

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

May 9, 2007

Located on the Web at:

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

- **Lake Whatcom water quality is declining—become informed, be an active steward**
- **Silver Beach neighborhood planning to address Lake Whatcom Concerns**
- **City wide Neighborhood Disaster Preparedness Committee formed**
- **Emergency planning featured on BTV10's May "Inside Bellingham"**
- **Planning and Community Development – reporting in!**
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- **More winners—AmeriCorps volunteers on Whatcom Creek**
- **Bellingham neighborhoods plan seventh annual National Night Out Against Crime – August 7, 2007**
- **BTV10 Inside Bellingham—and more**
- **An opportunity to build leaders — Leadership Whatcom**
- **EverybodyBike!**

REMINDERS

Transfer station for yard waste open at Lakeway and Yew

May 13 — Mother's Day — Sculpture Show – Lifetime Community Achievement Award honors the late Joan and Dick Beardsley — 1 to 4 p.m.

**"Old Village Trail" – Open House – Review of Final Design Improvements-- Tuesday May 15th 7 p.m.
Mayor's Board Room, 2nd Floor of City Hall**

Bike to Work and School Day is Friday, May 18th! For information on biking events throughout the month go to: <http://www.everybodyBIKE.com>

Lake Whatcom



Lake Whatcom water quality is declining — become informed, be an active steward of Lake Whatcom

Lake Whatcom is the source of drinking water to some 95,000 people in Whatcom County, including the 82,000 served by the City of Bellingham. The health of this tremendously important resource is declining, and at a pace that is faster than expected.

Bellingham's drinking water is safe, but algae growth is making it less appealing and is requiring more expensive treatment to keep it safe.

Local governments are working hard to study the lake and make wise decisions about its future. We have made Lake Whatcom protection efforts a top priority for 2007, and will consider rigorous steps to protect our lake. These steps will include protecting more undeveloped land in the watershed, improving storm water treatment, and helping watershed residents become better stewards of the lake.

The information linked to this page is designed to help people understand the challenges we face as we work together to preserve and enhance Lake Whatcom. <http://www.cob.org/pw/lw/index.htm>

Silver Beach neighborhood planning to address lake issues

Recognizing their special role in protecting Lake Whatcom, the Silver Beach neighbors hope to include in their neighborhood plan measures to protect our precious source of drinking water.

Silver Beach is the only city neighborhood bordering the shores of Lake Whatcom. Neighborhood leaders are raising many questions for their residents and property owners to ponder as they seek consensus for neighborhood plan updates and try to support further lake protection efforts:

- Have we limited impervious surfaces to the degree necessary?
- Can we afford to have even one more house built in the watershed?
- Does every home need a lawn?

Neighborhood leaders also will explore values around recreational uses vs. lake protection and intergovernmental actions to draw state and federal attention and funding to solve lake issues.

“These are among the many contentious questions we will be grappling with over the next several months as we try to help chart a course to a healthy lake. It is our hope that when future generations look back on this decade, they will applaud the leadership and the selfless vision guiding it. They will recognize that rather than settling for half measures, our city leaders and neighborhood residents have insisted on the hard work necessary to preserve the lake for generations whose grandparents have yet to be born.” Mike Johnston, President, Silver Beach Neighborhood Association

To participate in the Silver Beach Neighborhood Association and its plan update work contact Mike Robinson, MNAC representative at BRobinson04@MSN.com.

City-wide neighborhood disaster preparedness committee formed

We have asked all 21 of our neighborhood associations to participate in a city-wide planning process to build and strengthen disaster readiness among neighbors. This is because, in a disaster, your most immediate source of help will be your neighbors. As Katrina and other major disasters have shown, our first responders are simply not able to handle all the significant citizen and community needs in a disaster — communication and infrastructure systems go down; damage can overwhelm our emergency response capabilities. Knowing what to do in the first hours of a disaster response may help you save a life, reduce the severity of possible injuries, and reduce the amount of damage the neighborhood sustains.

Our emergency management staff is working with a committee of neighborhood association representatives to plan for implementing a step by step program for neighborhood readiness called “Map Your Neighborhood (MYN)”. They will hold their first meeting this month and from there begin the work of neighborhood disaster preparedness. Stay tuned...we’ll report their progress in future editions! (See also BTV10’s May edition of “Inside Bellingham” for more about our disaster preparedness).

Emergency planning highlighted on BTV10’s May “Inside Bellingham”

Filmed in the Guide/Meridian/Cordata neighborhood, the May episode of *Inside Bellingham* highlights individual and community emergency preparedness, lake-friendly gardening, tips for cyclists and motorists to share the road, and more.

Inside Bellingham airs on BTV10 several times each week and is available to watch on-line, too. For BTV10 schedule information and access to on-line television programs, visit the city’s website at www.cob.org. *Inside Bellingham*, produced by the City of Bellingham, gives viewers an inside peek into city government programs, services, activities and people.

