

Meeting Summary

Lake Ballinger Watershed Public Meeting
November 12, 2008 | 7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.
Ballinger Lake Golf Course | Lakeview Room
23000 Lakeview Dr | Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

Lake Ballinger Watershed Study Forum

City of Lake Forest Park
Councilmember Don Fiene, Co-Chair
Mayor Dave Hutchinson

City of Edmonds
Councilmember D.J. Wilson, Co-Chair
Public Works Director Noel Miller

City of Shoreline
Councilmember Janet Way
Councilmember Chris Eggen

City of Lynnwood
Councilmember Lisa Utter

City of Mountlake Terrace
Mayor Jerry Smith
City Manager John Caulfield
Public Works Director Curt Brees

Snohomish County
Councilmember Mike Cooper

Welcome and Introductions

Penny Mabie, facilitator and public outreach consultant for the project, welcomed meeting attendees and confirmed that attendees had picked up the two meeting handouts; Meeting Agenda and the Meeting Survey. Penny introduced Lake Ballinger Watershed Forum members, forum project staff, and other project consultants attending the meeting.

Lake Ballinger / McAleer Creek Watershed Forum

Following introductions, forum co-chairs Councilmember D.J. Wilson (City of Edmonds) and Councilmember Don Fiene (City of Lake Forest Park) discussed the watershed study.

Councilmember D.J. Wilson

Councilmember Wilson noted that it is very uncommon for this many jurisdictions (Edmonds, Lake Forest Park, Shoreline, Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace and Snohomish County) to work together with a common goal. It is especially rare that all of the cities are approximately the same size and jurisdictions in all parts of the watershed are participating—those on the lake, upstream and downstream. He also mentioned that King County and the Army Corps of Engineers are included in the process.

He commented that it is very important to “keep the momentum” going throughout the process and after. This process started last January and this is the first public meeting. Councilmember

Wilson originally learned about the need for this study from Lake Ballinger residents. He noted that, once complete, residents in the watershed will need to convince legislators and city officials to “keep the ball rolling.”

Councilmember Wilson added that this kind of a process usually is of low importance until there is a major flood, but that was not the case with our staff. He noted the staff and forum members that are involved, as well as the other agencies and told meeting participants to contact any of these people with comments.

Councilmember Don Fiene

Councilmember Fiene thanked everyone for attending the meeting and noted that Councilmember Wilson covered things well. He commented that it is his hope that we can bring all of the jurisdictions together for real progress. He noted that D.J. is the “prime mover” behind this project. Councilmember Fiene reminded the group that their input is very important and the more input provided during the process, the better the result.

Mayor Smith of Mountlake Terrace added that Lake Ballinger is a “gem” and it is important to protect it.

Strategic Action Plan overview

Joe Simmler, project consultant with Otak, provided a project and strategic action plan overview presentation to the group.

The main objective of the watershed study is to develop a strategic action plan. In order of importance, the strategic action plan must address:

- Flow control
- Water quality
- Habitat enhancement (where possible)

Background Information

Joe used aerial maps to tell the story of the watershed and provide background information.

An aerial watershed map from the 1940’s was presented to the meeting attendees. Joe pointed out an important feature of the aerial map to the group:

- The natural/forested state—an extensive amount of the watershed is covered by vegetation.
 - During the 1940’s there was not a great deal of flooding related issues in the watershed.

In comparison, Joe provided the group with a present day aerial map and pointed out important features, including:

- The watershed is almost completely developed
 - The developed surfaces inhibit rainwater from infiltrating into the ground
 - The current flows exceed the natural drainage system and it will take time for us to determine what to do.

Joe provided a graphic that addressed the watershed water balance and pointed out the different concepts evident in the graphic:

- One column demonstrates the forested watershed:
 - Evapo-transpiration—most rainwater doesn't touch the ground
 - There is a greater volume of water in the soil
- One column demonstrates a developed watershed:
 - The amount of water is substantially reduced
 - The amount of water going into the groundwater is reduced
 - The balance of the watershed changes

Components of Watershed Study

Joe then addressed the question, "What do you do to mitigate this?" He talked about the different steps of the study:

- He commented that the first step is to gather existing data and learn from previous studies.
- In addition to existing information, the project team placed a monitoring well in the north end of Lake Ballinger to determine the ability of groundwater to accept additional flow.
- Once this information is considered; staff and forum members will evaluate possible alternatives. These might include:
 - Enhancing development standards
 - Other long-term solutions
 - Purchasing land
 - Control techniques
 - The solution will most likely be a mixture of both long and short-term solutions
- Once alternatives are identified, the list will be prioritized, a cursory cost analysis will be done, and an implementation strategy will be developed.

