

May 21, 2019

Whatcom County Council
 311 Grand Street, Suite 105
 Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Rud Browne, Whatcom County Council Chair:

As President of the Sudden Valley Community Association, I am concerned that the proposed fee structure for the new Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility District will result in our residents being double charged. As the Council move through your deliberations of the proposed fee, please consider the following:

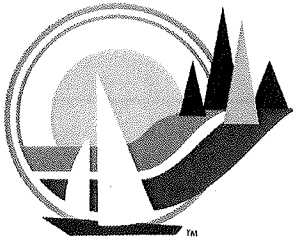
The Sudden Valley Community Association has for decades been one of the only, and arguably the largest, entities beside the City of Bellingham itself, that has prioritized and spent significant amounts of money to address water quality issues and has taken actions that significantly impact the mitigation of phosphorus in the watershed. This has been done at significant planning and implementation costs that have been borne solely by the Association and its members. While the City has had the benefit of public financial resources, the average \$500,000 per year that Sudden Valley Community Association has spent has been financed by the dues that are paid by each member of the Association. No publicly funded road or flood fund has been available to accomplish these mitigation activities.

In creating the Utility District, the County determined that the City of Bellingham should not be included because of activities that they have implemented over the years towards the goal of water quality. The idea was, obviously, that implementing a fee, on top of what they have already been paying for, would be paramount to double charging City of Bellingham residents in an unfair and inequitable manner. We strongly believe that imposing the proposed fee on Sudden Valley and its members would essentially have the same effect. We believe that the management and dues paying members of the Association who have borne the financial impact of these mitigation activities, and will continue to do so, will likewise question this clear double charge.

Considering these facts, we urge that the Council reconsider the Sudden Valley Community Association and its residents from any rate responsibility for amounts of phosphorus that have been and will be prevented from entering the Lake. Given the precedent that the Council itself has set in exempting the City of Bellingham, it is difficult to understand how the same consideration should not be extended to Sudden Valley.

Additionally, we are asking that the Council commit to allowing the members of Sudden Valley to benefit from the Homeowner Incentive Program (HIP) that is funded by the proposed fee. Sudden Valley is home to over 7,000 residents on 3,200 lots, several of which are directly on the Lake's shore,

FILE UNDER AB 2019 - 293
 DATE RECEIVED: 5/21/2019
 SUBMITTED BY: Larry Brown
Lk. Whatcom Stormwater Utility Adv. Board - Sudden Valley Rep.
 COUNCIL MEETING
 Finance COMMITTEE
 EXHIBIT: _____



Sudden Valley
Naturally!

and all member residents are concerned about, and active protectors of, the watershed. Under the proposed fee, SVCA will contribute a significant amount of funding for the HIP, and extending this

program to such a significant, paying population will be reasonable, equitable, and a benefit to the entire watershed.

We understand that there are many considerations to your deliberations. We ask, however, that you remember that the Sudden Valley Community Association and its membership are a vital and active part of the Lake watershed, as well as of the overall County community, that prides itself on its commitment to the environment. We have long put our money where our heart is. Thus, we ask that you take under consideration in your process that asking any Sudden Valley resident or the Sudden Valley Community Association to be a significant contributor to this fee, especially in light of Bellingham's exemption, is essentially an unreasonable, inequitable double charge to a community long successfully contributing to water quality and phosphorus mitigation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Leslie McRoberts
President, Sudden Valley Community Association, 2019