Planning and Community Development—reporting in!

Shoreline Master Program heads to City Council

The Planning Commission finalized their recommendations on the update to the Shoreline Master Program. Those recommendations will now be forwarded to the City Council on Monday, June 4th. The Council will conduct at least one public hearing before finalizing the document and sending it on to the Department of Ecology for final review and approval. For further information, contact Steve Sundin, ssundin@cob.org.

Waterfront Redevelopment Project

On Monday, May 7th, Karen Morse, president of Western Washington University, provided a presentation to the City Council on WWU's planning efforts regarding the waterfront. WWU secured \$1 million from the state legislature to continue working on a plan for a university presence on the waterfront. Also on Monday, Len Johnson, the city's Waterfront Redevelopment Manager, provided a waterfront project update to the City Council. This update is the first of monthly updates to keep City Council apprised of the progress as the project enters the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) phase, and ultimately, the regulatory approval phase scheduled to begin by the end of the year. The deadline for public comment on the EIS scoping is May 11th. All public comments should be addressed to sepaofficial@portofbellingham.com.

Upcoming Public Hearings on Neighborhood Plan Amendments

On Thursday, June 7th, two public hearings with the Planning Commission are scheduled for 2007 Neighborhood Plan Amendments in the Puget and Guide Meridian neighborhoods. For details on those proposals, click on those respective neighborhoods from the see the city's neighborhood page at <http://www.cob.org/pcd/planning/neighborhoods/neighborhoods.htm>

Lettered Streets (to Columbia) Old Village Trail design ready

The Old Village Trail travels between Maritime Heritage Park in the Lettered Streets Neighborhood, and Elizabeth Park in the Columbia Neighborhood (see [Old Village Trail Location Map, 390K PDF](#)). In 2003 the Lettered Streets Neighborhood Association applied for and was awarded a Neighborhood Initiatives Program (NIP) grant by the Planning and Community Development to make improvements to the trail.

\$160,000 in Community Development Block Grant NIP funds was allocated for the project, and since that time Planning & Community Development, Parks and Public Works Department staff have worked with residents, property owners, and interested citizens to develop a master plan for improvements to the trail.

The public is invited to a May 15th open house to review and give final comments to construction drawings/design for the trail (7 p.m., Mayor's Board Room, City hall). Questions should be directed to Katie Franks, Planning & Community Development, 676-6855 ext. 106 or kfranks@cob.org. See also our website, http://www.cob.org/pcd/cd/neighborhoods/nip_current_projects_ovt.htm

Public Works Projects in the neighborhoods—new and updated info

Various:

- We have a number of annual programs to improve and maintain our basic public utilities. This includes sewer system replacements and rehabilitation in areas where we have a history of maintenance problems. We also work to repair bridges including crack repair as identified in the 2006 bridge inspection report. We also do install/replace pavement markings, paint stripes, and repair street surfaces, with a lot of this work happening during the better weather of spring, summer, and early fall.

Birchwood

- In April, Public Works staff attended the Birchwood Neighborhood Association meeting to:
 - review the designs for curb, gutter, and sidewalks on Birchwood Avenue west of Meridian Street including an eastbound right turn lane;
 - future plans for two roundabouts on Northwest Avenue;

- 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).

Staff responded to questions and comments and invited the public to submit comments to our Public Works staff:

Birchwood and Guide Meridian

- **Northwest Avenue/I-5 Pedestrian Improvements:** We reviewed this project with Birchwood neighbors at their April meeting. This dialogue with neighbors to develop effective improvements for pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic movement in this busy area is an important part of our planning and design work for these projects on Northwest between McLeod and Bakerview Roads. This is a major walking route for school children traveling to and from Shuksan Middle School.

Sehome, York, and the Greater Central Business District:

- The Holly Street Corridor (Ellis to State) Improvements pursuant to the City Center Master Plan are now under construction. We are periodically publishing notices regarding traffic disruption on Holly Street during this work. 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. Most of the curb and sidewalk on the south side of the road has been removed. Work on the utility trench is in progress so that our contractor can install storm drainage improvements and utility crossings.

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. We expect to open bids for both the architectural and streetscape designs on June 7th. Meanwhile, we are nearing the end of the design stage on our project to improve the life safety elements of our historic downtown Federal Building and make it more attractive/useable to new tenants.

Columbia

- Our West Street project designed to make West Street between North and Squaticum Parkway safer pedestrian and bicycle use, provide better drainage and roadway improvements is almost ready for final inspection.

