



City of Bellingham MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION

City of Bellingham Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission "JUST SO YOU ARE AWARE" – Information of Interest October 2007

Located on the Web at:

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

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Reminders

Clean and Green accepts Fall Yard Waste

Clearing Restricted on Lake Whatcom

Installation of Whatcom Centennial Story Pole—October 12, 4PM Whatcom County Courthouse

Find October Bellingham Public Library programs at:

http://www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org/bpl/source/data/events/events_oct_07.pdf

Learn about your neighborhood at:

<http://www.cob.org/pcd/planning/neighborhoods/neighborhoods.htm>

CITY AND COUNTY ELECTIONS! DON'T FORGET TO VOTE—NOVEMBER 6

Mayor Douglas names new Neighborhood Services Coordinator

Mayor Douglas named Linda Stewart as our new Neighborhood Services Coordinator. Linda has extensive experience working with neighborhood associations. This work includes the design of a nationally recognized "neighborhood walkability" assessment for Olympia neighborhoods as well as serving as an advisor to organizational leadership, working in partnership with neighbors and government on crime prevention, land use, planning and development. She has been both an employee (Thurston County Public Health Department and King County Parks, Planning and Resources) and an elected official (Highline School Board) of local government. Her career represents many achievements in building and supporting community partnerships.

Though a relative newcomer to Bellingham, Linda was able convey to the interview panel and Mayor Douglas that she has already learned a lot about Bellingham and its neighborhoods. A panel of four

neighborhood association members and four staff members interviewed the top eight applicants before presenting recommendations to Mayor Douglas for his interview process.

Linda will officially assume her position on October 22. Please welcome her as she puts her considerable talents to work on behalf of our neighborhoods and community.

Lettered Streets wins three Whatcom in Bloom awards

Lettered Streets Neighborhood Association has mounted a number of efforts to beautify sections of their neighborhood. Lettered Streets is one of the City's oldest neighborhoods. Their work is now receiving community recognition. Their work on Gossage Garden and the Parklette at C and Holly Streets earned them 2nd and 3rd place in the Community Gardens category in this year's Whatcom in Bloom. The Parklette also won a special award for "Best Use of Recycled Material" and a \$75 gift from the RE Store. Sponsored by Whatcom County Parks, Whatcom in Bloom recognizes beautification projects throughout Bellingham and Whatcom County.

For years, Lettered Streets Neighborhood Association has provided volunteers to maintain and improve the landscaping of Gossage Garden (F Street at Cornwall and Alabama). With flowers, soil, and labor donations from The Garden Spot and Northwest Recycling (some pieces are from GP's waterfront site), neighbors cleaned up and landscaped the Parklette on Holly and C. Thanks especially to Judy Buchanan (Gossage Garden) and Michael McAuley (Parklette) for your dedication to neighborhood beautification. *Additional funding was provided through a City Small and Simple Grant. Lettered Streets' latest project is the B Street Wayside at the Holly Street Wayside at the Holly Street gateway along Whatcom Creek.*

Planning and Community Development News

Over 50 attend Neighborhood Plan Update Technical Workshop

Neighborhood volunteers recently had an opportunity to meet with Planning, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation staff as they continue to work on their proposals to update or revise their neighborhood plans. Planning Director, Tim Stewart, answered commonly asked questions before the participants broke into interest groups to obtain information to help them move forward with their work. Staff was present to answer questions on the development code, transportation planning, public involvement processes, parks master planning, as well as specifics of neighborhood plans.

Each neighborhood is at a different place in their work and although one size does not fit all, there is much commonality and the opportunity to come together and learn from each other appears to be valuable for the participants.

Consultant Hired for Fairhaven Highlands EIS

City officials have hired a consultant to conduct an environmental assessment of Fairhaven Highlands, a process that will be managed by the City and funded by the company proposing to develop the property. Conducting an environmental impact statement is the first step in understanding the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development, and is expected to include opportunities for the public to participate.

