

Planning Commission Meeting  
May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010

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Good Evening,

I want to make a few comments after March 24<sup>th</sup> Public presentation and before the active discussion of the SMP draft tonight.

Until the public presentation on March 24<sup>th</sup>, we as citizens have found it difficult to participate in the Bellevue shoreline regulation process. Our initial encounter a year ago this month at the City's Open House opened our eyes that we were not alerted when the CAO shoreline regulations were passed in 2006.

Our frustration with the SMP creation process has been furthered by the failure, up front, to provide goals, objectives, and policies. Other municipalities did do this.

We have listened patiently through the fall of last year as a series of experts provided testimony which, when questioned, failed to "*connect the dots*" in establishing a justifiable need or a rational, or comprehensive set of solutions. There should have been take away points provided as to applicability to the City of Bellevue lakes.

We are concerned that the outcome of the SMP will be a purely aesthetic program; funded at our expense; allowing a return to business as usual - where other needed elements are sidestepped, buried, diverted or averted. We are all (Staff, Planning Commission members, Council members and homeowners) giving our most valuable asset of time in developing Bellevue's Shoreline Master Program. We the residents want this time to have meaningful, measurable benefits to our lakes and protect the individuals who live on Bellevue's shorelines.

We were encouraged by the opportunity to provide an independent perspective on March 24<sup>th</sup>. (We thank the City for that opportunity.) At that meeting some 250 of our neighbors heard us express their concerns. Our points included the following:

- Impacts to fish in our waters go far beyond our shorelines. Alteration and damage to our streams and rivers, upland pollution, highway drainage, threats at sea and in between, and some downright dumb actions have led to today's conditions.

- A systematic, knowledgeable approach has not been undertaken, however. Dr. Gil Pauley presented an alternative set of scientific information that somehow has been stepped over in the SMP process to date. Indeed, Prof. Pauley found serious shortcomings in what has been presented as “*the best science*”. Not enough questions are being asked of the so called experts nor are opposing viewpoints discussed. Meaningful details are being left out and we don’t understand why. Just last week at Mercer Island’s Planning Commission’s meeting a representative from DOE discussed her paper on docks and their effects. In the question and answer period afterward she admitted that her study was only done on large marina and commercial docks. She did not study lake environments with small docks and their effects. Such detail counts if we are going to listen to experts when we are about to set policy for Bellevue’s Shorelines.
- Exemplary of one of the areas of misinformation, our own efforts have shown statements of “*extensive shoreline bulkheading*” to be inaccurate and misleading. And, more serious, a lack of understanding of the dynamics of our lake systems would have us make changes to our property that would provide very little benefit, if any at all.
- Next, with the help of a professional planning consultant, we explored what would transpire with a series of improvements to properties under today’s regulations. We were prompted to do this because we’ve encountered numerous property owners who report an extraordinarily burdensome permit process fraught with uncertainty, lack of consistency, huge expense, and even negative impacts on our lakes.
- Finally, as we’ve done numerous times over the last year, we provided independent legal advice from an attorney who has successfully questioned and challenged a process that boldly ignores personal property rights. He pointed out the actual requirements and exemptions within state codes and regulations which seem to evade consideration.

We’ve been told our issues and concerns have been heard and addressed. With the release of the City’s draft regulations, we’ll continue to provide the litmus tests of reality, balance, reasonableness, and justice. We hope the Commission’s members will employ these tests as well.