Comment at Public Hearing Held by Washington State Department of Ecology

As one of the co-founders of the Sammamish Homeowners (SHO) group, I will summarize SHO activities with respect to the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update.

SHO was founded in January 2009 when a small group of people realized that the SMP draft prepared by the Planning Commission (PC) did not provide the balance between the use of the shorelines and protection of shoreline environment as required by the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). The group also noted that the draft contained regulations in conflict with Washington State law and the Corps of Engineers regulations for Lake Sammamish.

SHO decided early on to be proactive by suggesting changes to the SMP draft that would be consistent with state law and protect the environment. The small group also realized that everyone affected by the SMP should be contacted and given the opportunity to be involved. Thus, mailing lists of all shoreline property owners were established along with an e-mail list of more than 400 parties wanting to participate actively.

SHO has a focus group that met weekly, and now monthly, to establish issues of concern. These issues are then discussed at open meetings held in the local fire stations. All official positions taken by SHO have been submitted in written form after review by the focus group and everyone on the e-mail list.

When individual comments and amendments to the PC draft seemed to be confusing rather than focusing the issues, SHO unified the comments and amendments into its May 18 draft document. This draft started with the PC draft and then used Microsoft Word change control to denote and annotate all text to be changed. SHO spent thousands of hours researching state law and good environmental practices. SHO believed it extremely important to be within the state SMP guidelines and promote environmental practices that are proven to protect the shorelines.

At the direction of the Sammamish City Council, the Sammamish staff published its August 7 draft that included many of the SHO recommendations. SHO responded with its September 1 draft, again using Word change control. After considering the suggestions from SHO and others, the City Council gave the staff direction to prepare the final SMP update. While SHO does have issues with the final draft, SHO believes that the final draft meets the requirement for balance required by the SMA.

Therefore, SHO recommends that the Department of Ecology approve the SMP update as submitted. This update exceeds the state guidelines and has received more than adequate public comment.

Sammamish Homeowners

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