The City issued a Request for Proposals for the EIS consultant. City staff unanimously selected ESA Adolfson & Associates due to their extensive experience preparing EISs under three-party agreements, and their demonstrated ability to provide an objectively developed document. PCD Director Tim Stewart is the City's SEPA official for the project. All documents related to the EIS, including additional studies and reports, are posted on the city's website and will be continually updated as the process proceeds.

See <http://www.cob.org/pcd/planning/growth/fairhaven-highlands.htm> for details, or contact Katie Franks at kfranks@cob.org for more information. To be a party of record on this process, please contact Fiona Starr at fstarr@cob.org. Both Katie and Fiona can be reached at the Planning & Community Development Department at 676-6982.

Old Town Master Plan Moving Forward

At long last, the Old Town Master Plan is heading to the Planning Commission on November 8th. A well-attended neighborhood meeting was held in late September. The Lettered Streets Neighborhood Association held its own meeting to review the draft plan as well. Documents are available for viewing online at <http://www.cob.org/pcd/planning/OldTownSub-areaPlanning.htm> Staff contacts are: Tara Sundin, tsundin@cob.org, and Chris Koch, ckoch@cob.org, 676-6880.

Samish Neighborhood Plan Update

An updated draft of the Samish Neighborhood Plan Update is available online at <http://www.cob.org/pcd/planning/SamishNbrhd.htm>. The Planning Commission will continue its work on this item on October 25th at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Staff contact is Pat Carman, pcarman@cob.org, or 676-6982.

City Council continues work on DRAFT Shoreline Master Program

The next work session for this item is scheduled for the regular City Council meeting on Monday, October 15th in the afternoon. The topic will be a continued review of Nonconformity and Hold Restoration Harmless, as well as the interface between the Shoreline Master Program and the Critical Areas Ordinance. Staff contact is Steve Sundin, smpupdate@cob.org.

Columbia – Cornwall – Lettered Streets Final two Fountain Plaza Design Charettes

The last two charettes for the Columbia—Cornwall--Lettered Streets Neighborhood Associations and the RE Store for revitalizing the Fountain Plaza site (corner of Meridian and Broadway) are coming up.

Oct. 11th - Thurs - 7-9 p.m. Overall Site Design for the Fountain Plaza - How would the community like to see the entire plaza re-created?

Nov 7th - Weds - 7-9 p.m. Finalize the vision by showing 3 different possible plans and taking final comments to refine the final vision.

The meetings will take place in the main parish hall at the Fountain Community Church on Broadway and Halleck, right next to the plaza, thanks to Rick Quall and his parish.

The final 3 plans alternatives will be available on the RE Store and RE Sources websites a final concept at neighborhood association meetings in November/December.

Questions can be directed to Jason Darling, Outreach and Marketing Manager for RE Store via email: jason@re-store.org or phone (360) 734-7161

A message from Officer Fleetwood: 8 Rules for Child Safety

Officer Fleetwood provides this “8 Rules for Safety” for parents to share with their school age children in a conversation about their safety. Please view this as an opportunity to discuss safety and build your child's confidence in their ability to distinguish safe people from unsafe ones and to seek help from a safe adult when necessary.

Tara advises: "As parents, it is important for us all to remember that we are responsible for teaching our kids how to listen to their intuition about safety. Please call (360-676-6924) or e-mail me, tfleetwood@cob.org to discuss this further."

8 Rules for My Safety

1. I will always check first with the person in charge before going anywhere – even with someone I know.
2. I will check with my parents before I accept anything from anyone – even if I know them.
3. I take at least one friend with me when I go places or play outside.
4. I know my full name, mailing address, telephone with area-code, and my parents' names/work/cell numbers.
5. I will say "NO" if someone tries to touch me or treat me in a way that makes me feel scared, uncomfortable or confused.
6. I know that I can tell my parents if I feel afraid, uncomfortable or confused.
7. It's okay to say "NO" sometimes, and I know how to find someone to help me.
8. I am strong, smart and I have the right to be safe!

