



White Paper #22
Public Purpose Corridor
Margaret Curtis
Handout for March 21, 2003

March 13, 2003

Waterfront Futures Group
Attn: Patricia Decker, Project Director
1801 Roeder Avenue
Bellingham WA 98225

Re: Scoping session comments

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your volunteer service to the community.

The most essential element - from which all other good endeavors will flow - is a wide public purpose corridor immediately adjacent to the water. The corridor (100'-200' wide) would accommodate and facilitate:

- Views
- Landscaping
- Recreation and commuting for all ages and abilities (walking, biking, skating)
- Underground utilities (You knew I'd say this!)
- Connection points to many neighborhoods
- Transportation? (I'm undecided on how close a thru road should be.)

While the beautiful Chrysalis Inn did provide a public walkway around their private development, we must greatly expand that concept. That narrow width of public way would be totally inadequate for the future of a great small city. If we are to live more densely (and we will!) we need to have expansive, accessible and beautiful public corridors that benefit all economic levels of residents. An expansive approach will stimulate private property investment, not diminish it.

San Diego has exceptionally good waterfront access. When, in certain parts of town the access is suddenly necked down or terminated due to private property ownership, the feeling of a lost opportunity is dramatic. In Bellingham, the first row of real estate adjacent to the public corridor will be sufficiently valuable and appreciated for its recreational access if that is what is universally available around Bellingham Bay. Boulevard Park is a very successful example of what is reasonable to accomplish adjacent to the Bay, with commerce and residential buildings adjoining.

Very Truly Yours,

WILSON ENGINEERING, L.L.C.

Margaret Curtis
Margaret Curtis, P.E.