Guide Meridian:

- Our joint planning of water and sewer extensions as the State Department of Transportation does improvement work for the Guide Meridian between Horton Road and Smith Road continues. The project was recently awarded by WSDOT to Imco Construction of Bellingham.
- The three-way stop at Kellogg and Eliza has been installed including 24-hour flashing beacons and stop bars. Summer extra labor crews will install the planned crosswalk markings as time and weather permits.
- We are beginning the planning of a project to upgrade the sanitary sewer (wastewater) system pump station on Horton Road. This is needed to increase capacity to handle growth in this area of the City.

Happy Valley

- We are still monitoring pavement settling issues on near a storm water vault installed last year on 30th Street. Our crews will be doing streetscape work at the end of 32nd Street this month with landscaping to follow.

Happy Valley/South

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

Mount Baker

- Pedestrian improvements at Barkley Boulevard and Chandler Parkway including pavement markings and a flashing warning system are now complete
- Our planning and design work to replace three culverts on James Street requires significant coordination with Bay to Baker Trail planning, future roadway improvement planning and the possibility of development proposals for James. Part of the design will also include protection of wetland and streams in the area.
- Sunset Drive Improvements east of Woburn: For this major project, we have completed right of way acquisition for 50 percent of the parcels needed to accomplish this state highway/major arterial improvement. This project is scheduled for construction in 2008.

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. This project also requires us to look at impacts to Lincoln and Whatcom Creeks for all phases of the project.
- We'll be reviewing the design progress of San Juan Boulevard with the neighborhood this month.

Roosevelt

- Our prep work for the Woburn and Alabama Intersection Improvements to provide dual right turn lanes and provide adequate stormwater handling continues at this location of heavy traffic volumes.

Samish:

- San Juan Boulevard, Phase I: We'll soon be submitting documentation of our wetland inventory and issues for review by various agencies on this complex project.
- Yew Street Upper Reservoir: We're ready to begin implementing the design for this 1.3 million gallon water reservoir as part of infrastructure development for Samish Hill.

Silver Beach:

- Silver Beach and Alabama Hill neighbors especially will be interested in our new and very informative ***Steward's of the Lake*** publication available on our website – www.cob.org
- We continue work on 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/Maryland alley street and drainage Improvements, and work on East Maryland Street, E. North, E. Oregon, and Hayward Drive water quality.

Whatcom Falls:

- Our project to replace the filter media and upgrade the infrastructure of the Water Treatment Plant is moving right along. Filter #1 is complete and on-line. Filter #2 is in progress. 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.

Neighborhood participation in transportation planning moving ahead

- **Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP):** By our April 30th deadline, 17 Neighborhood Associations submitted their 2007 top three residential street locations for Public Works to study. Public Works staff will conduct traffic counts at the residential street locations indicated and work with the neighbors of qualifying locations 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 Draft 2008-2013 TIP priorities list was subject to a public hearing before City Council on May 7th. The City Council continued the discussion of the Draft 2008-2013 TIP to a May 21st work session and left the public comment period open. This was the first year that Neighborhood Associations were asked to identify the priority for their neighborhood, as listed in the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, as an important part of the information considered by staff and elected officials in establishing funding priorities for transportation infrastructure projects. The City is required to adopt and submit a six year TIP to the State of Washington by July 1st of each year and neighborhood input will continue to be an important part of this annual process.

Our Taylor Street Dock—a winner outside Bellingham, too!

The City's Taylor Street Dock, which is near the Fairhaven end of the South Bay Trail, was presented with an "Award of Excellence" from the Washington Recreation & Park Association (WRPA) at their annual conference in Blaine last month. This award is part of the WRPA's Professional and Spotlight awards that are a coveted honor for the individuals and organizations of the Parks and Recreation profession. The awards honor public agencies and individuals for outstanding and unique achievement. Taylor Street Dock is certainly that. If you have yet to visit this dock, it is at the foot of Taylor Street near the Chrysalis Hotel, and includes a small gateway park. Once on the dock, you walk out and over the water of South Bellingham Bay coming back to land again at a short trail link to Boulevard Park. This may now be our busiest trail, for commuters and recreational users.

Congratulations to the community leaders who had the vision to see the possibility in this historic structure and in the design that adapted the dock as a Parks and Trails amenity. Congratulations also to the many dedicated staff who worked to bring this vision to fruition, and to the volunteers and citizens who are boosters, users, contributors to our community's outstanding park and trail system.

Columbia, Fairhaven, and the Central Business District win Green Power Challenge

These three neighborhoods earned \$1,000 from Puget Sound Energy and the Northwest Clean Air Agency for having 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. To sign up for green power, call a PSE energy advisor at 1-800-562-1482, or visit the website at www.pse.com/solutions/greenpower_signuphome.aspx

More winners—AmeriCorps volunteers on Whatcom and Baker Creeks

You may have seen our 13 Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) members working on restoring fish and wildlife habitat along city streams. Our City WCC crews have now been recognized by the Washington Department of Ecology as “Outstanding Crew of the Quarter”.
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/0706015.pdf>

This year, the crews have been working on three major in-stream projects located along Whatcom and Baker creeks. As part of the WCC Program, crews also plan and organize an annual community service project. Last January, members of the City-sponsored crew organized an infant food and supply drive for the Bellingham Food Bank in celebration of Martin Luther King Day which raised nearly \$12,500.

