

ShoreScore Update

Nov. 23, 2012



Planning Commission Wrapping Up SMP

The Commission's Nov. 14th meeting last week was well attended by shoreline property owners. WSSA's board thanks those who were able to attend.

At the meeting, several members of WSSA's board and our attorney spoke to issues of concern; including -

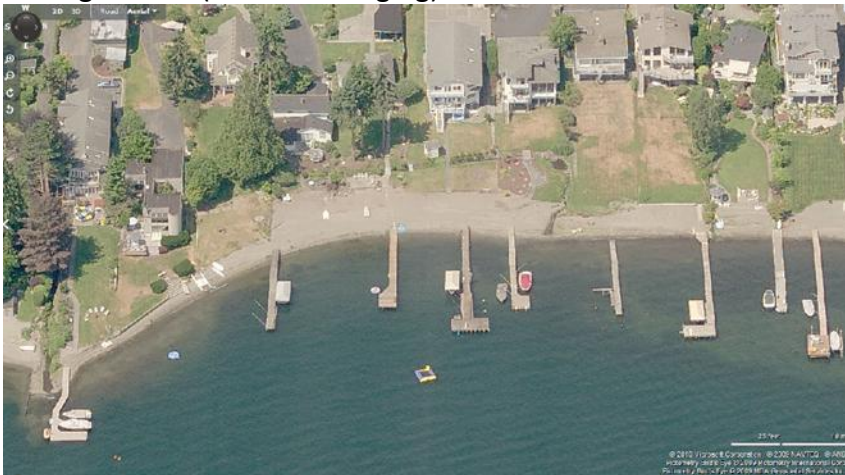
- What will trigger the regulations?
- What's required in the setback?
- Docks and Boathouse issues
- Flood hazard/flood plain issues
- Can you use the shore?
- Shoreline Stabilization (bulkheads)

The Commission discussed these topics, making decisions on some but not on others. Following is a summary. We encourage you to dig into the detail by reviewing this week's **staff report** by [Clicking Here](#) (for their online material). To see **WSSA's input**, [Click Here](#).

What will be affected? Any new residential development which includes expansion projects and development of vacant land and teardowns.

Flood Hazard Areas – Current Bellevue regulations, adopted in 2007, declare many Lake Sammamish and all properties fronting Phantom Lake as flood hazard critical areas. This is because the floodplain extends inland beyond the shoreline setback. WSSA's attorney informs us that staffs' interpretation of current regulations precludes home expansion or new construction within the floodplain, which is more restrictive than Redmond, Sammamish, and FEMA. We've asked that the City Council and affected property owners be alerted, and more important, that these harsh regulations be changed.

Structure Setback – The shoreline structure setback mark in the draft SMP has been set at 25 ft. from the high water (at WSSA's urging). Now there's debate on what can occur within that area.



- What percentage has to be planted, and with what type of plants?
- What else will be allowed there?
- How much can be impervious surface?

This topic is going to be discussed further next Wednesday, Nov. 28th.

Staff, as shown in the online material, recommends Mercer Island's restriction that only 10% of the width of shoreline can be impervious. This would restrict a 50 ft. front lot to only a 5 ft. walkway down to the shore. Mercer Island allows 30% of the next 25 ft. from shore to be impervious which includes the house. WSSA's position is that this is unreasonably restrictive and threatens to make existing shorefronts non-conforming; prohibiting typical residential use of the shore and access to it.

Use of the Shoreline - What would staff allow you to do near the shore? The term "structure" is at issue. City staff considers any man-made or man-placed items to be a structure, and that all structures are impervious, and these impervious things drain bad stuff directly to the lake. WSSA continues to request that a reasonable amount of area be available along the shoreline for our use. Yes, while a portion, such as half, could be vegetated, we've requested that certain items, such as barbeques and, for example, racks for kayaks, be permitted as well.



Docks and Boathouses – WSSA has recommended that the City defer to State and Federal agencies for permitting activity on dock characteristics such as length, area, number of lifts, and type of canopies. We expect the SMP will list certain values, but we're hopeful that deference to the Corps of Engineers and the State's Fish and Wildlife Dept. will be allowed. It should be noted we asked that over water boathouses be grandfathered. This request was rejected.

