

From: [Cheryl Laughbon](#)
To: [PCD](#)
Subject: Regarding Permit #: PLN51498 RUE/VAR - Lytle Creek Wetland Development
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To the City of Bainbridge Island regarding the proposed Lytle Creek Wetland development:

I have lived very near the proposed building site for 18 years and have seen for myself what is happening in the Lytle Creek Wetland. I am concerned about a number of issues regarding another development in this very fragile area.

Lytle Creek Wetland is on an active wildlife corridor, and it has been drawing more and more animals because of the trees that were required to be planted there to mitigate the impact of the developer's current house on the land. Deer sometimes linger now, and even sit down close to the new trees. Packs of coyote come in periodically and howl together. All of this is relatively new. Animals are coming here because they **need** this land on an island where development is increasingly encroaching on their habitat.

The proposed house would have a deck hanging out the back very near the vernal pool that attracts water fowl. Human activity and dogs so close-by would certainly scare these birds away, and any animals passing through on the corridor. And certainly, animals would no longer linger.

Wetlands work like natural filters that slow the movement of water over land. Adding another house with its large roof into the wetlands would cut off this portion of the land from rain, and all the water, rather than percolating into the ground, would run-off fast from the roof and directly down into the stream. Construction upstream has exacerbated flooding downstream and this proposed development would contribute to this. The neighbor living next to the stream and adjacent to this .2 acre parcel has significant problems with his backyard flooding to the point of his fence being torn out.

The developer who owns these two parcels of wetland has been irresponsible in his stewardship. He regularly mows and weed-wacks all the grasses in the No-Disturbance Restoration Zone, depriving birds, insects and animals the habitat they need in the tall grasses; and deer, the cover that tall grasses provide. In the 15 years the developer has owned this land, the wetlands could have healed a great deal and be teeming with life. Instead, the tall green grass is cut short with decaying brown grass evidence of the destruction. In particular, the strip of land he wants to develop has not been nurtured and planted with trees like his parcel adjacent to it, so it looks conveniently like a building site. But this small parcel includes the wettest and most vulnerable part of the wetland, a Category II wetland, and it is on this parcel the developer wants to squeeze in yet another house. A 5' property line variance from his neighbor is part of the plan which would allow more development. In fact, the "2-bedroom" house that is planned is two stories and includes a significant 3rd room, and all of these 3 rooms have adjoining full bathrooms. This essentially 3 bedroom, 3

bath house would attract more residents, and the impact on the wetlands and septic system would undoubtedly be greater because of it. (The detailed plans for this house have not been included with this application; the City needs to provide the public these important documents, and it needs to be made clear if fill dirt will be brought in)

Disturbance in this No-Disturbance Restoration Zone would continue as the plan calls for a 185 foot sewage pipeline that would cross right through this zone and across a stream that feeds into Lytle Creek to a reserve septic drain field up at the corner of Lytle and Beck, next to the developer's house. It is surprising that this pipeline is even presented with this building application. Doesn't a "no-disturbance zone" mean a zone that is not to be disturbed?

Maintaining the beauty and character of our neighborhood, much of which is historic, is important to us. We neighbors are out walking on the streets and lanes. We pass by this fragile land on our way to nearby Lytle Beach. If this development goes through, what will we all see? Besides a big house squeezed onto a tiny lot in the wetland, we would see a sand filter septic structure right off the street, squeezed between Lytle Rd and the front of the house. The plans show this as a concrete, above-ground box, 41 feet long running parallel to Lytle, 11 ft wide and much of it 4 ft tall. There is no indication in the drawings as to what would be done to try and make this look attractive. Depending on the landscaping, and the maintenance of this landscaping, this structure could be a significant eye-sore in the neighborhood.

In closing, Lytle Creek Wetland may be small but it is not insignificant and should not be considered a building site.

This is a special place. A treasure. A gem in our beautiful neighborhood that we are making important permanent decisions about right now. Healing has already started in this fragile land with the planting of the new trees. Left undisturbed, it would continue to heal, with more trees and native plants seeding, and what was primarily just a path for the animals would finally become the safe haven it once was. We might even start to hear frogs. It could be exquisite like healthy wetlands are, a place we would all feel so fortunate to live near.

Either this, or just another house, with a strange huge concrete box in front, and animals trying to move through the area unnoticed.

Which is it? We have the opportunity now to bring Lytle Creek Wetland back to life for the island animals and for generations to come.

Cheryl Laughbon