

City of Bellingham
MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION
"JUST SO YOU ARE AWARE" – Information of Interest

April 11, 2007

Located on the Web at:

http://www.cob.org/mayor/boards_commissions/neighborhood/just-so-you-are-aware.htm

- **Former Councilmember Don Gischer appointed interim 4th Ward representative**
- **Parks and Recreation projects updates & working with a Park Steward**
- **Crime prevention help from BPD—Identity theft Shred-a-thon on April 28—Graffiti, report promptly, wait for police, then cover it!**
- **Planning and Community Development--status reports from the Neighborhoods on 2008 Neighborhood Plans Work**
- **Making Neighborhoods" Elder Friendly"**
- **Neighborhoods work on traffic issues**
- **More Parks and Trails work parties**
- **Public Works projects in the neighborhoods**
- **Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program priorities due April 30**
- **Whatcom County Lake Whatcom Comprehensive Storm Water Plan Public Meeting**
- **Earth Day--three "Green Power Challenge" neighborhood winners!**
- **Jazz and poetry at Bellingham Public Library**
- **BTV10 Inside Bellingham—Speed bumps & humps, unwelcome intruders, the health of our water supply, the return of the bike patrols, and more**

REMINDERS

Transfer station for yard waste open at Lakeway and Yew

Whatcom County Public Meeting on Lake Whatcom Comprehensive Storm Water Plan on April 17, 6:30 p.m., Bloedel Donovan Beach Pavilion

New Whatcom Project—Public Information Meeting – April 18, 6-8 p.m. Bellingham Cruise Terminal

Earth Day, Green Power Challenge Winners at Bellingham Farmers Market, April 21

New Whatcom Project—Public Scoping Hearing for the Environmental Impact Statement—Wednesday, April 25, 6-9 p.m., Bellingham Municipal Court, 2014 C Street

Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program "Top Three" due April 30

City Council 6 Year Tip Priority Public Hearing -- May 7

Former Councilmember Don Gischer appointed interim 4th Ward representative

On April 4th, the Bellingham City Council appointed Don Gischer from a field of nine candidates to fill the vacant Ward 4 seat. The position was left vacant by the death of Joan Beardsley on March 12th.

Gischer, a nine-year resident of the Alabama Hill neighborhood and retired mill worker, served on the Bellingham City Council from 1984 to 1996, representing the 1st Ward.

Gischer has experience working with water quality, economic development, neighborhood and environmental issues.

The Ward 4 position will be up for election in the November 2007 general election. Gischer will serve until the person elected in the general election takes office on November 27th, which is the date the election results are expected to be certified.

That same day, the City Council also adopted a resolution honoring Joan Beardsley for her commitment to public service and her dedication to the citizens and City of Bellingham.

Parks and Recreation Projects Updates:

Puget: Skatepark expansion at Civic Field Complex: Part of the Civic Athletic Complex Improvement Project, the Skatepark expansion construction starts this week. Although the contractor will try to keep the remainder of the park open as much as possible, please use caution in the area. Work is scheduled for completion in August of 2007. The project is funded with Civic Bond funds, which are being repaid with Real Estate Excise Tax revenues.

Birchwood (near Columbia) : The Coast Millennium Trail, Squalicum Connector is under construction. This project is to build a trail from Squalicum Way through Squalicum Creek Park to the Bay to Baker Trail near Birchwood Park. The contractor is scheduled to complete work in July 2007. The project is funded with a Washington Department of Transportation Enhancement Grant with matching local funds from Beyond Greenways.

Birchwood (near Columbia): Squalicum Creek Park – Phase 1: City Council has awarded the bid for phase one construction of Squalicum Creek Park. Work will begin by May 1st and is scheduled for completion in early 2008. Phase one includes building demolition and utility infrastructure, one combination baseball/softball field, restrooms, parking, connecting pathways, landscaping, and grading,. The project is funded with a combination of Olympic Pipeline Settlement, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Grant, Real Estate Excise Tax and City Sewer Funds for the public restrooms.