“This year’s Washington Conservation Corps Crews just amazed us with their positive attitude and can-do approach. They are an integral part of the City of Bellingham’s restoration program, and working with them on a daily basis has been a real pleasure,” said City of Bellingham Environmental Coordinator Sue Madsen, who oversees the work of the WCC crews.

Bellingham WCC members include Elizabeth Anderson, Andy Barry, Rebecca Britten, Cassidy Geppert, Tanya Hladik, Adam Jackson, David Lofgren, Vanessa Lott, Chris Matson, Kaci Radcliffe, David Row, Kevin Walters and Lauren Williamson.

Bellingham neighborhoods plan seventh annual National Night Out Against Crime – August 7, 2007

For the seventh year running, Bellingham neighborhoods and Police and Fire Departments will be involved in the National Night Out Against Crime program. National Night Out is celebrated in communities nationwide and teams Police and Fire agencies with community leaders, civic groups and local businesses to promote safe and healthy neighborhoods.

National Night Out activities are designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate participation in local anti-crime programs, strengthen neighborhood spirit and community partnerships, and send a message to criminals that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back. These neighborhood and block parties are just plain fun with cookouts, potlucks, or ice cream socials.

National Night Out is a great opportunity for demonstrating neighborliness and neighborhood commitment to crime prevention. To schedule an event in your neighborhood or for further information contact Officer Tara Fleetwood at 676-6924 or email at tfleetwood@cob.org or your neighborhood association leadership. You can find their contact information at our website for the Mayor’s Neighborhood Advisory Commission: http://www.cob.org/documents/mayor/boards-commissions/neighborhood/2007%20MNAC%20Roster_Public_ABN.pdf

An opportunity to build leaders – Leadership Whatcom

For the many volunteers working on behalf of their neighborhoods, you may be interested in an opportunity to build even better leadership skills through the Leadership Whatcom Program. The Leadership Whatcom program brings together both experienced and “emerging” community leaders from throughout Whatcom County. The views, ideas, and experience of the participants/trainees are an important part of the learning experience meant to develop even better team-building, problem-solving and collaborative approaches to your neighborhood work. Also, you will take a real look at community issues affecting Whatcom County, making this more relevant to your needs and more interesting. The program includes field visits to urban and rural Whatcom County, in-class training, interaction with community leaders, and small group community projects chosen by participants.

Leadership Whatcom is now taking applications for the next program series. Up to 24 participants meet one Friday each month for ten months, September through June (excluding December). Application deadline for the 2007-08 year is Friday, May 18th. Application forms, program objectives and perspectives of those involved in the program can be found on the website.

<http://www.leadershipwhatcom.org>

And...short course on productive public conversations (such as occur at neighborhood meetings!)

Neighborhood associations often draw together large numbers of residents to discuss issues, sometimes controversial, and with many view points. To provide meeting leaders with a toolkit of skills and resources in support of productive and civil large-scale discussions, Leadership Whatcom is also offering an evening training. This event will be Thursday, May 17th from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Pre-registration is required, so contact Leadership Whatcom. Please RSVP to Allison Roberts at 715-1061 or aroberts@whatcomcoalition.org

Also from the Whatcom Coalition... Strategies to Address Poverty

Whatcom Coalition for Healthy Communities is holding a community summit on poverty in Whatcom County. Hear what was learned from the recent Whatcom Prosperity Project client survey, Friday, June 1st, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please RSVP by May 23rd to Allison Roberts at 715-1061 or aroberts@whatcomcoalition.org

EverybodyBike: a month of fun and prizes in Whatcom County!

Celebrate National Bike Month in May. EverybodyBike is a month of fun and prizes for everyone on two wheels. Anyone who bikes or walks to destinations in Whatcom County instead of driving for at least three trips during May is eligible to win terrific prizes, including a trip to bike-friendly Holland, a new bike, luxury dinners and more. Kids can win a new bike, a rock-wall party at the YMCA and other cool stuff! If you're new to bike transportation, you'll have additional prizes that you can win.

Bike anywhere! Any bike or walking trip that replaces a car trip counts. Try biking to work or school, and once you're there – why not bike to lunch? Parking will be so much easier! Do you live too far from work to ride your bike? Try biking for your errands or to visit friends on the weekend.

Enter to win by recording your biking and walking trips at <http://www.everybodyBIKE.com/> before June 7th.

EverybodyBike includes the celebration of Bike to Work and School Day on May 18th as well as a whole month of fun events to help you get rolling. You can find these events through the calendar on the website above.