X _____
Signature of Child

Consider participating in the 2008 Bellingham Police Citizens' Academy

The Bellingham Police Department is accepting applications for its Citizens' Academy 2008.

The Citizens' Academy is a 12-week program designed to help Bellingham residents increase their understanding of how the Police Department works within the community. Instructors are police officers and other department personnel who use their particular subject expertise on the following topics: Firearms, Patrol Procedures, SWAT, Use of Force, Investigations, Narcotics, Traffic, K-9, and Crime Prevention.

Participants gain an understanding of the daily decisions the officers must make in the line of duty. Participants also tour the Bellingham Police Department, Whatcom County Jail, and the 911 Communications Center.

Citizens eligible to apply for the Academy must be 18 or older, and live and/or work in Bellingham. Participation in the Academy includes a commitment to attend all the training sessions. Applicants must complete and pass a background check prior to acceptance. There is no cost to participate in the Citizens' Academy.

Winter 2008 classes will start Tuesday January 8th continuing for 12 weeks. The classes are held from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in the Bellingham Police Department's Training Room. Applications are

available on our web site at www.cob.org/police and must be mailed to Officer Tara Fleetwood c/o Bellingham Police Department at 505 Grand Avenue Bellingham WA 98225 no later than November 30, 2007.

For more information call Crime Prevention Officer Tara Fleetwood at (360) 676-6924 or email at tfleetwood@cob.org.

October Inside Bellingham — Visit the Happy Valley Neighborhood, see a "walking school bus," and learn more about other public safety services. These stories and more are featured on the October episode of *Inside Bellingham*.

Inside Bellingham is an award-winning series produced by the City of Bellingham that gives viewers a peek inside city government programs, activities and people. Episodes of *Inside Bellingham* air on BTV10 several times per week. See the BTV10 [program schedule](http://www.cob.org/btv10/inside-bellingham.htm) for current times or watch online at <http://www.cob.org/btv10/inside-bellingham.htm>

Neighbor disaster preparedness moves forward

On September 27th, the City of Bellingham Office of Emergency Management and Whatcom County Sheriff's Office Division of Emergency Management sponsored a "Train the Trainer" workshop to prepare neighborhood committees to introduce our "Map Your Neighborhood" (MYN) disaster preparedness program to their neighborhood. MYN teaches neighbors (from 5 to 30 households) how to work together to prepare and take care of themselves and their neighbors after a disaster. Our Emergency Management Staff and the City-wide MNAC committee working on MYN call these groups of neighbors "Micro-Neighborhoods".

Training our Trainers was Dr. LuAn Johnson, the author of MYN. LuAn explained that generally the citizens of a city are often slow adopters of programs like MYN. However, we had 55 Bellingham residents representing 17 neighborhoods attend. We are off to a great start.

- To book a MYN training session for your "micro-neighborhoods," contact Don Davis, Emergency Management Specialist, City of Bellingham Office of Emergency Management, 360-676-6933 or ddavis@cob.org. He will put you in touch with your neighborhood's MYN chair to help you organize your "Micro Neighborhood" and provide training for you and your neighbors.

For more information about these programs and more, follow the links from Bellingham's Office of Emergency Management website, <http://www.cob.org/fire/emergency.htm>, or contact the City of Bellingham Office of Emergency Management at 676-6933.

Parks and Recreation news

Old Village Trail

Work is scheduled to begin this month on the Old Village Trail Improvement Project. This project is the product of a Neighborhood Initiative Program Grant requested by the Lettered Street Neighborhood Association to improve this beloved pedestrian trail link developed in the 1970s.

Old Village Trail is a seven-block urban trail that combines public Right of Way with pedestrian walkways through Old Town, one of the City's oldest urban areas. The trail runs between Maritime Heritage Park and Broadway Avenue on Bancroft and Clinton Streets, then to Elizabeth Park via sidewalks. Over time many of the bollards that were originally located to keep vehicles off the pedestrian areas have deteriorated or are missing, allowing vehicular traffic to encroach in numerous places along the trail. Because the Old Town area has been the focus of recent revitalization efforts,

additional pressures on the trail have been created by adjacent housing and commercial development.