Roosevelt & Puget: Whatcom Creek Trail – Racine to Fraser: We're adding a new section of Whatcom Creek Trail! Construction will start in May and be completed by this fall. The project includes a bridge across Whatcom Creek with a trail connecting the main route of Whatcom Creek Trail to the Civic Athletic Complex. The project is funded with the Beyond Greenways levy.

Samish: Lake Padden Park – new playground equipment installed: Check out the new playground equipment at Lake Padden Park. Completed in December, this work was part of our 2006 playground replacement program which also included new playgrounds at Broadway Park and at Civic Athletic Complex next to the Aquatic Center near Carl Cozier Elementary School.

Work with a Park Steward: An opportunity for exercise and neighborhood park and trails improvements:

- ***Lettered Streets:*** Park Steward Niki Thane holds monthly work parties at **Robin's Hollow on Old Village Trail** (between H & I Street) the **first Saturday** of the month from 10:00 a.m. to noon
- ***Lettered Streets by Sunnyland:*** Spring is a busy time at **Gossage Park**, located at Cornwall & Alabama. If you have some spare time give Judy Buchanan a call at 734.6639; she could use your help with pick up, planting, mulching, weeding, and pruning.

- **York:** Neighbors join forces at **Franklin Park**, working on the natural area at the west end of the park, the **second Saturday** of the month from 9:00 a.m. – 12 noon

For more information contact our Greenways Volunteer Coordinator, Rae Edwards, at 676-6801 or email at redwards@cob.org.

Crime prevention help from Bellingham Police

- **Identity Theft—shred-a-thon! Saturday, April 28th 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**
Office Max, 1055 E. Sunset

ID theft is a growing problem in our communities. To bring awareness of the problem, Bellingham Police has teamed up with Washington’s Law Enforcement Group against ID Theft better know as LEGIT to host a free “Shred-A-Thon.” at the Office Max located at 1055 E. Sunset Drive. Consumers are invited to bring 3 garbage bags per person of sensitive documents for free shredding. Documents will be destroyed on site by an industrial shredding machine. For more information contact Officer Mark Young BPD @ 676-6924 or myoung@cob.cog

- **Graffiti – report promptly, wait for police, then cover it**

Defacing walls and other property is a crime classified as "Malicious Mischief" (damage to property). Although graffiti may be at times “creative”, when done without the explicit permission of the property owner it is a crime and contributes to the denigration of the neighborhood and community.

Our Police Department reports that graffiti is most often committed by individuals working independently, not by groups or “gangs”. This makes it more difficult to identify an offender unless the police are called to an incident in progress.

Regardless, it is very important that we receive reports of graffiti from victims. This enables our police department to identify crime patterns, focus neighborhood watchfulness, and to better the chances of apprehending the perpetrator. Call 911 if an event is in progress. If afterwards, report the graffiti to our police department Station Officer at (676-6840).

Once reported, it is important that the property owner cover the graffiti promptly. This has been shown to discourage graffiti. For further information contact: Bellingham Police Crime Prevention at 676-6924.

Planning and Community Development--Status reports from the Neighborhoods on 2008 Neighborhood Plans Work

Alabama Hill: Alabama Hill’s planning committee is moving forward. Members are taking on new issues and after the workshop on April 3rd new energy is bubbling over. The committee has been able to maintain an every-other-week meeting time and questions for our next surveys are coming forth. Finally, plans for a postcard notice mailing to the neighborhood will be ready by April 17th.

Edgemoor: They had their first “official” Neighborhood Plan Update meeting in March to lay out their planning process. Step one is to design and send out a survey to every owner/resident in the neighborhood to obtain information relevant to Edgemoor’s particular situation. They will then use the results from that survey and those of two previous “Visions of Edgemoor” surveys to compile draft policies and outline a draft plan. Next, they will hold neighborhood meetings, get feedback on the draft, and develop a final proposal to submit to the Planning Department before December 1st.

Fairhaven: They submitted a Development Code Amendment on December 1, 2006 to the Planning Department and have been notifying stakeholders of a Public Meeting on April 26th on this proposal.

They are also working on their Neighborhood Plan. Glenn Denkler has volunteered to lead the effort.

