

Attention Summerfield Homeowners Association

By Joe Miller – March 2011

Summerfield Green Belt (Native Growth Protection Area)

Contact Person: City of Renton Mr. Stan Job (pronounced "JOBÉ")
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Many of the home owners in the Summerfield complex are acutely aware of the continuous and excess amount of water that drains from the hill behind the southern homes known as the "green belt." When the homes were originally approved by King County, the contractor and King County were well aware of the drainage issues that confronted them, primarily the contractor that was approved. King County held the easement for what is known officially as the "Native Growth Protection Area, aka "The Green Belt." As people purchased the homes along the green belt, they were advised that although they owned the property behind the house they purchased, King County held the easement and, the "Native Growth Protection Area" was not to be compromised by the home owner/s simply because they may not appreciate the native vegetation growing that helps control the amount of water draining from the hill. The contractor building the homes was compelled to develop berms and, build a complex drainage system to take the water to a central drain that allowed the water to drain into a storm drain that ultimately drained into the sewer system. In addition, the contractor was required to develop a drainage system for each home that would take any excess water away from the homes and direct that water to the central drain system. The system worked well for many years until some of the home owners (many now gone) decided they did not like the vegetation and endeavored to alter the topography. When they did, the drainage system was compromised for several of the homes. In addition, when King County approved construction of homes in the Fairwood area in recent years, the contractor did not properly develop a drainage system. The resulting issue is water draining into old coal mines below Fairwood and above Summerfield. The mines are not active. However, because of the poor drainage from the Fairwood homes and water leaking into the mines, the water has to go somewhere. That somewhere is out what were originally mine vents. The vents are now drains for the excess water. That water is coming down the hill onto the Summerfield complex.

In my telephone conversation with Mr. Richard Marshall, Manager, Maintenance Services Division and, Stan Job's immediate supervisor, stated that the homes above Summerfield (Fairwood) and the homes in Summerfield should not have been approved for construction along the green belt by King County. The City of Renton, because of the annexation, holds the easement for the Native Growth Protection Area.

Stan Job was called in to evaluate the green belt area and formulate a plan to provide a complex and effective drainage system that would alleviate the water draining onto individual home owner properties. The plan that was conceived and presented by Stan to the City Engineers; develop access roads up to the base of the hill and then along the green belt, from East to West, develop a drainage system with holding ponds that would drain directly into the storm drain/s and ultimately drain out to the main sewer line/s.

I again met with Stan Job on February 14, 2011, to discuss and recommend solutions for the excess drainage problems that I am experiencing and, also determine what the City of Renton Engineers decided. Stan was advised that the City of Renton is not going to attempt developing access roads, holding pond/s, etc., that would compromise the topography resulting in major land slide/s that could extensively impact Fairwood and Summerfield.

Stan said that the City of Renton Engineers will re-visit the area in two – three years.

In the meantime, homeowners along the green belt that have water problems, is strongly advised to contact Stan Job, to discuss their option/s. Attempting to resolve the water issue/s without expert advice from the City of Renton, could result in major problems for your neighbor/s and beyond.

As was aforementioned in the context of this letter, Summerfield's annexation into the City of Renton holds the easement for the Native Growth Protection Area, aka Green Belt and, per the Summerfield Bi-laws, individual homes owners are not to compromise the green belt area.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joe Miller/Summerfield resident