Specific improvements include repair of deteriorated pavement, way-finding signs, landscaping, and the addition of a safety crosswalk at F Street. The project will also provide better buffering from adjacent uses, preserve wildlife corridors and eradicate various invasive plants, replacing these with more desirable ones. (The project does not include improving the trail between D Street and E Street due to a pending adjacent mixed-use development.)

The Old Village Trail Improvement Project has been a partnership between various City departments, the Lettered Streets and Columbia Neighborhood Associations, neighbors adjacent to the trail, and many citizen volunteers. Construction is planned for completion in early 2008.

For more information, contact either Katie Franks in the Planning and Community Development Department, or Jonathan Schilk in the Parks and Recreation Department.

Volunteer for our parks!

Volunteers contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of Bellingham's growing trail system by restoring wildlife habitat, controlling for litter and safety hazards, helping with "service learning" projects and trail building. There are many ways to get involved and it is rewarding and fun. Upcoming opportunities as listed below and more information is available on our website:

<http://www.cob.org/parks/volunteer/index.htm>.

Squalicum Creek Park — October 13th ~ 10am-12pm

Help the Kulshan Kiwanis weed, mulch & plant along the Bay to Baker Trail. *Park at the end of Firwood Street: walk across the Bay to Baker trail to the site.*

Euclid Park — October 20th ~ 9am-12pm

Join us in a battle against the invasive English ivy! *Going east on Lakeway, take the first major left after Oriental Ave. Follow Euclid Ave until you see our work party sign. Parking is limited, so bike or carpool if you can.*

South Bay Trail — October 20th ~ 1-3pm

Mulch & weed plantings along the South Bay Trail with Village Books. *Park in Fairhaven & catch the trail at 10th & Mill. Then follow the trail to Douglas St.*

Make a Difference Day — October 27th ~ 9am-12pm

Join volunteers throughout the community assisting with a wide range of projects. Contact the Whatcom Volunteer Center for more information: 734-3055

Franklin Park

Work with local community members to restore native plants along the hillside. We'll be planting & mulching! *Park is located off Ellis at corner of Whatcom & Grant. Parking is available on street.*

Squalicum Creek Park

We'll be planting shrubs & trees for the new park with the Public Works, Environmental Resource's Washington Conservation Corps Team. *Park at lot off Squalicum Parkway opposite West St.*

Connelly Creek — November 3rd ~ 9am-12pm

The Bellingham Parks Volunteer Program and the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association join forces to free native plantings from invasive reed canary grass. Parking at the west end of the Food Pavilion parking lot; walk west along Fairhaven Parkway & follow signs to site.

Woodstock Farm — November 3rd ~ 12-3pm

Weed & plant a new watershed friendly garden with Surfriders at Woodstock Farm. *Park at the North Chuckanut Trailhead & wait for shuttle to farm.*

FYI — Greenways Advisory Committee Vacancies: The Greenways Advisory Committee will have two upcoming vacancies. Anyone interested can obtain an application from the Mayor's Office, or at: http://www.cob.org/mayor/boards_commissions/index.htm"

Keeping neighborhoods fall fresh, clean and green

Fall is in the air and if your garden looks past its peak, it's time to clean up. The first thing you want to do is get rid of all the dead and dying plant debris. So, what do you do with that big pile of yard waste? In Bellingham there are several options:

Clean Green Transfer Station

The Bellingham Clean Green Transfer Station accepts residential yard waste from Whatcom County residents. The site is operated by the Bellingham Public Works Department as one of Whatcom County's waste management programs. The fee for dumping at Clean Green is \$2 per load. A load is defined as a pick-up truck, garbage bag, trailer or bundle. A pick-up truck with a trailer will be charged as two loads.

