

February 28, 2003
Waterfront Features Group
1801 Roeder Ave.
Bellingham, WA 98225

From: Douglas E. Coggin
415 N. State St. #502
Bellingham, WA 98225
Tel: (360) 676-1558

Re: Waterfront Planning

I have lived in Bellingham since April, 2000, and have a condo on North State St., overlooking our beautiful bay. Born in San Francisco in 1918, I lived there and in that immediate area all of my life. Consequently, I've had considerable experience in that city, including its famous Fisherman's Wharf. For nearly 100 years that small bayside area has been a major attraction for natives and tourists. Like the City itself, the Wharf is recognized internationally as a must-see place. And since it has been spectacularly successful commercially, it is certainly worth it for us to consider its pluses and minuses as we plan our own similar development. I respectfully suggest that one or more trips to the area by those in charge of our own plans, to witness and study the area first hand, would be both constructive and appropriate. As great as Fisherman's Wharf is, there are certain conditions we should be aware of, to include them in our planning or to avoid them- and one could not possibly absorb enough information in just a day.

You will notice that I called the area "small"- and it *is* small for the amount of attractions it offers and the great number of visitors it accommodates every day. One of its major drawbacks is the lack of parking, something we can avoid if we carefully plan for it. Another problem is the density of its restaurants and other amenities. Long lines, particularly on holidays and week-ends are unavoidable. But in spite of these and other problems, the Wharf flourishes, due to its spectacular setting overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge, Fort Point, Alcatraz and Goat islands, and the community of Tiburon on the north shore.

And we, too, have an unique location, with (usually) snow-capped mountains visible above our port and yacht harbors to the north, and the beautiful San Juan islands to the west. Boat trips from our shores to these islands would be as attractive to our tourists as similar jaunts to Alcatraz and Tiburon are from Fisherman's Wharf.

I would also like to comment on some things I deem very important to our development from its very start. The area between the GP property and Boulevard Park must surely be a major part of the project. All the old, unsightly buildings must be removed, of course, and the area completely cleaned up. But the overhead power lines along this area should also be removed and relocated under ground. Even now they are an eyesore, and they would be totally unacceptable as part of the new facilities.

To date, I am incapable of envisioning what should be done about the GP plant and surrounding area. This is a major problem, and I'm sure your group is considering it most carefully. The concrete pier extending south into the bay from GP might be left and developed for strolling and fishing, perhaps with a tackle shop, small restaurant or snack bar and convenient seating.

These are just a few of my initial thoughts on the project. I am extremely interested in seeing the plans materialize, and anxious to cooperate in any way I can. Thank you for your attention and your good efforts.

cc: Bellingham City Council


