

Margaret Fleek

From: Reed, Greg [Greg.Reed@unitedgeneral.org]
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2009 6:03 PM
To: Margaret Fleek
Cc: Jon Aarstad; Scott, Jacque R; Bonthuis, Michael; Warren, Cindy; Barns, Thomas
Subject: RE: Burlington's Flood Control Plans

Margaret,

The following is for consideration by the Administration and Council of the City of Burlington in relationship to the flood control project they have under study.

The Board and Administration of Skagit County Public Hospital District #304 are always concerned about any proposed projects that would have an effect on services at United General Hospital. We appreciate the opportunity for input to your study. Recalling the presentation by personnel of the City of Burlington during the latter part of 2008 at a workshop of the City Council of Sedro-Woolley, there was information shared that indicated that placing dikes along the Skagit River created a funnel effect. Such an effect would result in flood waters backing up into the flood plains of Sedro-Woolley and the surrounding county area. As you are aware United General Hospital (United) is located in part of the flood plain at the eastern city limits of Burlington and just within the boundaries of Sedro-Woolley. Some projections indicate that with a backup of waters of the magnitude discussed Highway SR20 would be closed minimizing if not eliminating access to the hospital for emergency care. In fact there are scenarios that demonstrate that the United campus would very likely become an island. Such an event would prevent United from participating in any effective fashion in caring for those in need during such a disaster.

While the obvious solution for United would be to relocate the hospital, research for that purpose revealed a number of other issues. Not only would there be significant cost involved for the construction of the hospital facility but the reconstruction of the entire campus with all of its adjacent buildings as well. Additionally relocation to those useable sites above the flood plain would take the hospital away from the mainstream roads system used by most of the people we serve. Just as important to United's continued viability is its Critical Access Hospital designation from both the State of Washington and the Federal Government. Due to limitations within the related regulations should United be relocated from its present campus the C.A.H. designation would be lost.

If the dike plan being considered is the most effective answer to the flood dilemma of Burlington it would seem reasonable to co-ordinate that project with related planning and projects of the City of Sedro-Woolley, the Dike Districts, Skagit County as well as United and incorporate it into a more regional solution to the problem. I would be willing to participate in whatever activities that would be required to arrive at such a solution.

Thank you for your time.
Respectively,

Greg

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