

August 9, 2010

Planning Commission  
City of Bellingham

Dear Commissioners,

I write regarding the York Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan Amendment proposals.

What has been provided in your packet is the culmination of more than three years of work in various committees and a number of public meetings. All meetings were open to all comers (with the lone exception of the failed "stakeholders" meeting for Area 9). The public meetings were held after the appropriate legal notice and additional publicity in newsletters, e-mail, signage, posters and local newspapers.

Aside from the committee work and meetings, surveys were conducted using "hardcopy" and electronic methods.

The proposals brought forward are those that the neighborhood association's general membership voted as the most important. These proposals, as just noted, were vetted over a three year process and received consent from the general membership (open to all land owners, business owners and residents within the York Neighborhood, without restriction).

Further, these proposals received super majority votes in the general meetings.

The association looked not only at existing use but at desired future uses, including how to accommodate infill and preserve historic structures. Neighborhood plans are broad documents and the neighborhood also considered topics such as traffic and parking.

I urge the commission to recommend acceptance of all the proposals as presented by the applicant (York Neighborhood Association) and honor the thousands of hours and the majority desires of the residents, businesses and land owners in the York Neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Thomas R. Scott  
1445 Grant ST  
Bellingham, WA 989225



millingwiley@comcast.net  
08/10/2010 01:37 PM

To planningcommission@cob.org  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Area 9

August 10th, 2010

Dear Planning Commission Members:

We are John Wiley and Carlyne Milling, York Neighborhood home owners for over 30 years. We're here because we love old houses and we support the York Neighborhood Association's proposal for a rezone of Area 9 (Ellis Street) to the density of 3,000sq. feet per unit. This is intended to help preserve the historic houses on Ellis Street and prevent future bulldozing of this area of the neighborhood to be replaced with four-story apartments or office complexes.

There are 3 reasons to support the YNA's Area 9 rezone proposal because it: (a) is consistent with Washington State's support of historic preservation and creation of historic districts (b) is consistent with the State's Growth Management Act, which encourages the preservation of existing housing stock; and (c) is consistent with the City of Bellingham's Comprehensive Plan, which encourages revitalization of historically and architecturally significant homes in deteriorated condition.

We love our 1918 Craftsman home, have worked hard to preserve it and contribute to Bellingham's historical legacy. Area 9, Ellis Street, is part of that historic legacy and part of the Historic York District. The YNA has identified other areas within the neighborhood for multi-family infill potential where historic housing will not be removed: Area 1 along Meador Avenue, Area 2 adjacent to the Central Business District, and Area 8, the Samish Way Urban Village. These sections of the neighborhood are appropriate for infill housing development. Infill should be achieved without bulldozing already existing historic homes.

Area 9 is a poor location for four-story apartments or office complexes because the only vehicle access would be through the alley that runs between Franklin and Ellis Streets. That alley is already busy, presently, and has numerous parking problems. Three and four-story apartment buildings and offices would overshadow our homes, block views, increase noise in an already noisy and densely populated section of the neighborhood and compromise the historic integrity and property values.

The YNA's Area 9 rezone proposal also includes a change to allow selected commercial uses (as specified by the YNA's list of allowed commercial uses) if an historic structure is used for a new commercial purpose, along with design standards to ensure compatibility with our historic character. This kind of adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of historic buildings is a concept that we hope the Planning Commission will support.

The rezone proposal does not change the current multi-family or office use.

Our efforts over the past two and a half years have been inclusive and public. We believe the proposals represent the majority of property owners on Ellis Street, Franklin Street and within the York Neighborhood as a whole. We urge you to support it as well.

Sincerely,  
John Wiley and Carolyne Milling



Kirsten Shore  
<kirstenshore@gmail.com>  
08/10/2010 01:43 PM

To planningcommission@cob.org  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: written comment

August 10, 2010

Planning Commission  
City of Bellingham  
210 Lottie St.  
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Planning Commission Members:

As a property owner and resident of the York Neighborhood, I am in support of the York Neighborhood Association's proposal for a rezone of Area 9 (Ellis Street) to the density of 3,000 sq. ft. per unit. This reduction in density, from the current 1,000 sq. ft. per unit, is intended to help preserve the historic housing stock on Ellis Street and prevent future bulldozing of this section of the neighborhood to be replaced with four-story apartment or office complexes.

I urge the Planning Commission to support the YNA's Area 9 rezone proposal because it: (a) is consistent with Washington State's support of historic preservation and creation of historic districts; (b) is consistent with the State's Growth Management Act, which encourages the preservation of existing housing stock; and (c) is consistent with the City of Bellingham's Comprehensive Plan, which encourages revitalization of historically and architecturally significant homes in deteriorated condition.

