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Comments on Proposed Changes to Boone County Subdivision Regulations

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As a citizen of Boone County and owner of 180 acres who lives at the end of a ¾ mile long private drive, I make the following comments about the proposed changes to the Boone county subdivision regulations:

- 1) The changes to these regulations are not minor changes by any stretch of the imagination. The changes will have a major negative impact on future development and therefore, also negatively impact the value of Boone county land. I own land for several reasons. One of those reasons is because Boone County land is a good long term investment and can provide significant retirement income. I'm sure many other landowners are also counting on the value of their land increasing. Seems to me that changes that will significantly affect land values need an adequate period of public comment and Boone county citizens need to be made aware of these changes. I would venture to guess that most citizens do not have a clue such changes are in the works. A succinct summary of the changes needs to be developed and provided to the media. The summary posted online is woefully inadequate.
- 2) I am a fan of something called structured decision making and I teach it in classes at MU. One of the first and most important principles is that before any policy decisions are made, the reasons for the decision should carefully thought through and be explicitly stated. The statement of purpose in the document describes what the regulations will do but not why the changes were made. I gather from other comments online that the primary reason these changes are being made is because a few people who own land on private roads are complaining to the County Commissioners and as a result the Commission wants to eliminate private roads. If this is indeed the case, then these changes are a radical solution to what many of us who live on private roads don't see as a problem. This problem could be easily solved by requiring a road and utility easement on all private roads in the future. It seems obvious that if one shares a private drive with others that a road and utility easement should be in place. I can access my property from either my ¾ mile private drive from the east off Locust Grove Church Rd or from a > 1 mile private drive on the west side off Graham Rd. Both drives have others who share the drive and both have road and utility easements which explicitly state how the road will be managed and who will pay for maintenance. We have lived here now for 10 years with absolutely no problem with regard to the road. I would venture to guess that there are many others who share this same experience. The Commission will, for the most part, never hear from those who have had no problems. There are many good reasons to have zoning regulations in place. Perhaps the Commission should take a step back and really think about what they would like to achieve with these regulations rather than to make radical changes to these regulations in response to a few complaints. A shared vision (public, Commission) for

what we want Boone County to look like in the future should be developed. Once that vision is in place then subdivision regulations can be put in place that would implement that vision.

- 3) It seems obvious from the other comments posted online that the Planning and Zoning Commissioners do not even fully understand all the ramifications of these proposed changes. I would venture to guess that staff do not either. I spent my career being involved in the regulatory process of a state agency. One lesson I learned is that major changes to regulations almost always have unintended consequences unless they are very carefully thought through. I would suggest that these changes have not yet been adequately thought through.
- 4) Finally, for the reasons stated above, I believe any changes to the current zoning regulations are, at this point, premature. I suggest that Commission take a step back and really think about what they are trying to achieve with changes to subdivision regulations. They should also involve Boone county citizens in that process.