



**City of Bellingham  
Mayor's Neighborhood  
Advisory Commission**

December 10, 2008

The Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission meeting was called to order by Linda Stewart, Neighborhood Services Coordinator, at 6:30 p.m.

**APPROVED MINUTES**

	<p><b>Attendance: Unless noted below, all were in attendance:</b>  <b>Absent: Meridian, Guide Meridian/Cordata, Sunnyland</b>  <b>Jimmy Kelsey – pending appointment/Alabama Hill</b>  <b>Deborra Garret – pending appointment/Happy Valley</b></p>
	<p>Introductions and Roll Call          November Minutes approved as amended.          Agenda for meeting adopted</p>
	<p><b>Waterfront Update – Mayor Pike</b>          Some outstanding issues should be addressed with meetings later in the week. Mayor is very optimistic about the progress. He hopes to have more of an update in January.</p>
	<p><b>2009 Neighborhood Transportation Projects - Dick McKinley and Chris Comeau</b></p> <p><i><b>(Note: This section contains additional details to what was presented during the meeting, provided to assist representatives with understanding the issues and communicating this information to designated association transportation representatives.)</b></i></p> <p>Public Works Director Dick McKinley and Transportation Planner Chris Comeau announced that significant budget cuts and financial challenges have affected the ability for Public Works to continue some of the processes that have been established to incorporate more Neighborhood and BPAC input into the annual development of both the 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP).</p> <p>Director McKinley explained that 7.5% of the sales tax money that had been directed toward the City Street Fund in past years was re-directed to the General Fund for other municipal services. In addition, Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) revenue, which has been used primarily for bicycle and pedestrian projects, has been significantly diminished due to the national economic slowdown and REET revenue is projected to have a downward trend in coming years. Federal Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) funding that had been identified for enhanced pedestrian crossings on Lakeway Drive and on North Samish has also vanished. Director McKinley explained that Public Works still intended to construct pedestrian crossings on Lakeway Drive and on North Samish in 2009 (as well as one near Northwest/Maplewood), but in order to do so, would have to re-direct most, if not all, of the \$150,000 programmed for NTSP in 2009.</p> <p>Chris Comeau explained that in the past few years, Public Works has asked MNAC representatives to solicit the "Top 3 Residential Street Requests" for NTSP evaluation from their respective Neighborhood Associations and turn them in by April 1. Because there will be no NTSP funding available in 2009, Public Works will not be accepting requests for traffic calming, nor conducting new NTSP traffic counts on residential streets in 2009. This would only build false expectation within the community that cannot be met in these difficult financial times. Public Works will conduct follow-up traffic counts on</p>

streets that received traffic calming in 2008 and nearby side streets to ensure that a traffic shift has not occurred. If NTSP funding is available in 2010, then much of the programmed \$150,000 will be already be obligated to the two traffic calming projects that were over-budget in 2008 and one residential street that is qualified for traffic calming in 2009, listed in order of funding priority below:

- 1.) A speed table/elevated pedestrian crossing on Pacific Street at the Railroad Trail crossing (Roosevelt Neighborhood);
- 2.) 4 speed humps on Alderwood Avenue between City limits and Cherrywood Ave (Birchwood Neighborhood); and
- 3.) Yet to be determined traffic calming measures on Birchwood Avenue between Northwest Ave and Pinewood Ave (Birchwood Neighborhood).

Unfortunately, the re-direction of 7.5% of sales tax to the General Fund rather than the Street Fund and the decrease in REET revenue also affects the 6-Year TIP solicitation process. There are 22 projects programmed on the 2009-2014 TIP and several will now be significantly underfunded due to the decrease in REET revenue. In the past few years, Public Works has asked MNAC representatives to solicit the "Top 6-Year TIP Priority" (as listed in the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan) from their respective Neighborhood Associations and turn them in by March 1. Similar to the NTSP, Public Works will not ask MNAC representatives to solicit the "Top 6-Year TIP Priority" from their respective Neighborhood Associations in 2009, nor will Public Works ask BPAC to submit a new "Top 5 Bike/Ped Priorities" (as listed in the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan) in 2009. Rather than adding new unfunded projects to the 2010-2015 TIP, Public Works will continue to seek State and federal funding sources, look for efficiencies in project funding, and focus on moving the existing 22 projects closer to construction.

While Public Works truly regrets the inability to receive input from Neighborhoods and BPAC in 2009, we also do not believe that creating false expectations for projects that cannot be funded is a benefit to MNAC, BPAC, Neighborhoods, or the community in general. The department believes that this open, honest approach is best. It is believed that the most responsible course of action at this point is to take a collective 'time-out', focus on the existing priorities, and hope that financial circumstances improve soon. They hope to resume normal procedures in 2010 and have appreciated MNAC and BPAC efforts with these two programs.

Neighborhood Reps are responsible for communicating this information to Association Presidents and NTSP / TIP Transportation Representatives within the neighborhoods. If there are questions, call Chris Comeau, Transportation Planner, at (360)778-7900.

#### **Incoming Proposed Plan Amendments**

Linda sent link in email last week from Planning, listing all incoming plan amendments proposals and letters of intent. Planning promised in last meeting to make information available by December MNAC meeting and that was accomplished. Kudos to Planning for putting this together and giving them a starting point.

Group agrees that there should be a triage of the plan amendments before January meeting.

Motion to form committee of at least three people to discuss the plan amendments and get a list of priorities/projects back to the MNAC group in January. Motion carries.

One suggestion for the sub-committee is to talk to the neighborhood rep to collect history and information on the submitted plan amendment(s).

