

Lisa Clausen

From: Public Council Inbox
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 9:34 AM
To: 'Bob Edgar'
Cc: Monica Lusk
Subject: RE: Letter to City Council-Public Process

Thank you for your message to the Burien City Council . It will be included in the Correspondence for the Record for an upcoming Council meeting.

L. Clausen
City Manager's Office

From: Bob Edgar [mailto:r_edgar2@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2010 2:33 PM
To: Public Council Inbox
Cc: Monica Lusk
Subject: Letter to City Council-Public Process

Please add the attached letter to the City of Burien meeting packet.

Thank you,
Bob Edgar

CSTR: 04/05/10

To: The Burien City Council
Subject: Shoreline Master Plan Document-Public Process & Alignment with City Policies
Date: March 19, 2010

The process used by the Planning Department to include public involvement needs to be more inclusive. The current format moves participants into confrontational positions. Specific ploys include:

1. suspending public comments,
2. squeezing in additional meetings to meet an arbitrary deadline, and
3. accepting only public written comments but then not addressing them or including them in the Summary of Public Comments

These appear to be designed to discourage public involvement which, in turn, increases confrontation.

When citizens review the Summary of Public Comments that is available at the beginning of the Planning Commission Meeting and find that their comments have not been included, their opportunity to publicly inform the commissioners has already been eliminated. The loss of timely information reduces the ability of the Planning Commission to make an informed decision, especially if the information is relevant to a topic currently on the meeting agenda.

This is all compounded by recently uncovered conflicting and erroneous information

1. between the Burien Comprehensive Plan and the Burien Critical Areas Ordinance
2. within the Burien Comprehensive Plan itself
3. between Burien Comprehensive Plan, Burien Critical Areas Ordinance and the draft Shoreline Master Program and associated four technical documents
4. between four technical documents "supporting" the Shoreline Master Program

Burien citizens have been forced to provide the due diligence to ensure that the SMP will be integrated and congruent with existing city documents. And quite honestly, performing due diligence is the Burien Planning Department's responsibility.

In spite of citizens' continued comments about these valid conflicts and inaccuracy of information, the Planning Department is reluctant to take ownership or confirm that the inaccuracies are valid and it appears that they would rather perpetuate the conflicts and incorrect information through additional city documents.

Part of the Shoreline Master Program update process has been to hire specialists Reid Middleton and Grette to prepare technical documents and SMP text. The conflicting information between the Burien Comprehensive Plan and the Burien Critical Areas Ordinance may have created a moral dilemma for Reid Middleton. I feel that, to some degree, Reid Middleton's reputation has been compromised either because they assumed that they were getting correct information from Planning Department or because they were told which Burien document and information to use in their four technical documents. Whatever the reason, the bottom line is that the SMP text and the technical documents are not aligned with the City documents.

When citizens provide oral and written comments that this conflicting information needs to be addressed before a legitimate Shoreline Master Program can be completed, the Planning Department uses one or more of the following responses:

1. The technical documents were "vetted" by the Department of Ecology, implying that the documents cannot be changed; therefore, case closed
2. The technical documents were "vetted" by the Shoreline Advisory Committee, implying that the documents cannot be changed; therefore, case closed
3. The concern was already discussed by the Shoreline Advisory Committee, implying that the concern has already been addressed; therefore, case closed
4. The wording needs to be in alignment with the Burien Comprehensive Plan, implying that the concern cannot be addressed; therefore, case closed
5. The wording needs to be in alignment with the Burien Critical Areas Ordinance, implying that the concern cannot be addressed; therefore, case closed
6. "It will be handled in the permitting process", implying that it will be handled sometime in the future; therefore, our preference is to be reactive rather than proactive

Outside of mouthing these words, the Planning Department has not produced any documentation or evidence to support the truthfulness of their responses.

At this point in time, the process used by the city:

1. perpetuates the use conflicting, incorrect and inaccurate information
2. attempts to decrease public involvement
3. reduces any accountability to create an accurate, legitimate document
4. places the consultants in a difficult position

So Burien City Council, please help Burien citizens understand how this process lends credence to your tag line:

"Innovative Stewards of Public Trust"

Bob Edgar