The Clean Green Transfer Station is located on Woburn Street near the corner of Lakeway and Woburn Streets and is open 8:30 am to 4:00 pm on Saturdays and Sundays through November. Materials accepted are grass clippings, garden clippings, limbs 8 inches or less in diameter and less than 7 feet in length, vines, leaves and other natural vegetation. For more information, please call the Bellingham Public Works Department at (360) 676-6850 or <http://www.cob.org/pw/solidwaste.htm>.

Home Compost

Compost is one of nature's best mulches and soil amendments, and you can use it instead of commercial fertilizers. Best of all, compost is cheap. You can make it without spending a cent. Using compost improves soil structure, texture, and aeration and increases the soil's water-holding capacity. For more information about compost, call WSU Cooperative Extension office at 676-6736.

FoodPlus Recycling

Materials collected in this program are delivered to [Green Earth Technologies \(GET\)](#) in Lynden for composting. Composting is a natural process that breaks down organic materials turning them into a rich and beneficial soil amendment. For more information about the FoodPlus Recycling program contact Sanitary Service at 734-3490 or visit their website at www.ssc-inc.com.

We need your help

The City would like to ask your assistance in keeping our storm drains clear to avoid flooding when those winter rains begin. If you see a storm drain in your neighborhood covered with leaves and other debris, take a moment to clean it off using a shovel or broom. **Be sure you stay on the sidewalk and not in the roadway when clearing the drain.**

Clearing restrictions in Lake Whatcom Watershed began October 1

Annual restrictions on land clearing, adopted by the City of Bellingham to protect Lake Whatcom, become effective on October 1.

The Silver Beach Ordinance, adopted in 2001, is in effect from October 1 through April 30. This regulation places conditions for land-disturbing activities with exposed soil areas greater than 500

square feet. In order to be in compliance, contractors and homeowners must apply approved soil-coverage techniques including:

- Grasses that are well established and without erosion potential. Sod is acceptable. No soil or earth may be visible.
- Wood chips, mulch or straw that fully covers the exposed area to a minimum depth of 3" and prevents erosion from the site.
- Crushed rock or gravel not less than ¾" in aggregate size and a minimum of 4" deep.
- Finished landscaping that, through a combination of plantings and/or mulching, prevents erosion and captures runoff.

The ordinance does not provide for time extensions. Sites that are out of compliance on October 1 may be subject to penalties of up to \$1,500 per day of non-compliance. For more information about the ordinance contact Bill Reilly at 676-6961 or email breilly@cob.org.

Downtown parking restrictions enforced for street sweeping

Starting Oct. 23, vehicles parked downtown in "No Parking" areas on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., (hours of downtown street sweeping), will receive parking tickets.

Growth in the downtown area, including the addition of residences, has made sweeping increasingly difficult for our crews because of cars left parked overnight. We need cleared streets to be able to sweep clean.

Street sweeping improves community appearance, helps keep heavy metals and other pollutants from entering local waterways, and reduces localized flooding during heavy rains by keeping storm drains and gutters clean and free of debris.

In July, the City started a scheduled street sweeping program in the downtown area. Signs were installed marking areas affected by the new program. Streets are swept weekly between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with north-south streets swept on Tuesdays and east-west streets swept on Wednesdays. Downtown alleys are scheduled to be swept on the first Tuesday and Wednesday of each month.

Since the start of the program in July, the City has refrained from enforcing the "No Parking" zones to allow area residents and business to adapt to the change. Illegally parked vehicles have thus far only been posted with reminder notices not to park in the area during sweeping hours. Unfortunately, some drivers continue to park in the "No Parking" areas, which has limited the City's ability to effectively sweep streets. So, on October 23rd, the parking restrictions will be enforced and \$20 fine levied on violators.

Flyers with a map of the sweeping routes and information about the program are available at www.cob.org, at downtown businesses and properties and at City Hall, 210 Lottie Street.

