

## ShoreScore Update

September 2013<sup>1</sup>



## Candidates Forum

As they have done in prior years, Meydenbauer Bay Neighborhood Association (MBNA) will play host for a candidates' forum prior to the November election. WSSA urges all shoreline property owners to attend and learn directly from candidates their goals, their philosophy, and how they view shorelines.

**No other event, mailer, pamphlet, or news article can adequately give you insight on how these individuals will perform as elected officials. Know who you're voting for!**

MBNA Candidates Forum  
Overlake Golf & Country Club  
8000 NE 16<sup>th</sup> Ave., Medina  
7PM October 2<sup>nd</sup>

[Click here for directions](#)

**THANK YOU, MBNA, FOR SPONSORING THE FORUM!**

## Other News

### **SMP (Shoreline Management Program) Status – Where is the SMP and why is it taking so long?**

In January the Planning Commission completed a [draft of the major portions](#) of the SMP. It took until July, however, for staff to package it and deliver it to the City Council. Unfortunately, as WSSA's attorney advised the City, it was incomplete.

When the Council received the draft, it was quickly pointed out that key components were missing. Why? Because plans such as the SMP are legal documents and must be accompanied by other legal documents assuring there's no conflict with existing regulations. For example, shoreline property owners are currently regulated by the Critical Areas codes adopted in 2006. (Note: they shouldn't be). Language called "conforming amendments", assuring an appropriate transition from one to the other, needed to be developed.

The Council sent the draft SMP back to the Planning Commission to guide staff in finalizing the package. Unfortunately, the effort languished through the summer, but the Commission's new Chair, Diane Tebelius, has moved it forward. She has appointed a subcommittee to work on the remaining changes. These will be introduced later this month.

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<sup>1</sup> Prior issues of ShoreScore Updates are available online at [WSSA's homepage](#).

## **Lake Sammamish – What’s happening in and about abutting parks?**

**Willowmoor Project** – In August the County kicked off its project to alter the Sammamish River in the Marymoor Park area. The Willowmoor Project calls for re-meandering the river. To seek advice, the County has appointed a stakeholder advisory committee, or SAC, to develop alternatives to accomplish a series of goals; among them protection of lake water levels and lake out-flow. Members of the SAC range from lakeside property owners to environmental groups to business interests and municipal staff.

As observed by the consultant working with County staff, there’s a complex set of interests involved –

- Lake side property owners seek stable lake levels and protection from flooding.
- Dog owners who frequent Marymoor’s off-leash area want to protect their territory.
- Wildlife enthusiasts, such as Audubon Society members and bird watchers, seek expansion of “creature territory”.

More information on Willowmoor can be found at the [County website](#) and you can sign up for notices from the County.

**State Park** - As reported previously, improvements have been occurring at the State Park in Issaquah. Under current activity, there have been improvements to the boat launch facilities and you may have noticed announcements recently of the opening of a boardwalk along Issaquah Creek. Efforts to expand activity at the park are associated with a desire to increase its use and to cover/justify its cost of operation. The improvements mentioned above are only a start, and shoreline residents should expect there will be proposals for changes to further increase activity and to generate revenue.

WSSA recognizes the need for the park and that it functions effectively. However, a transition from a suburban-type use to a city-like park must be done with great care. Venues such as found at Marymoor Park, involving music and crowds would be disruptive as sound carries great distances across open lake water. Likewise, increased impervious surfaces would send stormwater directly to the lake and impact water levels and lake health.

As this ShoreScore was being prepared, we were surprised to learn of another effort that could impact the Park. Issaquah Press announced in an [article](#) that Lake Sammamish has received a special federal designation and funds are to be provided for educational programs on wildlife. A search of the [US Dept. of Fish and Wildlife](#) found this statement about the designation (which several other urban areas will also receive)

*Lake Sammamish Kokanee Salmon Partnership, Seattle. (The Urban Wildlife Initiative) will increase awareness, understanding and support of the Service, the Refuge System and conservation of aquatic ecosystems and native species at Lake Sammamish State Park and the Issaquah State Salmon Hatchery and elsewhere.*

WSSA will attempt to keep you informed on State Park issues, but encourages your awareness as well.

## **Phantom Lake - Handling a Rubik's Cube of dilemmas!**

**Wetlands Dilemma** - In case you've missed it, City staff declared this 64 acre man-made lake's shores to be wetlands. The question that arises is whether some shores have become wetlands due to high water levels controlled by others, not residents. If declared as wetlands, this will shift lakeshore property regulations from the SMP to the CAO (mentioned above). Rather than the 25 ft. setback now in the draft SMP, they would be more than 100 ft.



Certainly high lake waters have been the demise of long standing tree growth as shown here.

**Lake Management Dilemma** – Another major question facing Phantom property owners centers on care and maintenance of the lake. The extent of City involvement versus resident responsibility has been debated for more than 30 years; property owners pointing to the fact that the City drainage extends back to Eastgate. Street and parking lot runoff place a high degree of demand and degradation on lake waters, and as such, residents believe the majority of responsibility is the City's (or at least others in the basin).

The 1976 City Master Drainage Plan, in several places, recommended a "control structure" (weir) to "detain floodwater in Phantom Lake. . .". Flooding has been an issue since the weir's 1990 installation. Indeed, Phantom shoreline residents', like all of our City Utility bills, show fees for "flood control and management of streams and lakes". Residents ask why should this not be used for actions such as clearing in-flow and out-flow channels or removing obstructive beaver dams on Phantom?

The City (which owns over 20% of linear shorelines and over 30% of abutting lot acreage) claims Phantom is "a private lake" and disqualified for such maintenance. The City has promoted a Lake Management District for the shoreline owners which would tax residents for "lake programs". And, recently, the City has hired new personnel to work on Phantom Lake (and Lake Sammamish) issues. In an effort to gather public input on solutions, a survey is being processed polling residents on their perspective.

## **Funding Appeal**

Folks, we understand there are many demands for you to support charities, candidates, and more. And, we find we must look to you for support. As the SMP comes before the City Council, it will be essential to have a legal representative reviewing proposed changes and assessing the legal nuances therein.

**Please keep shoreline property owners represented in this process!**

**Send a check to WSSA today at P.O. Box 6773, Bellevue 98008**