I greatly value my historic home and have worked hard to preserve it and contribute to Bellingham's historical legacy. Area 9, Ellis Street, is part of this historic legacy and is part of the historic York District. The YNA has identified other areas within the neighborhood for multi-family infill potential where historic housing will not be removed: Area 1 along Meador Avenue, Area 2 adjacent to the Central Business District, and Area 8, the Samish Way Urban Village. These sections of the neighborhood are appropriate for infill housing development. Infill should be achieved without bulldozing already existing historic homes.

I also do not consider Area 9 a good location for four-story apartment or office complexes. The only vehicle access would be through the alley that runs between Ellis and Franklin Streets; an alley that is busy, presently, and has numerous parking problems. Four-story buildings would overshadow our homes, block views, increase noise in an already noisy and densely populated section of the neighborhood and would decrease historic integrity and property values.

The YNA's Area 9 rezone proposal also includes a change to allow selected commercial uses (as specified by the YNA's list of allowed commercial uses) if an historic structure is used for a new commercial purpose, along with design standards to ensure compatibility with our historic character. This kind of adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of historic buildings is a concept that I hope the Planning Commission will support. The rezone proposal does not change the current multi-family or office use.

The YNA's efforts over the past two and half years have been inclusive and public, providing many opportunities for everyone to have a voice and vote in planning for our future. I believe the proposals represent the majority of property owners on Ellis Street, Franklin Street and within the York neighborhood as a whole. I urge you to support it, as well.

Sincerely,  
Kirsten Shore  
1325 Humboldt St.

August 10, 2010

Dear Planning Commissioner,

I live in the Sunnyland neighborhood and am a board member in my neighborhood association. I support maintaining the integrity of all of Bellingham's neighborhoods and for this reason I am writing to support the York neighborhood.

It is my hope that the members of the Planning Commission will take to heart the mission of representing the best interests of the people who are most affected, and not just the ones who have the most money and loudest voices. The issue here is between a few who want to develop for their personal profit, and a large majority of citizens and homeowners who have worked through their Neighborhood Association to come up with a plan and ideas that will allow them to continue to enjoy their homes and neighborhood. The Planning Commission needs to show some independent thinking and not be a rubber stamp for the Planning Department, which frequently forgets whose interests they should be representing. That's why there are checks and balances in our democratic form of government.

The proposal supported by the York Neighborhood Association regarding a zone change for area 9 (Ellis St.) in their neighborhood puts forth the values of historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and adds value to the properties. In contrast, the current density zoning promotes further deterioration of homes for the purpose of development speculation and the bulldozing of historic homes to make room for four-story office and apartment buildings.

Large office and apartment complexes along Ellis Street would have a negative impact by shadowing homes, blocking views, and increasing noise on Ellis and Franklin. The end result would be to decrease historic integrity and

property values for the homeowners on these streets.

The York Neighborhood Association has suggested alternative sections of the neighborhood appropriate for infill housing development. These are in area 1 along Meador Avenue, Area 2 adjacent to the Central Business District, and Area 8, the Samish Way Urban Village.

Greed should not trump livability, historical preservation, and the lowering of property values of adjacent homes. People living in the neighborhood have created a proposal by participating in a democratic process, and have come up with a thoughtful plan that should be adopted.

Please support the York Neighborhood Association's proposal for a rezone of Area 9 (Ellis Street) to the density of 3,000 sq. ft. per unit.

Judith Green  
Bellingham, WA  
2824 Ellist St.



Don Hilty-Jones  
<hiltyjonesdon@yahoo.com>  
08/10/2010 03:59 PM

To planningcommission@cob.org  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Letter supporting York Neighborhood request to rezone Area 9.....

Bellingham City Planning Commission;

Even with the best economic conditions and the most fluid develop opportunity available in the last 20 years, the 30-year-old zoning for limited commercial development in Area 9 of the York Neighborhood along the Ellis Street corridor has not been fulfilled. It seemed prudent and forward looking to help foster and aid re-adaptive use of the current housing stock as it had developed up to the 21st Century by updating the zoning requirements. Limited by traffic patterns, limited by lot size, limited as to available parking, taking into account what commercial development has occurred in the properties over the last 30 years, and acknowledging the lack of commercial development or any thriving business sector to the west of Area 9, what more realistic development of Ellis should be considered?

Then the York Neighborhood applied for and achieved Historic Neighborhood status, and the rezoning of Ellis street became additionally important as a readily definable, already established boundary of the neighborhood's western edge. What would be the point of attaining an Historic designation if the very architectural environment by which you gained that intrinsic distinction can be plowed up and replaced with modern, unsympathetic structures guaranteed to denigrate and blight the physical environment of the rest of the neighborhood?