Public Works in the neighborhoods

Thanks to Ravyn Whitewolf, Engineering Manager, for providing this monthly summary of public works projects in the neighborhoods. Thanks to our citizens for your patience as we complete our good weather overlay and sidewalk repair work!

Birchwood:

- Birchwood west of Meridian: Design work for curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements is progressing. We are working with property owners to look at options to reduce impact of construction on existing trees. Construction to take place in 2008.

- West Illinois Street extension to Marine Drive along Timpson Way: This project to divert truck traffic to the designated route requires coordination with Whatcom County, the Bellingham Technical College, Oeser Company, and Morse Steel. It involves a creek crossing and railroad spur relocation. These aspects will take time to work through. Nevertheless, we expect a design report from the consultant in November.

Central Business District:

- Champion Street water main and Bay and Holly Streetscape Improvement: This project will improve citizen safety, increase mobility, improve lighting and enhance the downtown. We will begin construction on the Champion Street part of this project this month and continue to proceed with the design work on the Bay and Holly Streetscape for construction in 2008.
- Federal Building Renovations: Lots of design and logistics work to this project as our schedule must consider the need for federal agencies to relocate. Construction project bidding will occur soon and construction work will happen in 2008.
- Railroad Avenue/Depot Market Square: We are doing design work to partially improve the leased space at Depot Market Square as well as work on a permanent covered bicycle storage facility on Railroad Avenue by the square.
- Art and Children's Museum: Coordinating with the Public Facilities District, we have completed the excavation for the basement, foundation, and footings. We'll soon begin the underground electrical and plumbing work and excavate the elevator shaft.

Columbia:

- Sidewalk replacement work continues into November.

Fairhaven:

Repair and Replacement of the Post Point Sewer Treatment Plant Secondary Emergency Outfall Pipe: We completed the marine segment of our pipe installation on 9/20 when the pipe was "sunk" into Bellingham Bay without incident. We are now completing the process of restoring landscaping in Marine Park and at the Plant itself.

Guide Meridian/Cordata:

- Horton Road Pump Station Upgrade: We continue the design work to increase the capacity of this pump station to accommodate flows from north Bellingham.
- Meridian Street Water & Sewer Extension: Testing is underway for the completed water main extension; sewer main construction is next. This is a joint project with Washington Department of Transportation.
- Street resurfacing work on Northwest Drive is complete and design work continues for sidewalk and roundabout improvements between the Interstate ramp and Bakerview Road.

Lettered Streets:

- Storm water facilities improvements at C and Astor Streets: Expect construction to begin in November.

Mount Baker:

- Bakerview and Irongate Traffic Signal: We're still scoping this project; stay tuned at efforts to provide for increased vehicular safety for vehicles exiting the Irongate Industrial park onto Bakerview.
- Phase II of Sunset Drive improvements (Woburn to McLeod): This complicated project is progressing with the completion of acquisition of 31 of 55 parcels and relocation of two homes in September. We are proceeding with the wetland mitigation design.

Puget:

- Puget (South of Fraser Street) Pedestrian and Bike Improvements: Sidewalks are graded and road paving work is complete on this part of Puget Street. Now we begin the considerable work to construct bicycle lanes, curbs, gutters and sidewalks on Fraser Street from Puget to the Regency Court Apartments. There are considerable permit challenges due to physical and environmental issues, including the need for wetland protection. This last project is Phase 3 of a multi year project to provide better transportation safety in this high use area.

Roosevelt:

- Woburn/Alabama Intersection Improvements: We have begun construction! We have completed excavation of the rain garden and grading of new sidewalk area behind existing curb. Storm drain enhancements, grinding and paving of Woburn Street in that area is next.

Samish:

- San Juan Boulevard, Phase I. We are plugging away at the preparation and permitting work for this complicated project with many environmental and construction challenges.
- Yew Street Upper Reservoir: This 2.5 million gallon water reservoir and infrastructure enhancement for this growing neighborhood is in design stage while we establish transmission, distribution and access easements and plan the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) and Critical Areas Ordinance compliance processes.

