

May 20, 2013

Sammamish City Council
486 228th Ave. NE
Sammamish WA 98075

Esteemed Council Members:

Friends of Pine Lake is providing further public comment on the CAO update you will soon be deliberating on.

We continue to insist that you not allow subdivisions in the NO DISTURBANCE zones of the Overlays. The city has allowed subdivisions in the NO DISTURBANCE area and then allowed the same developer to apply for a reasonable use exception for each one of the lots that he was allowed to subdivide! This is happening in the Inglewood sub-basin where the city has several properties that are not in compliance with stormwater codes and have no solution for them to become compliant.

The Overlays were established to provide for stricter controls than regular development. These areas have been subject to additional clearing limits, and limiting development to what stormwater can be managed onsite. It continues to be appropriate to establish stricter criteria for development in these zones.

Pilot projects in this city have become a way of allowing something to happen that otherwise would not be allowed. Even a pilot project is of high risk to the city. A true pilot project would be for only one, small, very specific project and only after thoroughly documenting baseline conditions. Strict criteria for vegetation retention, limiting clearing for minimized road and driveways and limiting clearing of lots to only the building pads, along with strict re-vegetation guidelines to plantings that work to hold slopes once established would all be necessary requirements for a pilot project. Additionally, monitoring parameters and clear benchmarks would be established along with the criteria that would determine a successful outcome, including the long-term. None of these requirements are being proposed for any pilot project you are considering. We continue to oppose the pilot projects.

unknown outcomes, and the developer is eventually going to turn these facilities and their liability to the city. The new homeowners in the new development face many unknowns and a potential unknown expense. Is this the development you all want to encourage?

When assessing risk, you need to consider the natural risk, the long-term maintenance risk, the legal risks, the protection of downstream properties and the health of our streams and lakes. The policy you pursue will greatly impact the city in years to come. Choose wisely. Thank you for your work in crafting an ordinance that truly reflects protections of these geologically fragile areas.

Erica Tiliacos,
Friends of Pine Lake

During the 2005 CAO process, Friends of Pine Lake made it possible for Dr. Booth to provide a dialogue with the City Council. The night of his meeting with the Council he presented the city with a newly released soils/geological map of the Sammamish Plateau. The city should now make use of this updated soils map rather than the 1970's map currently being referenced.

While I served on the Planning Commission the city made what they called code block revisions. One of them was allowing for additional footprints for re-models in neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the idea to allow existing development to increase footprint also led to limiting the total square footage in these zones to be limited to a maximum of around 2500 sq. ft. of development. There was no distinction from existing development and new development. Additionally, the relief that had existed for development in these areas of transferring development rights was not adopted until recently. (Please read our comments of November 8, 2012) This led to overly strict restrictions that have made it nearly impossible to develop in the Overlay areas, thereby pressuring the Planning Commission & the Council for much greater changes to the code. The code should revert back to the original language of the original ordinance. Any changes to code should be thoroughly understood and thought through in order to eliminate unintended consequences. Please read our comments of July 12, 2012 we made to the Planning Commission.

There is a lot of pressure for the Council to loosen development regulations in these Overlay areas but the consequences are often not recognized until it is too late. The impacts invariably lead to the city being pulled into litigation and still having to come up with a solution to a major problem that does not have an easy fix. A good example of this is the detention pond and the infiltration gallery of the Greenbrier development. It is likely that these facilities had something to do with the large landslide that occurred on the Frasier property in the Ebright canyon 2 years ago.

We are aware that the city is now facing litigation due to the problems a downstream property owner has experienced. There is not a win for anyone in a situation like this. The downstream property has been irreparably harmed, the city is involved in expensive litigation with