Shoreline Stabilization – This important issue was held over until next week's meeting. As currently written, the draft code reflects City staffs' efforts to have bulkheads removed in favor of rock revetments. If you review this week's Commission [letter](#), you'll note that we continue to apprise the Commission of our concerns given the conditions prevalent along our lake shores. Our shores are subjected to harsh conditions from wind, waves, wakes, and water (which is abnormally high). At next week's meeting we'll again impress this upon the Commission.

Please attend the Planning Commission meeting on Wed. Nov. 28th at 6:30PM in City Hall.

Wet Weather Warnings

On Lake Sammamish and Phantom Lake, water levels have risen dramatically this week given the rains. However, as we've explained before, there are other factors at play. On Phantom Lake, beavers have constructed a large dam. Should it break or breach, as happened recently in [Carnation](#), serious problems might occur downstream.

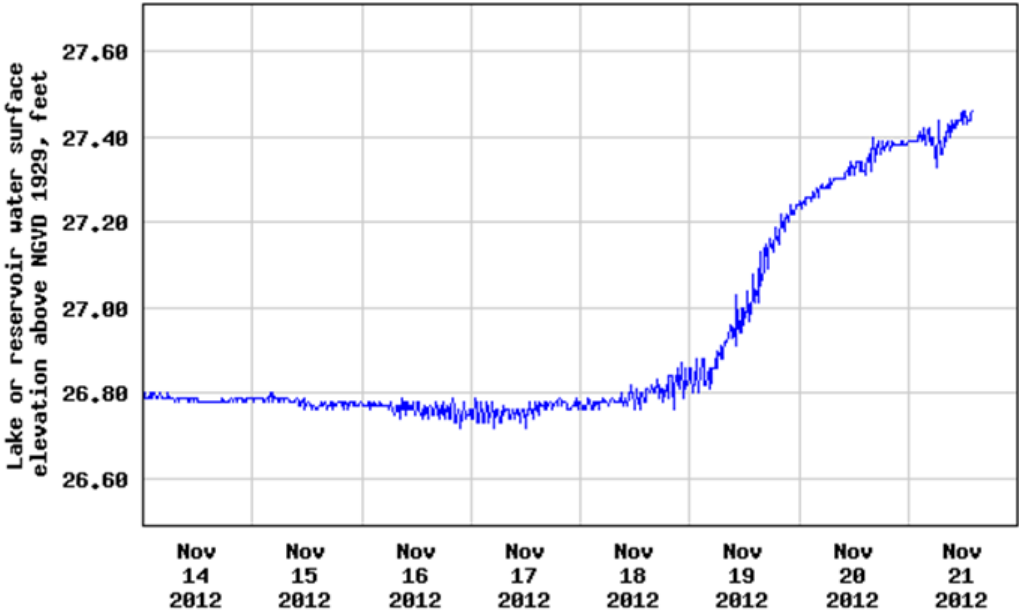


Phantom Lake Homeowner's Association president Brian Parks has alerted the City. Hopefully the City will recognize its role and responsibility with this recurring issue.

The County trimmed vegetation on both sides of the “Slough” at Marymoor last September and the preceding September. That had not occurred for nearly a decade. They also removed an illegal rock dam. These measures appear to have helped avoid high lake levels this week. However, there is significant concern that the sediment that has been accumulating over the last 20 years has not been removed. The County has approved a budget item for removal of this blockage, but until it is removed, shoreline resident should be concerned that we’ll continue to see extraordinary high lake levels.

The issue that we continue to warn the County of is the danger of a major storm – one that the accumulated debris will impact. Three or four days of rainfall, similar to Monday’s 2 inch soaker, would be dangerous, indeed! The graph below shows the lake’s reaction to Monday’s rainfall.

Change in Lake Sammamish Water Surface Elevation (Height) Week of Nov. 14-21



Meanwhile – please remove objects from the near shore. Things that float can and do cause blockages in the Slough. Those that don’t float become hazards as well.

Your Support!

As ever through this process, we need your support for our efforts. We are near the completion of “arguments” before the Planning Commission. This has taken an extensive and expensive effort. Please help us finish this leg of the race. Please contribute \$500, \$100, or what you can. Make checks payable to WSSA and send to P.O. Box 6773, Bellevue 98008