Committee Members agree to meet and discuss plan amendments before the next January MNAC Meeting. Committee volunteers are:

1. Brad Rose - Edgemoor
2. Howard Steiner - Lettered Streets
3. Michael Lilliquist – Fairhaven
4. Greg McCracken – Samish
5. Cathy McKenzie – South
6. Tom Scott – York

Committee to meet and exchange email addresses. Tom Scott volunteered to initiate contact and collected all email addresses.

Linda will keep MNAC informed of any changes to information or updates available on the website. The Staff Table is being worked on and will also include the set of information from last year's docketed plans.

**Neighborhood Roundtable**

**Central Business District** – Held 2009 planning retreat, which was excellent, with lots of new ideas. Individuals, not just downtown businesses, can be “Friends of Downtown,” and membership will also get you a ticket to the winter carnival, 2/28.

**Silver Beach** - Elections next week. Last month had City and Port waterfront presentations. Suggestion that others from the neighborhood be invited to future meetings when specific topics they are working on are discussed, i.e., traffic.

**Sehome** – Darby did a great job with Samish Way Urban Village planning and presented to Planning Commission and they were very happy. New businesses and some businesses being remodeled. Updated bylaws with help from Linda and Ann McCartney, through bylaws training workshop. Dick McKinley spoke at a meeting with WA Dept. of Transportation. Meeting was heated at times, but in the end DOT changed a wrongly designed illustration. Dick did a great job. Bruce Sheppard (WWU President) was at last meeting focused on communicating with residents and students. Great news on 2009 funding from Linda during the meeting. WWU armory too expensive to fix last year. They now have \$30-40M funding.

**Mt. Baker** – Last meeting elected new President Don Hale. Doing their best to move in progressive way to be a functional neighborhood association. Northridge Park – if any of you have experience in dealing with the “not in my backyard” and Parks & Recreation, Warren could use your help. People are grasping at straws to stop the progress and stop Parks and Rec. If you have additional information or can offer some help, Warren could use your help 961-9772 (cell).

**Happy Valley** - Not much going on. Successful in the Small & Simple Grant tree planting project. Trying to plan walk-through of neighborhood with Tim Stewart and WWU President.

**Puget** – Good general meeting last month. Port and Mayor Pike at meeting to talk about waterfront and had good dialogue. Currently conducting neighborhood survey.

**Columbia** – Board met last night and there is a plan to meet again in early February. They are interested in increasing number of meetings so want to increase number of board members because they will have more work and more meetings. Updated bylaws and improved membership statement. Membership form to be established and organized.

**Edgemoor** – County Assessor came to last meeting and discussed assessments. There were lots of questions and it was very helpful. No regular Neighborhood meeting in January due to January 1<sup>st</sup> holiday. They have contacted Tim Stewart and left a message, but not have heard back on draft EIS timelines.

**Lettered Streets** - Discussed Waterfront ideas; neighborhood voted to support the Mayor's perspective and what the City is trying to accomplish with the waterfront.

**Fairhaven** – Fairhaven - Big holiday party this Friday night. Fairhaven has a working waterfront, and the neighborhood association has been working with and keeping close tabs on Port's plans for improvements. A shipyard has applied for permits for a submersible dock for large boat repairs; meeting is next week. Elections coming up early next year; nominating committee was just formed.

**Samish** – Had monthly meeting yesterday and are looking at scheduling general meeting

	<p>March 10<sup>th</sup>.  <b>South Hill</b> – Meeting last week had County Assessor talk. Had Michael Sullivan, Historical Preservation expert, talk about waterfront historic buildings. Good discussion and full house. Neighborhood approved letter to City to approve the preservation of the buildings on the waterfront.  <b>Roosevelt</b> – Christmas party next week. Next weekend helping Birchwood neighborhood with toys for low-income people to buy for reduced price. Craft/gift making at the resource center to make decorations.  <b>York</b> – Submitted neighborhood plan. Wagon ride one the 20<sup>th</sup> and wine/roses club.  <b>Alabama Hill</b> – Meeting Friday.  <b>Cornwall Park</b> – Elections in February. Nothing new on Roeder Home and we are still opposed to it. If you are opposed, suggested writing letter to County Council office.  <b>South</b> – Looking forward to next meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 or 7:30 (at Fairhaven Middle School Commons) – Mayor Pike is going to come. Issue most concerned about save 100 acre wood - Chuckanut Ridge. All neighborhoods are invited.  <b>Birchwood</b> – Went to neighborhood research workshop on Saturday (surveys). Fantastic workshop and saved a lot of problems. Garden committee going to go for small and simple grant. Kurt was appointed in the planning commission and probably going to become the alternate. Kurt has stepped down as President.</p>
	<p><b>Neighborhood Services Coordinator Update</b>  An additional Neighborhood Research Workshop will be scheduled first quarter of 2009.</p> <p>Kudos for Edie Norton – Project Proposal Writing. Getting neighborhoods ready for small and simple grants. Great exercises to work through. Forms that she had will be part of the application.</p> <p>Small and Simple Application will be posted and announced the first week of January. New Neighborhood Page will launch soon. All skill building, training, workshop materials will be posted on the website.</p> <p>Finances for 2009 – Small &amp; Simple Grants are funded. We lost \$5,000 from pool from PW, but we are stable at \$35,000. \$25,000 is for neighborhood projects. \$10,000 is for sponsoring community events or activities.</p> <p>Neighborhood service program is still funded at \$1,000 per neighborhood and City will continue to pay for association limited liability insurance policy. Because everyone hasn't used the money, it's becoming harder to justify that the support is necessary. If in 2009 around September, if the neighborhoods haven't used it, then it will be open to other neighborhoods.  Last day for reimbursement requests for 2008 expenses is January 14<sup>th</sup> (includes Planning academy).</p> <p>Calendar Website Schedule – Submit your 2009 neighborhood association meeting schedule to Linda no later than March 1, 2009.</p>
	<p><b>Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.</b></p>