The York Neighborhood has all along recognized that its past development with its small lot sizes inhibits realistic future plans for increasing population density within its borders. We can't build additional structures or enlarge current housing without violating the historical integrity of the existing buildings. We need far bigger housing options than small developments such as those possible along Ellis Street can achieve. Therefore, we proposed the construction of new high density housing on our northeastern border at Area 1 and supported similar proposals considered in the Sehome Neighborhood to help them meet these growth requirements without endangering historic sites. The City Planning Commission has repeatedly refused to adopt these ideas. The City Planning Commission has also not given us any reasonable alternatives that would achieve these same objectives. The small scale apartment structures possible along Ellis are in no way a commensurate substitute.

The York Neighborhood has diligently worked for years attempting to forge future growth options and develop a cohesive approach to the City's needs within a democratic process of public meetings and planning sessions. Over and over, it has redesigned its objectives and

proposed creative alternatives to develop its potential in the most pragmatic manner possible. And it has always worked within the wishes of the majority of its constituents.

Area 9 has not developed along the intents of its current zoning requirements for over 40 years. Its urban environment has not changed economically in any manner that would suggest such development is possible or desirable within decades of our proposal. Federal, State and environmentally concerned municipalities are repeatedly moving more and more to the conservation of existing urban structures as being more cost affective in the long run, less expensive to re-adapt than replace, and more congenial to the overall development of people friendly urban climates.

I continue to support the recommended rezoning requirements for York Area 9, as presented by the York Neighborhood Association. I ask the Bellingham City Council to override the Planning Commission's report or ask that it require the Planning Commission to continue negotiating with the York Neighborhood to develop zoning requirements that better reflect the future needs and concerns of the majority of its citizens.

Sincerely,  
Don Hilty-Jones  
1316 Franklin Street

August 10, 2010

Dear Planning Commission,

Of all of the places I've lived growing up and in college, I have learned a few things about my sense of place, neighborhood and community. I grew up in a rural area in southern Oregon. While the area was beautiful and I enjoyed a quiet and secluded space in the country, I didn't have any ties to my neighbors. As I moved to the city my senior year of high school, I began to see the allure of living in a neighborhood where kids rode their bikes in cul-de-sacs and waved at their neighbors. People shared a sense of place, ownership and familiarity with those they lived next to. As I ventured out on my own through college and as a young married person, I lived in a variety of places including Eugene OR and Seattle as well as apartment city in the suburb of Federal Way. When I moved to Bellingham in 2001 and more specifically to the York Neighborhood when my husband and I bought our first home in 2003, I finally saw what being a neighbor was all about.

We purchased a 550 sq foot bungalow built in 1902. While it retained much of its original charm and detail, some restoration was needed to the house, landscaping and property. While to many a 550 sq foot, 1 bedroom house might be a waste of a city lot, to me it was an affordable piece of history. This house had seen over 100 years of windstorms, family dinners and who knows what else. As we established ourselves in the neighborhood, we began to get to know our neighbors. We had them for dinner, shared gardening tips and had each other's dogs over to play. I had never shared this sort of camaraderie with any of my other neighbors before. The people that lived next door and I shared more than just an adjoining property line. We shared our lives. Whether it was just an afternoon wave or something more intimate, these people were not strangers but friends who looked out for one another and cared about each other's well being.

I write about my background and my coming to a sense of place to explain that the city of Bellingham and more specifically the York neighborhood, has something very special to offer everyone. The sense of community, of caring and of place pervades almost every house. Built with old growth fir timbers and painstaking detail, the houses of the York neighborhood boast some of the most quintessential architecture of the turn of the last century. The modest and functional houses of working class people, immigrants, settlers and entrepreneurs line our streets and tell a story in every shingle, shrub and chimney that remains.

I am writing to urge you to not only support the amendments to the neighborhood plan for the York neighborhood but especially to explain how important the amendments for Area 9 are to our sense of place. As a York resident for the last 7 years, I know how important it is to protect our sense of place. Last year my husband and I sold our house on Grant Street, across the alley from the historic Nelson's Market and bought a house on Ellis. Our new (1908) craftsman home has some of the most beautiful features I have seen in a while. Crown molding

throughout, breadboard wainscoting in the dining room, a rare two story barn with a hay loft, claw foot tub and built in china hutch, wonderful wood burning fireplace and leaded glass windows. All of these details show the craftsmanship that builders put into creating a house one hundred years ago. When this house was built, people would have walked downtown or to the churches that were here in the neighborhood or to Nelson's market (which was a meat market) to get their weekly groceries. Today, it is not much different for 21<sup>st</sup> C. homeowners. I enjoy walking downtown to the Farmer's market on Saturday, enjoying a beer at Boundary Bay, getting breakfast at Marlin's café on a lazy Sunday or jogging on the trail into Fairhaven. In many ways, we can live much the way that those of 1890's and early 1900's New Whatcomites did.

