

Lauren Anderson

From: Marilyn O'Neill <marilynoneill59@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 5:28 PM
To: Lauren Anderson
Subject: Comments on short plat application SUB21-002
Attachments: Marilyn's letter.pdf

PURPOSE: Comment on the preliminary short plat application SUB21-002

I. History

My two siblings and I lived in the waterfront cabin at 3887 West Mercer Way in the early 40's. Freeman Avenue led to the dock where the steamship Dawn, would moor and pick up passengers and motor across the lake to Leschi. One of the oldest and steepest roads on Mercer Island, it served as an important link to Seattle before the construction of the floating bridge on I-90. It continues as an important road for the city with an emergency generator under the road for the pump station below and a large stormwater drain on the north side.

I have lived at 3881 West Mercer Way, above the bluff, for fifty years and bear witness to the erosion that occurs when trees and shrubs are removed for construction projects or esthetics with no geotechnical information. Consider the following:

WATER

The large storm drain that comes from West Mercer underground continues to be over-burdened as more houses are built. In recent years, city public works employees have used the term "it's over capacity". Voluminous water streams down the slope, filling the catch basins and roaring down to dump into the lake. The city has no records of the original pipes and infrastructure on this very old important road and adjoining neighborhood. These pipes continue to erode, become clogged and alter the infrastructure. The land cannot hold the water without mitigation.

TREES

Our neighborhood community realized the need for trees and plantings to help prevent the damage to our sloping lots. To the south of Freeman Avenue many trees created an orchard. Shrubs and an enormous cedar tree also helped to absorb the water. Today, most of the orchard and shrubs have been razed. The cedar tree did not survive the two years of recent construction as trucks and equipment parked on its fragile roots. The plat application calls for more trees to be removed; this seems like an invitation for more slides and water problems. Really need to have more information here.

RIGHT OF WAY CONCERNS

Need clarification and consistency. What are property owners allowed to build and grow on right of way property and who is responsible for maintenance? Jason Kintner and Brian Hartvigson had been working with us before Covid. Hannah Van Pelt created an amazing native garden at the top to replace a large conifer that had been damaged by lightning.

This short plat calls for many changes on the right of way property. Removal of existing driveway, carport and shed next to Greenhouse and then excavation for new driveway. Conversations about finishing the landscaping on the right of way when Freeman Avenue was rebuilt in 2017 need to occur so all understand our responsibilities and opportunities. The ecological impact of adding another house to this piece of land needs to be carefully studied.

Respectfully,

Marilyn O'Neill