Timing of Watershed Study

Joe spoke to the timing of the study. He noted that this was a quick study:

- The first two months are addressing how the watershed is currently functioning and, in comparison, how it used to work (he noted that we are well into this part of the study)
- The next two months will be spent identifying the alternatives and ranking these
- The next step is putting together the strategic action plan
 - Joe noted that public input will be needed again at this point
- He summarized where the group will be at the end of the process
 - A list of alternatives will be included in the strategic action plan
 - He noted that it we will not have improved the problem yet—this will take time and funding support
 - Joe commented that it will take awhile to bring the watershed back to where it can manage water quantity in the way it did in the forested condition

Public Involvement overview

Penny Mabie, project consultant with EnviroIssues, followed with an overview of the public involvement process associated with the watershed study.

She reiterated the short time period associated with the study. The process started in October, 2008 and will be complete in May 2009. She commented on how important it is to keep the community involved in the process. Tonight is a good start to public participation. Penny noted that information will be available throughout the process. Once public input is received the project team will move forward with the strategic action plan; it is anticipated that the action plan will be available for public input at the end of March.

Penny commented on the ways that the public can be involved in the process:

- The meeting handout provides information needed to stay involved:
 - The names of the forum members are included on the handout and those wanting to be involved in the process can contact any of the members.
 - Forum meetings are open to the public and included on the handout.
 - Project Web site: <http://www.cityofflp.com/city/engineering/stormwater/LBal-McACreek.html>
 - Five cities will also provide a link to the Web site.
 - Meeting materials and technical documents will be posted on the web site so the public can see the progress being made
 - Project email list serve: will include emails from tonight's meeting sign-in and will be used to push information out regarding study progress.
 - Technical team will be briefing five city councils for feedback.
 - Stakeholder Interviews: Penny will conduct key stakeholder interviews to better understand stakeholder values and expectations.

Discussion

Penny asked if there were any technical or clarifying questions for project staff. Questions included:

- Has a priority list been established for the watershed plan?
 - Joe Simmler answered that a priority list has not been established yet; the list will be created through the process.
- What is the function of the well? Where is it located?
 - Joe Simmler answered that the purpose of the well is to monitor the groundwater in relation to the lake level and to see how the lake level reacted. Already the groundwater is recharging.
 - The well is located at the north end of the lake, in the parking lot of the lake access area.
 - Doug Wood (Washington Department of Ecology) added that in addition to monitoring the level of the groundwater, the well can be used to compare the water level throughout the aquifer. There is another monitoring well on 228th that will help provide another data set for comparison of how the aquifer is acting. With these wells, the project team can better determine if there is space available within the aquifer.
- There was a question about locating the monitoring well on lake right where it floods. Wouldn't that provide more accurate information?
 - Doug Wood commented that the location of the well primarily had to do with permissions. It is located on public property and is a semi-permanent fixture. There are also issues to do with liability. Doug noted that staff realizes that many residents living on the lake shore would allow access, however the location does not reduce the efficiency. It was also noted that there is public property on the golf course that could be used. The well is not intended to measure flooding; rather it is intended to better understand the aquifer and the capacity for recharge.
- How large is the well?
 - An 8" auger is used to locate a 2" PVC pipe under the parking lot eighty feet down. A monitoring sensor is included in the pipe.
- How does the monitoring happen?
 - Joe commented that there is a sensing device in the well. Doug added that the PVC pipe goes into the aquifer and at the bottom of the PVC pipe water flows in

and out. It can fill up to the same level in the aquifer and a pressure sensor measures this.

Community comments – hopes for the action plan

Penny then asked the group to communicate any hopes that they have for the action plan. She also encouraged participants to fill out their surveys with more detailed comments and information for the project team.

As meeting participants provided hopes for the plan; comments were written on a flip chart. Participants were asked what they “hope the action plan will address,” answers are as follows:

