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10/6/08	Waterfront Connection Plan	Lynette Felber, Ph.D	<p>Dear Mayor Pike:</p> <p>At the City Council meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup>, you asked for community feedback on the new Waterfront Connections Plan. As a Bellingham resident who has followed the evolution of the Waterfront development closely, I'd like to voice support for most aspects of this new plan and urge that some of its strongest aspects be further enhanced.</p> <p>The strongest component of the new plan is its traditional grid. This grid would not only save taxpayers money, but it would also facilitate creation of a historic district within the waterfront. It is important, however, that those buildings not be destroyed before a plan is implemented. An article in the <i>Bellingham Herald</i> (9/29/08) reported on the Port's plans to destroy three of the Georgia-Pacific buildings because it's cheaper to do so now. The Port needs to consider not just the cost paid to dismantle the buildings but rather the entire expense ("triple-bottom-line," if you will). The total cost includes both the financial and the environmental costs of sending all those buildings to the landfill. In addition, we should consider the cost of the "embodied energy" it took to build them when they were constructed in the 1930s and 40s: if we start from scratch, that energy is lost. The Port's offer to preserve some concrete and iron remnants, some parts of buildings as part of the park area, wastes materials and is simply inadequate as historical preservation.</p> <p>In presenting the new plan, you argued that the new waterfront should "feel" like Bellingham, a point that preservationists surely endorse. The more historic buildings we include, the more the waterfront will reflect Bellingham's history and unique aesthetics. Bellingham is not a city with high density or many tall buildings. If density is maximized through new construction, the Waterfront will look like any other large city with recent construction. Some of the DEIS views presented in the new plan (for example, #s5, 7, and 11), depict high and dense construction, and a number of 75-foot buildings would certainly change the feel of Bellingham. The number of tall buildings should be kept to a minimum, and density should be phased in gradually as need for more space evolves.</p> <p>In your final comments at the meeting, you asked the community to comment on whether the construction should start next to the downtown or in the middle of the site. Clearly, it is advantageous to start near the downtown, extending the historic downtown rather than building an incongruent new city adjacent to it and pulling business away from downtown. You also argued that the plan finally accepted must "support the health of downtown." This point is crucial: if the initial phase of the development is too rapid, it risks undermining the fragile economy of the downtown. One of the most compelling aspects of the Waterfront Connections Plan is the phased development and the concept of an urban reserve, preserving</p>
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10/8/08	Waterfront Connections Plan	Chris Moore	<p>Dear Waterfront Advisory Group,</p> <p>The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation respectfully requests that you include the following comments in the public record regarding the City of Bellingham’s vision for redevelopment of the former Georgia-Pacific site: the Waterfront Connections Plan. The Washington Trust is a statewide, non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Washington’s heritage through advocacy, education, collaboration and stewardship.</p> <p>In previous correspondence to the Waterfront Advisory Group, the Washington Trust has expressed concern over the Port of Bellingham’s waterfront redevelopment plans for failing to adequately consider the adaptive reuse of several historic buildings located within the proposed Downtown Waterfront Area. Such plans prompted us to include the Granary Building in our 2008 Most Endangered Historic Properties List for the state. Given the Port of Bellingham’s assumption that all historic buildings within the Downtown Waterfront Area would be</p>

