

January 9, 2012

City of Sedro-Woolley Planning Department
325 Metcalf Street
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284



RE: Response to Hearing Examiner Questions after Reconsideration Request CUP-1-11

The Hearing Examiner has requested additional information relative to the operation and occupancy of A1 Storage since its Conditional Use Permit was modified to allow the operation of as many as 130 individual storage units. After the modification was granted Mr. Swett increased the number of indoor heated storage units to 68 and successfully rented these units. Additional units that he intended to rent were to be unheated spaces. With the economic downturn, Mr. Swett found no demand for unheated spaces and as is the case with many small businesses throughout the county, in these difficult times had been unable to realize his plan to increase the number of units on the property to the full 130 that were approved by the City.

It is important to remember that the current request is a modification of the approved CUP that would, today, allow 130 individual storage units and all of the associated impacts to the neighborhood. We understand that the neighbors perceptions of the impacts to the neighborhood are based on the number of storage units that were operating prior to the conversion to gardening units. However, the fact remains that the City of Sedro-Woolley approved a CUP for 130 units with all associated impacts and that the current modification must be reviewed against what was approved. That said we offer the following answers to the Examiner's specific questions.

Question 1. What has the average occupancy rate been since 2005? It would be helpful if an average for each full year could be provided, as well as indicating what the least and most units rented at one time have been for those periods.

Since 2005, the vast majority of the time (in excess of 95%) all 68 units have been rented. The most units that have been vacant during that time period are occasionally one or two rooms.

Question 2. Similarly, what has been the average length of time that individual units have been rented and what have been the lows and highs?

There is no real average length of time. Peoples storage needs are as varied as people are in general. One of the units has been rented to a tenant for 10+ years (that individual was the second tenant the business ever had and is still there today) other renters have rented for as little as six months. Mr. Swett is unaware of any tenant that has rented space for less than six months.

Question 3. Please provide a brief description of a typical mix of tenants the facility has had since 2005. In other words, have they been mostly households storing extra belongings; small businesses storing inventory, etc.

While there have been a mix of tenants using the storage for a variety of reasons, because they are heated indoor units, the primary renters are for household items. The rooms are 10' x 10' rooms and 10' x 12'. People rent the spaces to store extra items; to store seasonal items; while they are remodeling or as a result of some kind of natural disaster; while they are having a new home built; or a variety of other reasons. While tenants may discuss their reasons for renting the space with Mr. Swett, he respects their privacy and does not micro-monitor what they store, why they store it, why they visit their units, or how often they visit.

The applicant appreciates the Examiner's review and analysis of the proposal and hope that the information provided allows for the requested modification to be approved.