prepared by Antiquity Consulting, dated November 29, 2023.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

The project site will have access from Riverside Dr., a public roadway.

- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

No. The nearest public transportation is located in Morton.

- c. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

Yes, a new private roadway is proposed to serve the proposed lots. Improvements to existing roads are not proposed.

- d. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

Some residents may use the nearby Packwood Airport. There is no water or rail transportation located in the area.

- e. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

Approximately 28 (recreational homes) to 86 (single family homes) average daily trips (ADT) per The Institute of Transportation Engineer's Trip Generation, 10th Edition. Peak volumes for residential neighborhoods are typically from 4-6 p.m.; however, the peak volume time for this project may vary as a large portion of the homes may be used as vacation homes. The volume of trucks is unknown but is expected to be those normally associated with providing goods and services typical to a residential area.

- f. Will the proposal interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

No

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

None.

15. Public services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.
No new public service facilities are proposed; however, the project will increase the need on existing public services including public transit, health care, schools, and police and fire protection.
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.
None. Any impact fees will be paid as required by Lewis County.

16. Utilities

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other _____
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.
Refuse (LeMay); Water (Group B Public Water System); Telephone/Internet/CATV (Lumen and/or Astound; Electricity (Lewis County PUD); on-site septic systems, on-site Group B public water system.

C. Signature

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: 

Name of signee Chris Merritt

Position and Agency/Organization Manager, Merllawksi Investments, LLC

Date Submitted: March 15, 2024