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**Subject:** FW: Water :The Eleventh Hour

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**Date:** Mon, Jun 14, 2021 4:18 pm

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**Sent:** Sunday, June 13, 2021 4:06 PM

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**Subject:** Water :The Eleventh Hour

Greetings from Mill Creek Lane. With all due respect to WAC members with years of local political experience, the pressure is on to come up with solutions to our impending water crisis because actions to avert this crisis were not taken years ago. The writing has been on the wall (and in engineering reports) for a very long time. WAC must work diligently to gather the facts for the Council to make the best possible decision on how to move forward to protect the health and well-being of the entire Community.

The City has limited options:

1. Ignore City engineering reports or Talk and talk and talk, spin your wheels and don't get much done (PLEASE DO NOT REPEAT HISTORY)
2. Supplement Luffenholz by tying into surrounding creeks such as Mill Creek (feasibility? cost?)
3. Tie into HBMWD (feasibility? cost?)
4. Improve the existing infrastructure (feasibility? cost?). This will improve our water resiliency but is not a long term solution.

Recommended homework assignment for June meeting:

Choose a Chairperson who has an open mind... someone who is driven by science and data.

A. Assuming that past City engineering reports have useful scientific facts related to the above options and were not a total waste of taxpayer money, review the reports. Decide in June who will scan which reports. To improve clarity, public education and informed participation, each WAC participant will write a paper outlining the results of his/her fact-finding mission and post it in City documents before the July meeting.

B. Cheap and easy information related to #3 above: Mr. Friedenbach (HBMWD) has offered to write a written description [as stated in phone conversations] detailing the purpose and cost of the proposed "Feasibility Study" that was hotly argued at a past City Council meeting at the request of any WAC or Council member. Have a WAC member volunteer to call Mr. Friedenbach, request the letter, and post the letter in City Documents. The important reasons for this: It may answer public concerns about wasting money on unnecessary reports, it may provide useful information to help WAC achieve it's mission, and it may provide critical information about missing an important deadline. It will take a few moments of WAC time. Please do it.

#### Public Concerns:

We all want water to drink, bathe, and fight fire as necessary. Some of us want water to grow vegetable gardens. Ecological sustainability means different things to different people. Public concerns about how to improve Trinidad's water security needs to be addressed by encouraging public education and participation. Most of us live in this area because we appreciate the beauty of nature, the ocean, the woods, privacy and quiet. Trinidad City folk are being more challenged by loss of privacy and quiet than us woodsy people who are fortunate to have an acre or more in

the Sphere of Influence. We are more challenged by the difficulties of creating a defensible fire space around our homes, nestled in giant sequoias, with the nearest fire hydrants deemed "insufficient" according to past engineering reports.

WAC has a lot of work to do. The fear of unrestrained development associated with a more robust water supply needs to be addressed with fact based research involving documentation (hopefully written) from all involved agencies that have a say in who is able to get water under what circumstances. Who controls the water that comes into Trinidad's system from whatever source?

Speaking of unwelcome development, my lot was one of the last three lots to be developed on Mill Creek in 1991. The neighborhood was less than friendly upon our arrival (with the exception of a dear elder widow who passed away years ago). She alone encouraged my daunting project and had faith that I had the competency to orchestrate a team of subcontractors to build the shell, after which I would take on the task of doing all the finishing work, despite the fact I had very little construction experience and was a single mother on a limited budget. She and her husband had built their own house under similar circumstances in the mid 20th century. The retired drill sergeant who lived directly across the street from me was in my face on numerous occasions, worrying I was going to create an eyesore that would devalue his property. I suspect an element of misogyny factored into his concerns. He bemoaned the loss of the private forest in front of his house being replaced by... a house. His wife intervened periodically on my behalf. They moved to a condo over twenty years ago. My house exceeded my wildest expectations. It was recently appraised at over half a million dollars.

The point being... Let's be reasonable. There is a middle ground in negotiating development parameters. Planning and WAC needs to clarify constraints on rampant development other than restricting water. There is a housing crisis. We need to plan for future generations.

Humanitarian concerns:

Consider our neighbors who are already living here, some for many years, who are dependent on wells and creeks that are threatened by drought. Westhaven Water District has a record of about 65 households who have applied for district water and been denied because of lack of availability. Trinidad City has denied applications from households in the Community outside city limits, but there has been no written application process and no records kept.

Action Item: Send a letter to all households in the Sphere of Influence, introduce WAC's mission statement, provide information how to participate and stay informed on WAC's progress [overview of City website], and ask if they are interested in obtaining water from the City. Keep a written record of who is interested. This is important information moving forward in deciding how much water is feasible for the City to develop. Do the math. Without considering extortionate prices, even at 1991 prices (I paid \$7,500 to hook up to City water), times how many people? equals how much money to put towards improving the water system? And then there's the 65 households near (how near?)

Trinidad's water plant who wants water... is it possible for anyone to help them out?

A lot to think about.

Thank you for your time,  
Paula Levine