

## Commissioners

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**From:** Philip Maechling <maechling@bigsky.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2014 11:47 AM  
**To:** Commissioners  
**Subject:** Merging Environmental Health and Planning Departments

Dear Commissioners,

I just saw on your agenda that you will consider merging Environmental Health and Planning. For a number of reasons, this is not a good idea:

These responsibilities are not parallel, and they are subject to different codes and standards by state statutes. Food safety has nothing to do with subdivisions, or floodplain management.

This can create unnecessary conflicts of interest, and put the county at risk with permits and discretionary approvals that do not even appear to have been objectively considered, since review by Planning staff and by Environmental Health are considered in most counties as independent of each other because they use different criteria. Priorities will be confused when they need to be clear.

I say this with more than 20 years experience as a managing planner in Missoula County and the City of Missoula.

Considering ideas opens dialogues. Please consider this merger, and reject it as risky and irresponsible to the citizens of Ravalli County.

Thank you,  
Philip

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