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			<p>demolished as part of the redevelopment, the threatened Granary Building is actually symbolic of all historic buildings located at the site that collectively represent the city's agricultural and industrial past.</p> <p>With the City of Bellingham's recent release of the Waterfront Connections Plan, a vision embracing the city's historic resources as a viable economic element within the overall redevelopment equation is now on the table. The potential for a historic district comprising the former Georgia-Pacific industrial buildings and a restored Granary Building to be a vibrant, diverse and community-oriented development is supported by a multitude of projects across the nation that have adopted similar principles.</p> <p>Furthermore, a program of adaptive reuse would integrate historic resources with sensitive new construction, allowing for a layered project in terms of both context and design. One need only look to the Pearl District in Portland, Oregon to witness the benefits of a mixed use redevelopment zone that incorporates new construction harmoniously with the existing built environment. Waterfront Advisory Group October 8, 2008 Page 2</p> <p>It should also be emphasized that implementing a program of adaptive reuse does not preclude the entire redevelopment plan from being 'sustainable.' The largest privately-owned solar array in Washington State now sits atop a designated landmark in the City of Spokane. Rehabilitation of the historic Saranac Hotel, known now as the Community Building, was implemented according to LEED platinum standards. If the project achieves certification at this level, it will be the first LEED platinum historic rehabilitation in the state and proof that sustainability and historic preservation go hand in hand.</p>
10/8/08	Waterfront Connections Plan	Chris Moore	<p>Continued...</p> <p>But most of all, a waterfront vision incorporating those historic structures present at the site encourages a project that truly reflects Bellingham. The Granary Building, the boiler house, the high density water tanks – each of these resources, along with the other significant properties at the site, communicate an essential sense of place unique to the city that would be lost in their absence.</p> <p>The Washington Trust commends Mayor Dan Pike and the City of Bellingham for putting forth a vision that embraces historic preservation and adaptive reuse as a core element of waterfront redevelopment. We encourage the Waterfront Advisory Group to support the Waterfront Connections Plan and the holistic approach to redevelopment contained therein.</p> <p>Thank you, once again, for the opportunity to comment on this important matter.</p>
10/13/08	Concept Planning	Dan Hayes	<p>Dan,</p> <p>It sounds like the Port is trying to politically outmaneuver you and the City for more developer space on New Whatcom. Maybe my perception is just based on newspaper coverage.</p>

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10/13/08	New Whatcom	hawesfam4@comcast.net	<p>Hi Dan,</p> <p>This is a follow-up to an email I sent to the generic address with further brainstorms to help your political leverage to secure just four roads at New Whatcom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You might ask your neighborhood advisory committee to poll for feedback at the neighborhood association meetings.</li> <li>- You might actually co-present with the Port at each neighborhood meeting for feedback and direction.</li> </ul> <p>My point is that when dialogue seems to be gridlocked, more information is necessary to redirect the conversation. We know that the elections, greenway levy, and Cornwall improvement results support more multi-modal access and less cars. Now you just need to find the leverage to stand firm and not give in to five roads. Good luck!</p> <p>I hope this helps,</p> <p>Sean</p>
10/22/08	waterfront redevelopment	Terry Foulke ptfoulke@comcast.net	<p>Dear Mayor Pike,</p> <p>After reading several articles in the Herald about the proposed demolition of all the old buildings at the waterfront site, I thought I'd register my opinion just in case it makes a difference. I favor keeping as many of these buildings as possible. The current Bellweather</p>

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10/22/08	Historic Waterfront Buidlings	<b>Jim Schneider</b> <jgschneider@hotmail.com>	<p>Mr. Mayor</p> <p>Thank you for your efforts in helping to preserve the historic buildings at the Waterfront development project. I feel it is important that a community be able to connect with it's past. I commend the City and the Port in their ability to work together and hope that you both can find a solution that will preserve these historic structures.</p>
10/27/08	Waterfront	John Stewart,Architect,AIA,Leed AP	<p>I appreciate your involving the City Advisory Committee Members in the planning discussions. I believe the involvement of all of us is vital in the planning of this community. I will continue to provide input on this subject, and attend other forums and presentations. Thank you for providing the information for the Cities Road and Concept Plans for the New Whatcom Neighborhood.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p>
10/29/08	Waterfront Development	Bertha H. Stuurmans	<p>Good Afternoon, Mr. Pike,</p> <p>It was with interest that I read in <i>The Bellingham Herald</i> this morning the article which outlined the on-going discussion between the City and the Port regarding the proposed street direction in the new Waterfront Development. I want to voice my support of you and your idea of the direction of these streets.</p> <p>It is my opinion that the streets should be a continuation of our present streets so that the new development will "feel" like a part of our present City. Besides, this would be less expensive and developers would have the option of preserving the historical buildings on the new development. Please know that I admire your willingness to stand up to the Port. This is not easy—hang in there!</p>
10/29/08	Waterfront Plans	Edie Norton	<p>Dear Mayor Pike,</p> <p>Thank you for the good meeting last night. I very much appreciate the opportunity to hear about and discuss the city's and the port's plans-- and to hear the city's plan defended by staff members! It was great!</p> <p>I cc'd you on my thank you email to Tim Stewart and Dick McKinley, but I will state the reasons for my support of the city's plan here as well:</p>

