Debbie,
I went on the website and had a problem understanding and finding the names and emails of the planning commission. Could I bother you to forward the letter below to all of the names on the commission. Thank you.
Claudia Haunreiter

To the members of the planning commission,

I would first like to thank you for all the time that you are spending with great thought in regards to regulations for Tent City. The first priority is to keep our neighbors and the residents of Tent City safe. The best way to handle that is to have reasonable regulations allowing the churches to do what they are intended to do and to have the back ground checks needed to insure that the criminal element does not enter the encampments. There will never be a 100% way to keep our community completely safe. We all have our responsibility to keep our homes and our children safe and to do that is to be well educated about homeless encampments and dangers that face us every day.

I do not handle public speaking very well so many of the thoughts I had were over whelmed by the emotion I felt towards some of the comments during the public comments. I would also like to interject something in regards to the police situation and the time they spent handling situations at Tent City. If we have such a low crime rate as officer Ellredge stated then I would surmise that while Tent City was in our town for three months our officers were busy and earning their money?????? The question then would be: Did the time they spend dealing with the problems with in Tent City take away from their daily work or lack of????? One concerned mother wanted to know of the crime that was possibly committed in our city by the residents of Tent City like shop lifting and the like. I would assume that since we had heard nothing it didn't happen. The residents are not here to hurt us, they are busy trying to survive and work to the best of their ability. We have to
keep in mind that many people have unfounded fear of the residents and they gather to discuss the situation and work themselves into a frenzy.

The irony in the comments of the last three residents of our community is that of stereotyping and thinking that because the residents of Tent City are "different" than the rest of us they are an automatic danger to our children. These same ethnic individuals have at some time been stereotyped and yet they are doing the same thing to people they know very little about. I am stereotyped on a daily basis because of my being a fat person....obviously I am lazy and eat all day, right?

As one young woman stated a permanent place would be ideal but listening to her (when I could understand her) only exposed her true feelings...find a permanent place for them but not in Sammamish and not visible. Her wish for a one mile radius around any school told her true feelings. There are good (intentioned) people out there that are more than willing to do their part for charity but as long as the needy and homeless is not seen. Too many residents wish to keep Sammamish pristine and for all the wrong reasons. It is like the home owners that won't use their fire place so that when they go to sell it will look like it has never been used.....more value more money. We have a large snob environment in this town more interested in the awards and being in the Forbes best places to live kind of mind set then what we should be doing to help people.

We have crime in our city that is a fact. We have even had near abductions of children in our community and as our population grows so will the crime. Tent City cannot be judged by those who have fear that is out of proportion. The churches will do all that they can to keep our community safe but please to not fall victim to the fears of a few to cause you to define regulations that disallow what we should be doing for these unfortunate people. Whether they are in the encampment for one month, six months or for several years it is still their hope to improve their life and survive what ever life situation was dealt to them. Many people have come close to losing their homes that never thought it could happen to them. Concerns over mental health.....well, how many people have mental health issues you don't know about that live in your own neighborhood. The fear about the homeless is the same fear people have about the homosexuals.

If you listened to the positive comments last night you had to also realize
that no one in that room wants to put our community in danger. Supporting homeless encampments to revisit our community does not mean that those supporters are not well aware of the problems but they are also more knowledgeable about the true concerns and not making decisions on emotion and fear.

I got a sense that you are very open to the suggestions of the people that spoke last night, ones with knowledge and care about the homeless. As a resident of this community for over 30 years I thank all of you for taking on this task and trust that you will not be swayed by unfounded fears.

The next challenge will be our very own city council as one has already voiced his concern over his property values.

Thank you for listening.

Respectfully,
Claudia Haunreiter