Reviewer's report

Title: Overexpression of GOLPH3 is associated with poor prognosis and clinical progression in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma

Version: 2 Date: 20 May 2014

Reviewer: Gregory Lesinski

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript by Zhang et al. is well written and describes a series of studies using patient-derived material to explore the relationship between GOLPH3 expression and prognosis in pancreatic cancer. The authors provide data suggesting there is a correlation between GOLPH3 expression being tied to prognosis in this disease. Although this manuscript appears to be novel there are a number of concerns that need addressed before the data can be interpreted with confidence.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. It is unclear why the cutoff values of SI> or = 6 were chosen to stratify patients for Kaplan meier analysis. Would the data be different if the median SI value was chosen? As it stands, the groups are unevenly distributed and unclear whether the optimal cutoff value chosen is biologically relevant in some way. This cutoff value is the foundation of much of the paper, which could drastically affect conclusions if it does not hold true at other SI values.

2. For samples where non cancer adjacent lesions were obtained, what was the degree of fibrosis/stromal desmoplasia in these areas. This could greatly affect interpretation of the data.

3. Page 5, methods, please specify type of chemotherapy used in the postoperative setting.

Minor compulsory revisions.

4. It is unclear what is responsible for over-expression of GOLPH3 in pancreas cancer. This information should be stated as part of the introduction and/or discussion. Also, if this is a protein expressed at some level in normal tissues, how truly valid as an anticancer target will this be?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.
Declaration of competing interests:

I served as a consultant for Ono Pharmaceuticals, Inc in 2013, which is not related to this work.