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10/29/08	Waterfront	Pat MacDonald	<p>I want you to know that I support your plan for the G-P site. I support the ideas of aligning news streets with existing; 75 foot height limits; reusing existing buildings.</p>
10/30/08	Suggested criteria to evaluate the proposed street grids	David Courtis	<p>I attended your work session yesterday afternoon. I commend your decision to identify objective criteria to evaluate and compare the merits of the Port's and the City's proposed street grids. Those criteria should be useful in guiding your advice to the City and Port. After thinking about it last night and attending the City/Port evening meeting, I have seven criteria suggestions for your consideration.</p> <p>A. Enhancement of Development Value</p> <p>Everything that I have read about real estate development indicates that developers want to locate their projects either on the water or adjacent (close proximity) to attractive, well designed parks because those are features that purchasers of their properties desire. Consequently, the Port/City can sell such locations to developers for premium prices and make the overall development of the Waterfront District less of an economic burden for the taxpayer. As a result, it is imperative that whichever street grid is adopted has parks (or other attractive amenities) in the interior of the site to enhance the intrinsic value of the property for development. Think of Central Park in New York City. A view of the park, even from the bathroom of a condominium not directly fronting the park, is worth "millions" of dollars.</p> <p>B. Views and View Corridors</p>

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10/30/08	Suggested criteria to evaluate the proposed street grids	David Courtis	<p>Continued...</p> <p>D. Connecting Downtown to the Waterfront District to Bellingham Bay</p> <p>This is a critical factor because, if it is not done well and effectively, the Waterfront District will not be easily integrated into the life of our community. My bias is that the Port's angled street grid precludes instead of enhances the desired easy connectivity.</p> <p>E. Friendliness to Non Motorized Users and Public Transit</p> <p>The waterfront District needs to be inviting and friendly to pedestrians, bikers, and users of public transportation. We will rue the day if we accept a street grid that encourages and perpetuates the reign of "King Car".</p> <p>F. Social Interaction Possibilities</p> <p>It is important that the Waterfront District be a vibrant, attractive location for social interaction between people who live and/or work on the site, other residents of Bellingham, and visitors to our City. The street grid selected will either enhance or degrade this highly desirable activity.</p> <p>G. "WOW" Factor</p> <p>Dave Christensen was absolutely correct yesterday afternoon when he emphasized that whichever street grid is adopted must support a development plan that makes the Waterfront District the visual, aesthetic, social, and economic crown jewel of Bellingham. Consequently, we need to be creative and not constrained or restrictive in our thinking because once a plan is finalized and adopted, it will be too late to add a highly attractive park or other amenity. In summary, my bias is a preference for something similar to Dave Christensen's most recent concept. I especially like his addition of the third park strip, the parks at the eastern end of two of the park strips, and their ability to enhance the development value of the interior of the Waterfront District. I also like his green, pedestrian/bicycle connection of the Log Pond Park to the Cornwall Pocket Beach Park. The urban street connection of the two parks proposed by both the Port and the City is unimaginative and undesirable. Thank you for considering my comments.</p>

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10/31/08	Waterfront Street Grid	Roderick C. Burton	<p>Thanks for standing up the the Port's plan to raze the historic buildings. Though I did not bring this up at the meeting on the 28th, and had to leave before the meeting finished, I hope someone suggested the "Christensen/Blethen" plan as a compromise.</p> <p>I agree with your assessment that the Port's street plan would create a separation from downtown, but I do like the water-facing boulevard/promenade street shown in their drawings. I think the C/B "compromise" could give us the best of both the City and Port ideas.</p> <p>PS: I have to say that I feel that, in regard to the historic buildings, the Port is attempting another "bait &amp; switch" scam, just as they did with the Alaska Ferry. They built up community support by saying the ferry would dock downtown, then, when the deal was done, suddenly "discovered" that the water depth wouldn't allow the ferry terminal to be downtown.</p>
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