Sehome/York/CBD:

- Almost done with Holly Street Gateway project from Ellis and Lakeway to Railroad. Street resurfacing is done, cross walks are in; light fixtures and “under grounding” of utilities are next.

Silver Beach:

- East Oregon and East North Street storm-water quality treatment facilities: We are done!
- Lake Whatcom-Hayward Drive Water Quality: We'll be installing a prototype “Filterra” storm-water unit as soon as we can resolve under ground utilities issues.
- Pullman Road and Drainage Improvements: Construction is substantially complete including installation of alumina/sand filtration systems. All disturbed areas are covered with straw to avoid water quality issues for the Lake.
- Northridge Detention Basin Retrofit: This important project is to enhance storm-water treatment that will flow into Lake Whatcom from an existing pond site located off Northridge Way within the dense Brentwood Subdivision. We are working with homeowners' association on land issues prior to proceeding further with design.
- East Maryland Water Quality: The construction of stormwater facilities on East Maryland will wait for the allowable time frame for watershed construction work in 2008.
- Improvements to Northshore Drive from Britton to Alabama Street: To a project to replace a failing storm water system and complete a structural street overlay, we hope to add a sidewalks (if we can avoid impacts to the lake). We're in the design phase.

Sunnyland:

- James Street 2008 Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings: These enhanced crosswalks are planned for James Street at the intersections of Kentucky and Carolina Streets and will include concrete bulb-outs, solar powered actuated crossing arms and drainage improvements. Part of our annual pedestrian enhancement program for arterial streets, design work will begin this winter with construction next year.

For information on these and other projects, contact Ravyn Whitewolf at whitewolf@cob.org or 676-6961.

Library hosts open houses about new building

Community leaders expect to make more key decisions during the coming months on future library facilities and services, and they want to hear from you. What works well for you at the current library? What doesn't work? What services do you want from the library in the future?

A public open house on October 23rd will provide an opportunity for Bellingham citizens to get involved in the next phase of developing our new central library. At this meeting library officials will review decisions so far and invite participants to brainstorm about facilities and services and help shape library services proposed for the future. Other opportunities to participate will include an online survey, touring library facilities and more.

Library board members have proposed building a new library on the block of the current library downtown and making much-needed renovations to the Fairhaven Branch Library. These improvements are proposed to be funded by a library bond levy, expected to be presented to voters as early as spring 2008.

"Library use continues to be record-breaking, and while demand for services and resources continues to climb, our facilities are stretched to their limits," Library Director Pam Kiesner said. "We want people to tell us their vision for a new central public library: how it should look and feel, and what facilities and services should be offered in the future."

The library has contracted with [Thomas Hacker Architects](#) of Portland, Oregon, a firm that has designed more than [30 libraries](#) throughout the country. In partnership with Bellingham's RMC Architects the Hacker team will develop recommendations for library services and facilities that respond to the community's needs. These recommendations are expected by early 2008.

The open houses are scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m. October 23, in the Council Chambers at Bellingham City Hall. For more information, visit www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org or call the Bellingham Public Library at 676-7794.

Thank you from your editor

As I leave service with the City of Bellingham, I want to express what a pleasure it has been to meet and work with so many dedicated and competent neighborhood volunteers. Your service is a gift to our community and represents citizen democracy at its best.

Your discussions about neighborhood character, quality of life, neighborhood improvements, parks, transportation, or zoning and growth issues are all important to your neighborhood and community. The fact that your work includes significant efforts to include a broad group of stakeholders in discussion of concerns adds to your credibility. You create people connections with your welcoming picnics and celebrations. Finally, your willingness to gather neighborhood volunteers for work projects, whether crime prevention, disaster preparedness, or park and trail improvements, creates a sense of ownership of the assets and affairs of the community.

I feel so fortunate to have been a part of helping to strengthen the connection of neighbor's work with that of our fine staff in our City's public service.

--*Kathryn Hanowell*