

**Carol Lumb - New Ordinance about blackberries along the riverbank.**

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**From:** "Andy Jones"  
**To:**  
**Date:** 11/24/2009 9:51 AM  
**Subject:** New Ordinance about blackberries along the riverbank.  
**CC:** "Kristin Kotlan"

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Hello,

My name is Andy Jones and along with my wife own 100' of riverbank along the Duwamish River in the Foster Point neighborhood. We've owned the property 12 years and are in the process of splitting the property which would allow us to build a house with a view of the river. It is my understanding that the Council is considering an ordinance that would require property owners that are building new homes remove blackberry bushes along the bank and replant with native species and maintain the bank for a minimum five years.

We are citizens that this ordinance will impact...in our pocketbook. Unless ALL property owners (including the city and county owned property) remove the blackberry bushes your ordinance is a waste of time and property owners money. Sure, for five years there will be a river bank with native species. After the five years requirement has passed, blackberry plants from our neighbors property will creep onto our bank and squeeze out the native plants. This is why there are blackberry plants along at most of the thirty miles of riverbank from Elliott bay to Auburn.

I won't even discuss the impact that erosion will have on the river bank if the blackberries are removed. Blackberries hold our bank together.

I've got to tell you that the current ordinances in place are very costly to homeowners. For example, as part of splitting our property we had to cut down an old rotting pear tree. Current city ordinance and the Shoreline ordinance has us replacing this rotten 12" diameter rotten pear tree with four (4) native species trees. Native species will cost us in excess of \$2500 versus the four trees we wanted would cost less than \$1,000. Net additional cost to us \$1,500. Let's forget the additional cost for a moment, whose really owns the property when you can't even pick your own trees to plant on your property?

I know the Council is probably saying it's only \$1500 more. Please be aware that my wife and I have spent over \$75,000 to split our property. We had to hire consultants, surveyors, geotech engineers, civil engineers, landscape architect, biologists, lawyers and pay for permits for a sub-divide and a shoreline permit and hook up to the sewer system. We currently have an excavator company removing our driveway and installing new utilities to the new lot. The city requires that we tear down a perfectly good garage that would be on the new lot because "current city code will not allow a structure on a new building lot." Of course, we will need to replace the garage and also had to buy a shed for storage until the new garage can be built. Money, money money. These rules are making it too expensive to build an affordable family home in Tukwila.

The Council needs to focus its energy on making homes more affordable by REMOVING costly administrative burdens to build AFFORDABLE family homes.

Bottom line, it is already too expensive to split properties and build in Tukwila. Imagine spending \$75,000 to split your property and have little to show for it except a buildable lot and a tax id number that the county will use to tax us. My in-laws split a property two years ago in Idaho and their cost were less than \$500. They simply hired a surveyor and filed the plan with the county. Let's start returning some property rights to City of Tukwila

citizens by removing some administrative burdens.

Please don't add additional financial and administrative burden to property and homeowners in Tukwila by passing an ordinance that will require property owners building a new home remove blackberry bushes and replant native species. Why not try to do something that will expand the rights of Tukwila property owners instead of taking away their property rights?

Andy Jones and Michelle Kotlan

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