Fairhaven Neighbors also mailed out a total of 1,080 surveys to property owners and merchants and renters in Fairhaven. They will have worksheets inviting written responses and suggestions, as well as a timeline and Q &A for their update process with the goal of submission of a document to Planning Department December 1, 2007.

Guide Meridian/Cordata: Their planning committee has met once plus attended the City's Tech Seminar on April 3rd. At their next meeting they will organize a formal outline to their plan. They will then briefly document information under each category as they envision it or know it to be.

Roosevelt: Roosevelt will begin outreach planning with a meeting pm April 17th. They are looking closely at how the other neighborhoods are approaching the process and expect to be in full swing in their process by this fall.

Samish: Samish did the bulk of their work last year and submitted their proposal which is docketed for review by the Planning Commission in 2007.

Sehome: Sehome mailed or hand delivered meeting notice to all property owners, residents, and businesses, resulting in more than 90 attending their Step 1 (of 5) outreach meeting, with more submitting input via forms available at www.sehome.org. In Step 2, committees will incorporate all input received into a plan outline, to be presented for review in Step 3 in July. Sehome will be approaching other neighborhoods with similar architectural histories and futures about cross-neighborhood design standard development.

Silver Beach: They are redrafting their entire plan due to its age and obsolete names. In December they established committees to gather information and determine data gaps. Their schedule includes monthly meetings, a rough draft by June 1st (with a mailing), firm draft September 1st (with a mailing), consensus-building through the fall and a consensus document by November 30th.

South Hill: They are working with the Planning Department to prepare a mailing for an all-neighborhood meeting on May 2nd regarding the neighborhood plan text amendment that was submitted December 1, 2006. This will be reviewed by the Planning Commission in June or July 2007. The text amendment concerns policy language that emphasizes the neighborhood value of view preservation, and references the need for more determined height and bulk limitations throughout the neighborhood. They are also developing a neighborhood input process to submit a proposal in December 2007 for a neighborhood plan update in 2008.

Other neighborhoods: Other neighborhoods are also working on their neighborhood plans to submit to the City for review. Their effort was demonstrated when 75 association committee members turned out for the April 3rd Technical Assistance Workshop on Neighborhood Plan Amendment Process. Contact your MNAC representative or other neighborhood association leadership to find out how to take part in this important citizen involvement process. You can find

your representative by going to <http://www.cob.org/pcd/planning/neighborhoods/neighborhoods.htm>. A second workshop will be held in September when neighborhoods are further along in the process.

Making neighborhoods “Elder Friendly” – a new initiative of the Area Agency on Aging

The population of people over age 65 in our country will double over the next 25 years. To meet this challenge, the Northwest Regional Council (NWRC), the Area Agency on Aging for Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan and Island Counties, is beginning an outreach effort to promote dialogue on how to make our communities more ‘Elder Friendly’.

Making communities ‘Elder Friendly’ involves assessment of policies, programs and services including transportation, housing, land use planning, public safety, parks and recreation, workforce development and volunteerism/civic engagement, to name a few.

The Area Agency on Aging hopes to work with neighborhood associations to promote “elder friendly” neighborhoods as well as with local government.

Contact Richard Dietz at Northwest Regional Council, 360-676-6749 for more information.

Public Works Projects in the neighborhoods—new and updated info

Birchwood

- On April 17th, Public Works staff will be present at the neighborhood meeting to review the designs for curb, gutter, and sidewalks on Birchwood Avenue west of Meridian Street including an eastbound right turn lane as well as future plans for a roundabout on Northwest Avenue. In addition, an update on the design for the extension of Illinois street to Marine Drive along Timpson Way to divert truck traffic from Oeser Cedar and Morse Steel from residential area to a designated truck route (Marine Drive).

Birchwood and Columbia

- The waterline replacement under the Eldridge Street bridge is complete.

Birchwood and Guide Meridian

- **Northwest Avenue/I-5 Pedestrian Improvements:** Work continues on the design and budget for pedestrian and bicycle improvements on Northwest between McLeod and Bakerview Roads. This is a major walking route for school children traveling to and from Shuksan Middle School. We also hope to improve traffic flow in the area while providing for improved pedestrian and bicycle safety. We have recently been informed that WSDOT will be submitting for grant funding for the dual roundabout option presented to the neighborhood earlier this year. If this grant is successful, there is potential that at least one of the roundabouts, at the Interstate-5 northbound ramp, could be constructed together with the pedestrian improvements.

