From:	Scott Phillips
To:	Fritz Haemmerle; Don Keirn; Rick Davis; Beth Robrahn; planning; Carol Brown; Martha Burke
Cc:	Scott Phillips
Subject:	QUIGLEY CANYON proposed annexation
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Thursday, August 25th, 2011
Sent via Email.

Dear Planning Director Beth Robrahn, Mayor Rick Davis, and Hailey City Council Members:

This letter concerns Quigley Green LLC's latest petition to yet again appear before the Hailey City Council with a request for annexation of it's Quigley Canyon property into the City. Please incorporate this letter into the official public record on this matter. Dozens of Hailey citizens spoke up strongly against annexation in the summer of 2009. We are doing so again. The chronic issues remain the same. Some have been further exacerbated by the severe economic downturn. I will briefly restate the issues for purposes of clarity.

1. **TRAFFIC. Current high traffic levels are already negatively impacting the quality of life in East Hailey residential neighborhoods. With 444 new homes proposed at build out and a minimum of two cars per new home one could expect approximately a <u>doubling</u> of existing traffic. At a minimum there would be 800 to 1000 more vehicles a day. The heavy machinery, trucks, and associated construction traffic rumbling and roaring thru existing East Hailey residential neighborhoods for a decade or more of construction would be unbearable and unconscionable. " Round -a -bouts" or other simplistic band aids will simply NOT ameliorate the traffic onslaught in any effective or meaningful way.**

2. **WATER. PhD hydrologist Wendy Pabich of Hailey exhaustively documented for city leaders in 2009 the fact that the water is simply not there for a massive residential development of 444 homes. The aquifer would be severely depleted. Please review all her professional and extensive documentation in your files that she exhaustively prepared for your consideration two years ago.**

3. **The ECONOMY. As we are all keenly and unfortunately aware both the national and local economy has taken a sharp nosedive and continues to plunge downward into uncharted waters. The likelihood for economic recovery is completely unknown, but the prognosticators paint a dire picture. The robust "boom" economy previously experienced in the Wood River Valley may never reappear. Home foreclosures in the valley are alarmingly up. Many businesses unfortunately have closed their doors. Expensive properties are selling for less than 50% of their previous hyper- inflated values. Office buildings sit vacant. The attractive new two story office building completed in 2009 on the prime corner of River and Pine Streets in downtown Hailey sadly sits unoccupied with no business tenants! Under the current dark and foreboding economic cloud it is folly for responsible civic leaders to even begin to think about a massive new residential annexation wiping out another irreplaceable side canyon of prime agricultural land.**

4. RECENT SAD HISTORY of SWEETWATER and CUTTER ANNEXATIONS into Hailey city.
These two annexations have caused profound, unnecessary, and expensive problems --- putting it mildly. On Aug 17th the front page article in the *Express* was about the Old Cutters developer tipping over and going bankrupt. No big surprise there! When the expensive legal actions are complete Hailey City and we the taxpayers may not see any of that $829,000 annexation fee payment still owed the City by the Campbells. The Sweetwater annexation was similarly rife with expensive and counterproductive legal actions costing the City and taxpayers tons of money. What have we learned from these two recent unmitigated disasters? The take home message is clear - - - - - -NO NEW ANNEXATIONS can be tolerated.

4. **Hailey City currently has vastly more on it's UPKEEP and MAINTENANCE PLATE than it can possibly deal with. This includes city streets, sidewalks, snow removal, tree management, and neighborhood parks. City employees have recently had to be cut back. The City budget is down and may have to become leaner still. (This was clearly documented in the *Express* article of 8/24 page A7) It is beyond ludicrous to even contemplate taking on a mammoth new annexation project. The City must live *within* its financial and managerial means. Anything less will be roundly condemned by appropriately upset Hailey citizens and taxpayers.**

5. **INFILL LOTS. Back in 2009 there were 800 to 900 vacant infill lots within Hailey City boundaries. (I called and verified this with the City) I am sure the**

number is much the same now. Even if it were 500 infill lots that is a huge number that can and should be built upon in a logical, sequential fashion in coming years. It's not like a potential purchaser of a desirable lot can't find a suitable one within the City limits right now. Let's concentrate on the orderly and prudent development of readily available existing lots already served by City sewer, water, roads, police, fire, and infrastructure before we go tearing up a prime side canyon unnecessarily.

6. **FUTURE LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES and SMART GROWTH for HAILEY CITY.**

There are some major financial questions surrounding the new replacement airport, further compounded by the front page *Express* article Wed. 8/24. Nonetheless, if the airport issues get resolved the idea (and it is a good one) is for the City to logically grow to the south on the vacated airport land. Some good thinking and land use planning is already underway in this regard. It makes all kinds of common sense for the City to expand near its current downtown CORE with the airport land. Even if the vacated airport land doesn't happen the City should encourage development close to the core and discourage sprawl up side canyons.

What is needed now and in the immediate future years is *fiscal restraint, sound judgment, and absolutely no new major annexations with all their attendant social, financial and environmental impacts*!

Right after the last City council election in Nov. 2009 PhD Jima Rice of Ketchum wrote an article in the *Weekly* paper entitled "My wish list for the new City Councils." It was astute and I saved the 11/04/09 issue. Quoted below is Jima's excellent logic and reasoning which bears repeating.

"Fantasizing a future of constantly wiser government, here's my partial wish list for actions from the newly constituted City Councils.
A moratorium on annexations. Annexations bring short –term income to cities, but are economically challenging in the long run. They put a monetary burden on city services (ambulance, police, fire, and street maintenance) that is far larger over time than the developer's initial payment to the city.

Annexations substantially expand a city's footprint at a time when, nationwide, forward thinking planners are calling for city INFILL. Infill maintains

the current footprint, and within it, adds homes and businesses that pay taxes and create dynamic, walkable communities. Thus, no new roads, gas consumption, or buses are needed for parents to get their children to school or get themselves to work. Infill also protects our aquifer from continued depletion necessitated by watering landscapes and golf courses; it leaves open space for wildlife.

I'm looking for city councils that will say: "Let's go for the triple bottom line: protect the environment, budget for the city's (not the developer's) economic interests, and build a vibrant, healthy, cohesive community that our children will enjoy and want to return to."

A rousing "Amen" to Jima's compelling logic.

In summary, please do the right thing for the city, the taxpayers, and the future well-being of our community and DENY the annexation request for Quigley Canyon. *The City Council owes everything to the citizens and taxpayers and nothing to a prospective developer*. Annexation makes *zero environmental, financial, or social sense*. The deleterious and irreversible major negative impacts of an ill-advised annexation cannot be overstated. Quigley Canyon is properly in the jurisdiction of Blaine County and this is exactly where it should wisely stay.

As a common sense citizen and frustrated taxpayer I have every reasonable expectation you will deny Quigley annexation quickly following the August 29th public meeting based on logic, common sense, and an expected outpouring of public opposition. Like all of us I want to see the wonderful City of Hailey mature gracefully and elegantly long-term into the well thought out, vibrant, and pleasant community of the future that we all know is eminently possible.

It can certainly be trying serving on the Hailey City Council. I sincerely *commend you* for your considerable time, energy, and service to our community. Thank you in advance for reading what I have put together.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott H. Phillips
(Hailey Resident for 17 years)