

March 8, 2011

Margaret Glowacki  
City of Seattle – DPD  
700 Fifth Ave. Suite 2000  
P.O. Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

RE: Shoreline Master Plan Update – Public Comments

Dear Ms. Glowacki,

As a formally trained city planner, urban economist and real estate financier, I've been involved in the re-development of land in the shoreline zone; specifically those confined to water related and water-dependent uses on Lake Union. Recently, I've been involved in attempting to find some economic potential in the restoration and renovating shoreline properties in Seattle.

My experience reveals that there are some significant issues present in the existing as well as the proposed Shoreline Master Plan Update having serious ramifications of our City's ability to meet the requirements of State's Shoreline Management Act, which we know to be:

1. Preference to Shoreline Uses (i.e. water-oriented or uses consistent with the protection of the natural environment )
2. Environmental Protection: (i.e. ensuring there is no net loss of ecological function).
3. Public Access (i.e. promote public access to shorelines so new development maintains this public benefit);

The city of Seattle commissioned the consulting group, Property Counselors to provide a baseline of economic data for planning in the Shoreline Master Plan Update. Their report was completed in December 2009 and is essential in understanding the supply and demand for Shoreline Uses. Their data reported maritime use demand, anticipated new growth and existing supply. This is summarized as follows:

**DEMAND** (current)

Water Related/Dependent Uses:

85 Million Square Feet (water/land are being used in the Seattle Market)

**GROWTH:** (increased demand by 2030)

5.7 Million Square Feet are projected to be the growth in the Marine sectors by 2030

NOTE: 3 Million of this growth anticipated is for new recreational marina space for private boating (namely sailboats and small motor craft);

**SUPPLY:** (vacant/available land for water related/dependent)

31 Million – Water Dependent

78 Million – Water Related

**SUMMARY:**

There is OVER 100 Million SF of available supply for 5.7 Million SF of anticipated growth through 2030.

**ISSUES WITH OVER SUPPLY**

Despite seeing an oversupply in marine related/dependent designated land, the consultant recommendation was that the City should do what it can to protect water dependent and water related uses. The Recommendations stop short of describing how to address the oversupply and what an over supply does to the success of maritime uses.

Over supply economics suppresses values (and thus land owner borrowing capacity). The over supply depresses rents, precluding ownership from modernization or making necessary repairs and maintenance to properly run a property. Further, creating an oversupply of product, ultimately precludes the vibrancy of these environments by:

- A. **Inhibiting** the Modernization of Marine Facilities;
- B. **Impeding** environmentally safe operations;
- C. **Preventing** clean up of contaminated sites (i.e. no money to pay for clean up);
- D. **Reducing** regional competitiveness of Seattle for maritime work and loss of jobs (lack of modernization or site issues makes maritime operations expensive);
- E. **Preventing** the increase in public access (i.e no financial resources to create/provide)
- F. **Creating** no ability to pay for the restoration or maintenance of natural habitats and eco-systems.

An over supply of land zoned for maritime uses doesn't ensure a status quo for maritime uses, but rather as our marine environment and infrastructure ages, we threaten the health of our maritime uses and the environmental health of our waters for generations to come.

**TO FOSTER ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

I strongly urge that specific direction be taken to increase the potential for waterfronts to be successful, economically and environmentally. These actions might include:

- Reduce Maritime land supply and increase shoreline economics by permitting at least 50% of this supply to be non water related/dependent uses (offices, services, financial support, etc.); There will still be 10x the supply necessary to meet the 2030 growth projections.
- For these newly permitted uses, require that over 50% of the waterfront be publicly accessible (as these uses can support the creation of amazing public amenities/benefits);
- Provide incentives of increase density/height for Low Impact Development (100% storm water management) and habitat restoration, again because these uses can economically support these changes.

I appreciate your consideration and certainly provide my expertise and knowledge to the community advisory work for this extremely important document.

Sincerely,

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