

## Janet Stallman

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**From:** Public Council Inbox  
**To:** John Cochran  
**Cc:** Mike Martin  
**Subject:** RE: Annexation of North Highline

Mr. Cochran,

Thank you for writing to express your concerns to the City Council. Your email will be included in the Correspondence for the Record at an upcoming Council meeting.

Janet Stallman

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**From:** John Cochran [<mailto:jcochran@speakeasy.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 29, 2011 2:44 PM  
**To:** Public Council Inbox  
**Subject:** Annexation of North Highline

Dear Council members,

My name is John Cochran. My wife and I have been residents of Burien since 1991. I am an Architect who had a recent experience that may be helpful to you about if and how Burien proceeds with the annexation of North Highline.

I prepared construction documents for constructing an addition onto a single family residence in the highline area recently annexed by Burien. The design was in full compliance with the building code. However, the Fire Department denied the building permit because the existing water utility serving the address is undersized and does not provide adequate capacity for fire fighting. The Fire Department would only grant the building permit upon the condition that the home owner furnish and install a sprinkler fire protection system in the entire existing home and proposed addition. The Fire Department's reason was, they would not otherwise be able to fight a fire because of inadequate capacity of the existing water utility. My client chose not to proceed with the addition improvements because of the prohibitive additional expense and other leak risks associated with residential sprinkler systems.

My immediate concern about this goes beyond the specific home owner involved. It goes to all the existing homeowners in the Highline community served by this under-capacity water system. All the home owners in this area seem to be currently at risk for lack of Fire Department protection, and apparently are not aware of it.

The situation could cause the Burien Fire Department rating to be downgraded by the National Fire Protection Agency, and property fire insurers. This obviously would not be good for Burien.

I tell you this story because if Burien pursues annexation of the North Highline area, I recommend before a final decision is made, you conduct a proper due-diligence investigation and evaluation of all existing infrastructure. A due-diligence investigation should reveal the scope, age, condition, performance capacity, and long-term performance expectations of all the infrastructure systems. If Burien proceeds with the annexation, the due-diligence evaluation can serve as a basis for planning future upgrades. The due-diligence evaluation could also serve Burien in the final negotiation with King County.

Excuse me for possibly being a bit harsh, but, I am suspicious that King County knows exactly why they are encouraging this annexation. I do not want Burien to unknowingly assume the cost for future utility upgrades.

I look forward to learn how the Council will attend to this matter.

CFTR: 01/23/12

Regards,

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