Sehome, York, and the Greater Central Business District:

- We held a neighborhood meeting in March to unveil the Holly Street Corridor (Ellis to State) Improvements pursuant to the City Center Master Plan. The project consists of streetscape improvements along upper Holly Street between Ellis Street and Railroad Avenue. Included in the project is the replacement of all curbs, gutters and sidewalks, the addition of new traffic signals and street lighting, together with new street plantings, utility work and road resurfacing. Preliminary work is underway, and construction should be ramping up to full activity in the next couple of weeks.

Central Business District:

- The Arts District Projects continue including streetscape improvements for several areas, as well as significant progress on a new Art and Children’s Museum and on the next phase of Mount Baker Theatre (MBT) renovations including lighting improvements. City Council recently approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) laying out a funding plan for the museum and theatre projects. Parties to the MOU include the City, MBT Board, Whatcom Museum Society, Campaign for the Arts, and Bellingham-Whatcom Public Facilities District.

Columbia

- The final paving on West Street will be completed this week. Soon after, the pavement markings will be installed after which the project will be complete.

Guide Meridian:

- We are still working with WSDOT on construction bids for road improvements between Horton and Ten Mile Road. Our part is to install water and sewer extensions.
- Dry weather is allowing the installation of the three way pavement markings at Kellogg and Eliza.

Happy Valley

- Pedestrian improvements at Donovan and 21st Street are complete. We are repairing a pavement failure near a storm water vault and also dealing with a large puddle at the Cowgill intersection.
- Dryer weather will now allow us to complete concrete and pavement marking work for the installation of flashing warning system for pedestrian crossings on Bill McDonald Parkway near the Birnam Wood dormitories.

Happy Valley/South

- We’re working on the surveying, base maps and design work to replace the existing culvert for Padden Creek at 30th Street to improve fish passage.

Lettered Streets

- We’re beginning the design of storm water handling improvements at Astor and C streets

Meridian

- We’re accomplishing the survey work for a culvert replacement on Prince Avenue at Spring Street. This is preliminary work to designing the structure.

Mount Baker

- Pedestrian improvements at Barkley Boulevard and Chandler Parkway—continued dry weather will allow us to install cross walk pavement markings after which the flashing warning system will be installed.
- We are completing the survey and base maps this month to replace three culverts on James Street
- Sunset Drive Improvements east of Woburn: We’ve done a wetland inventory to determine necessary mitigation measures before design and construction of a widened and improved major arterial next year.

Puget

- Phase II of the Fraser Street Improvement Project (Puget Street south of Fraser) will improve pedestrian and bike safety as well as to enhance storm water treatment is in the final design stage.

Roosevelt

- For the Woburn and Alabama Intersection Improvements we're now designing storm water aspects for construction this summer. Included in the design is a "pocket park" concept proposed by the neighborhood association.

Samish:

- San Juan Boulevard, Phase I: We'll soon begin our wetland inventory and are doing the necessary joint planning with WSDOT and the Federal High Way Administration to begin the design on this complex project.
- Yew Street Upper Reservoir: To install this 1.3 million gallon water reservoir as part of infrastructure development for Samish Hill, our next step is to work on right of way acquisition for tank location.

Silver Beach:

- We have a number of projects in the Silver Beach neighborhood/Lake Whatcom Watershed to improve the quality of run off and storm water entering Lake Whatcom. We have a Northridge Detention Basin Retrofit, Pullman Road and Drainage Improvements, and work on East Maryland Street, E. North, E. Oregon, and Hayward Drive water quality.

Whatcom Falls:

- All of Bellingham will benefit from this project to replace the filter media and upgrade the infrastructure of the Water Treatment Plant Filter. Our challenge is to accomplish this without disrupting the flow of potable water from the plant to our citizens.

See City Public Works Department website for more information about capital projects under construction: http://www.cob.org/pw/curconst/index_current.htm.