- Water quality and flooding
- How the watershed will handle flow – so it does not flood Lake Forest Park
- Sedimentation in Lower McAleer Creek
- Small amount of rain it takes to overflow Hall Creek
- Inflow problem with Lake Ballinger
- Expectations of flood events should be published - what to expect with high flow
- In the last 60 years Lake Ballinger hardly flooded – now we’ve had flooding two times in a row; appreciate this study and hope we don’t get flooded
- The south and west side of Lake Ballinger includes unsellable property with current real estate disclosure laws
- Lake Forest Park Streamkeepers:
 - Control flow in McAleer & sedimentation
 - Technical information on macroinvertebrates; we sample yearly and the scores are in the poor range
- Bring salmon back, improved salmon habitat
- Retention ponds considered above/below lake
- Education and awareness program in the watershed
- Five cities better maintain culverts
- Improved “grandkid habitat”
- Better management of the level of the lake- to reduce the FEMA Insurance requirements
- Water quality; bad algae blooms
- Drawing down Lake Ballinger (even just winter months)
 - Outlet at the lake is a passive system, with levels changed 4 times per year
- Place to bring kids (water quality concerns)
- Hopes that everyone in the community knows how to provide input for this process
- Water quality-swimming in lake
- Flooding concerns in Echo Lake
- Trout back in Lake Ballinger
- Consider buying out property to create natural areas and public access areas
- Below 20 feet no oxygen; water quality
- Fines for dumping into lake
- Widen the road at the south end of the lake and buy out property
- There are 50 houses around Lake Ballinger and seven of them flood
- Consider nutria and wildlife in water
- Inputs and flow
- Hope to move past testing - plan should include implementation
- Funding
- Mandatory low impact development (LID) codes in cities

- “Human toll” of flooding

Clarifying questions

During the group discussion of hopes for the action plan there were some clarifying questions:

- Is Lyon Creek included in the process?
 - No, it is not part of this watershed.
- When is the survey due?
 - November 21, 2008.
- A concern was voiced that there have been numerous studies, but no implementation.
 - Councilmember Wilson commented that all jurisdictions will work together to get funding once the action plan is in place.
 - Councilmember Fiene noted that this is the first time getting the jurisdictions together and the mix of both technical staff members and elected officials on the forum will greatly increase the chance for funding.
 - Jesus Schez (City of Shoreline) commented on the Public Works Trust Fund and the greater chance for funding success with an inter-jurisdictional group that has already done modeling and cost analysis. The Public Works Trust Fund is giving these types of proposals the highest priority. There is more than \$200 million available.

Next steps and wrap-up

Penny reiterated that it is important for the public to stay informed. The forum will need public input. Penny also noted that at project milestones press releases will be provided by each of the jurisdictions to the local paper. She reminded the group of the forum meeting dates:

Lake Ballinger Watershed Plan Forum Meetings

Tentative Meeting Dates & Locations**

December 16, 2008	January 27, 2009	March 10, 2009	April 14, 2009
Mountlake Terrace	Edmonds City Hall	Location TBD	Location TBD
Ballinger Lake Golf Course	121 5 th Ave N		
23000 Lakeview Dr	Edmonds, WA		
Mountlake Terrace, WA			
98043			

**Meetings scheduled every 6th Tuesday at 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm.

Attendees

Forum Members

- Councilmember Don Fiene, Co-Chair, City of Lake Forest Park
- Councilmember D.J. Wilson, Co-Chair, City of Edmonds
- Public Works Director Noel Miller, City of Edmonds
- Mayor Jerry Smith, City of Mountlake Terrace
- Councilmember Janet Way, City of Shoreline
- City Manager John Caulfield, City of Mountlake Terrace
- Public Works Director Curt Brees, City of Mountlake Terrace

Forum Staff

Jesus Sanchez, City of Shoreline
Jerry Schuster, City of Edmonds
Aaron Halverson, City of Lake Forest Park
Mike Shaw, City of Mountlake Terrace
Doug Wood, Washington State Department of Ecology
Public Works Director Frank Zenk, City of Lake Forest Park
Gene Williams, Snohomish County

Project Staff

Joe Simmler, Otak
Jessica Collins, Otak
Penny Mabie, Enviroissues
Heidi Sowell, Enviroissues

Additional Meeting Attendees

Karin Scorill
Dianette Hrick, Echo Lake Neighborhood Association
Ken Weinberg, Sheridan Beach resident
Barbara Sharkey
Arline & James Fahey, Edmonds resident
Rich Meredith, Edmonds resident
Jim Halliday, LFP EQC
Doug Hennick, WDFW
Carol Hardy, Hardy Golf
Hal Diamond
Amy Daybert, Enterprise News
Jeremy Novack, Intern for Enterprise News
Roy & Paige Gorud, resident
Mark Phillips, LFP
Robert Pitman
Linda Smith, Corp of Engineers
Londa Jacques, Ballinger Neighborhood Council
Jerry Thorsen, Lake Ballinger Community Association
Jeff Crandall
James Vandecoevering, LBCA
Herta Grenzner
Gary Wallinder
Cheryl Paye, LBCA
Nancy Duffy, LFP
Hanni Reeb, LBCA
Lynn Yarnall, LBCA