

# Neighbors of Seahurst Park sign an Appeal Settlement Agreement with Westmark

Press Release: September 16, 2013

**On September 13, 2013, Neighbors of Seahurst Park (NoSP) and Westmark Development signed an appeal settlement agreement approved by Burien's Hearing Examiner.** The dismissal was based on a settlement agreement entered into by NoSP and Westmark that ends the long time contention over Emerald Pointe, Westmark's development plan bordering the northeast edge of Seahurst Park. Planning for the Emerald Pointe project at 136th and Ambaum was started over 23 years ago but had not been able to move forward because of legal issues over the potential environmental impacts to the steep slopes, wetlands, and Seahurst Park.

Julie Ainsworth-Taylor, attorney for NoSP (a grassroots citizen group of Burien residents) stated at the signing that while the settlement was not perfect, it would help to protect the park which is NoSP's ultimate goal.

## **Westmark agreed to voluntary mitigation on the development by:**

- **Reducing the number of buildings in the Emerald Pointe development**  
*2 apartment buildings and the outdoor pool have been eliminated, an indoor pool may be built inside the clubhouse that has been moved easterly and to a more central location and at a higher elevation on the site. Footprint of building site coverage is reduced by 30%. Impervious surface reduced by 10%.*
- **Retaining more significant trees on Westmark's property near the wetlands**  
*The original clearing plans approved by the City of Burien retained only 8 significant trees (26 inches in diameter at breast height). The new version of clearing plans retains 40 significant trees and many more smaller ones, most located on the border of the park near the wetlands and southwest corner of the project . Undisturbed area is increased by about 15% or 1.26 acres.*
- **Increasing the protective buffer to the wetland**  
*The original project plans had a 50 foot buffer around the wetlands and a 15 foot building setback for a total of 65 feet. Westmark's new plan has an approximate buffer of 108 feet between the nearest point of wetland and developed portion of the site. This buffer will be enhanced with native wetland species and cleared of non-native species **by hand** under the direction of a qualified wetlands scientist or botanist.*
- **Planting of native species on the developed portion of the site**  
*After construction and during the landscaping phase, the site will primarily be*

*replanted with native species. Ornamental species will only be allowed near the buildings and nowhere near the wetlands. Monitoring of all developed and undeveloped area will occur for 5 years after construction to ensure plant survival.*

- **Installing rain gardens to reduce storm water runoff from the roofs into the wetland**

*Infiltration into the ground will be through the bottom of specially constructed rain gardens, rather than the normal storm water system of dispersal trenches for the rest of the surfaces on site.*

- **Trail Development**

*To lessen disturbance to the wetlands, Westmark will move the trail further east into the new bigger wetland buffer. Interpretive signs are planned along the new trail. After construction Westmark will grant a permanent easement back to Seahurst Park (City of Burien) for the trail. Hiker access will be guaranteed into perpetuity. Westmark will install a bench near the trail for hikers to rest and enjoy the beauty of Seahurst Park.*

- **Improvement of the original storm water system**

*The detention vault for storm water has been tucked under one of the parking areas, and a new improved dispersal spreader design will be used.*

NoSP could not have achieved this agreement without the support and contributions of countless Burien citizens committed to protecting Seahurst Park. Thanks to everyone for being engaged and involved with our mission and your community.

Seahurst Park is the "crown jewel" of Burien's park system. We appreciate the greatly undisturbed ecosystem within it's borders, the forest, wetlands, streams, fish, park trails and sparkling beach . What happens to Seahurst Park is important to the ecological health of Puget Sound and entire region.

NoSP will continue as a citizen education group to inform and educate all citizens on how to protect Seahurst Park's environmental health and beauty now and for future generations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT NoSP Volunteers:

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Updates can be found on our website: [seahurstfriends.org](http://seahurstfriends.org)

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