Neighborhoods traffic safety program priorities due April 30

- **Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP):** Neighborhood Associations are reviewing residential street traffic concerns and will advise our Public Works department of their "Top 3 Neighborhood Traffic Safety" priorities by April 30th. Staff will study the traffic at the locations indicated and work with the neighbors to either solve the problem through education and enforcement, or, if a street qualifies, to design an appropriate traffic calming improvement.

See our website for contact information for your neighborhood traffic contact person or for more information about the program at <http://www.cob.org/pw/index.htm> or on the Neighborhood Page on our website at <http://www.cob.org/pcd/planning/neighborhoods/neighborhoods.htm>.

- **Six Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** The neighborhoods' TIP priorities are under review the Public Works Advisory Committee and staff. These will be reviewed by the City Council as they update the TIP for 2008 and seek funding for those projects. **A public hearing on the TIP priorities is scheduled before Council for May 7th.** TIP projects typically cost between \$200,000 and several million dollars each and so a City wide prioritization process must occur annually to determine which projects will be on the TIP list for long term planning and funding.

Whatcom County Public Meeting—Lake Whatcom Comprehensive Storm Water Plan—April 17

A 2nd public meeting on The Lake Whatcom Comprehensive Storm Water Plan will be held on Tuesday, April 17th from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Bloedel-Donovan Beach Pavilion.

Topics of discussion will include project background and status, driving factors including regulatory requirements in association with Phase II NPDES, problems identified, alternatives under consideration (both watershed-wide and location specific), and funding options and considerations.

Please contact Sue Blake at the **Whatcom County Public Works** at 715-7450 or via e-mail at sblake@co.whatcom.wa.us

Three Green Power Challenge neighborhood winners!

Thanks to the Northwest Clean Air Agency, an additional neighborhood will be eligible for a Green Power Challenge award of \$1,000. Awards go to the three neighborhoods with the highest percentage of residential electric power users buying “Green Power (electrical power generated from renewal energy sources) which costs as little as an additional \$4.00 a month.

Exciting news: The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency has notified us that **Bellingham has the highest percentage of electrical green power users** on the EPA’s list of Green Power Communities! More than 11% of all of the electricity use in Bellingham is now from Green Power. This is the equivalent of taking about 4,200 cars off of the road.

On Earth Day, Saturday, April 21st, at 12:00 p.m. at the Bellingham Farmers Market, Mayor Douglas will announce the neighborhood association winners. There will be cake, kids’ activities and free CF light bulbs from the Northwest Clean Air Agency. Anyone who brings someone in to sign up for Green Power that day will receive a free T-shirt. Otherwise, to sign up, call a PSE energy advisor at 1-800-562-1482, or visit the website at www.pse.com/solutions/greenpower_signuphome.aspx

Jazz and Poetry at Bellingham Public Library

• Looking at: Jazz! Film and Discussion Series - Session 4: The Jazz Swing Era

Friday April 20, 2007 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. in the Lecture Room of the Bellingham Public Library. Featured Film **Benny Goodman: Adventures in the Kingdom of Swing**. Doors open 6:30 p.m. Free - Tickets required, but unclaimed seats released at 6:50 p.m., film begins at 7:00 p.m. in the Lecture Room of the Bellingham Public Library.

• **Bellingham Reads . . . Your Favorite Poem!** In honor of National Poetry Month, we invite you to select a poem that moves you and share it with those attending our Library’s book club, Bellingham Reads on April 25th. Everyone is welcome. Contact Suzanne Carlson-Prandini at (360) 676-6860 for more information. (Wednesday, April 25, 2007 at 7:00pm in the BPL Lecture Room)

Speed humps, unwelcome intruders, health of our water supply, the return of the bike patrols, and more on Inside Bellingham

Now showing on **BTV10’s** Inside Bellingham:

- Speed humps – Who puts them on our streets and why?
- Reed Canary Grass is an unwelcome intruder in city parks.
- Kim Spens on the health of our only drinking water supply – Lake Whatcom
- Bike patrols return to the downtown – And more!

BTV10 airs several times each week and is available to watch online, too. For BTV10 schedule information and access to on-line television programs, visit the city's website at <http://www.cob.org/>.