Area 9 is as critical an area to the neighborhood as any other interior street like Grant or Franklin street and the fact that it borders on a 4 lane road doesn't mean that the homes should be devalued or torn down to accommodate growth. The greenest part of infill is keeping the historic structures that already exist, protecting them and restoring them to their original luster. I support the Area 9 rezone because it is the right thing to do for the city, for infill, for protecting historic structures and for the neighborhood.

The neighborhood has already made many adjustments to our Neighborhood Plan to assist in accommodating growth throughout the city (and within our neighborhood); additionally there are already several high-density areas that border or already exist within it (Shuksan home, Lincoln Square, etc.). By allowing other uses, such as commercial uses, the integrity of the housing stock remains and the use of these houses on Ellis remains purposeful to the neighborhood and the city. As an example, look at James St. Near Sunnyland Elementary School the houses remain residential but as you travel towards downtown many of the houses have been turned into commercial properties but retain their original charm. This is a great example of how existing structures could be used along Ellis St (Area 9). What is disheartening is the possibility that by allowing the current zoning in Area 9 to remain, homeowners could combine lots, tear down existing structures or allow properties to fall into disrepair, therefore encouraging the building of new structures rather than the repair of old structures. Likewise, the lack of building codes that exist for this corridor, should new construction take place, would allow for large/tall buildings to be erected whose residents/customers could negatively affect traffic flow, block the current line of sight and the disrupt the aesthetic feel of Area 9.

Again, I strongly urge you to support the Area 9 rezone. As a property owner, wife, Bellingham resident, Western Alumni, parent, friend, teacher, and Bungalow enthusiast, protect our sense of place and the integrity of historic structures and support the Area 9 rezone. It is the right thing to do for everyone involved.

In thanks,

Vale Bates  
1428 Ellis St.  
Bellingham Wa 98225  
360.752.0608

YNA resident, property owner and Board Member at Large

**RECEIVED**

**AUG 11 2010**

City of Bellingham  
Planning

August 10, 2010

Bellingham Planning and Development Commission  
Planning Division  
210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, Washington

**Subject: (Proposed) York Neighborhood Plan Amendments and Code Amendments**

I am registering my opposition to the proposed action listed above. Analysis of the amendments by self and others causes me to conclude the plan is shortsighted and detrimental to the future of Bellingham. In general, nothing in the proposed changes speaks to:

- (1) The economic future of the city and region,
- (2) The adverse social and economic impacts to the downtown business core,
- (3) The future consequences when values of a special-interest preservation group whose tactics place their individual self-interest ahead of what is good for the city, fellow citizens and other neighborhoods.

And for the future, an alternative approach to the York Neighborhood is required; therefore, I have included our thoughts as to what needs to be done!

Let me speak more to the point on each of the concerns mentioned above!

### **Economic Considerations-**

There is no question we are experiencing one of the most severe economic downturns since the great depression. Whatcom County is presently listed as being over 10% unemployment. Not counted in those labor statistics are the many people under-employed or who have lost living wage jobs due to elimination of natural resource-based positions and construction jobs. Yet, we have done little to replace these jobs with more lasting, in-demand technical and service positions. We all know the reasons. The question is what do we do about it?

Tourism and taxpayer-funded positions are not enough to employ our county young people. We need to entice private and public corporations to relocate offices from other parts of the nation and world. Because of the natural amenities

of the area and the lower land acquisition costs in the city when compared to other cities in the area, companies should find the area a cost-saving move for their organization and a better bottom-line performance for stockholders. The poor economic situation in the country should be an advantage and could also help promote the cost savings advantages of a move from their present location to Bellingham.

To also make this happen, we need directed leadership to target medical, computer-related and financial service businesses. It should be task shared with the Port Authority, County and City Planners plus appropriate nonprofit agencies and the University. If possible, carefully selected individuals with demonstrated success with similar development experience should also be included in the group. To make it happen without creating sprawl, the city must adopt the strategy of other cities that have experienced success in this regard. Cities like San Diego, Bellevue and Boise have met with success attracting new, high-tech jobs to their downtown core. Each of the above cities targeted their older neighborhoods and downtown area for re-development and did what was needed to make their respective areas attractive for selective development. Smaller cities that have found similar success are places like Eugene, Beaverton and many University towns like Champaign, Illinois and Charlotte, North Carolina. In each case not just the downtown core was revitalized, but also the surrounding neighborhoods were strengthened.

How did this happen? In each of the cases mentioned above, citizens and government officials declared it to be a priority over other competing interests within the city and region. It took concerted action by city planners and officials directed specifically with the task to create the infrastructure and policies needed to attract outside corporations. Bellingham appears to be waiting for these companies to come to the city rather than targeting criterion-directed, researched companies and then selling them on Bellingham. This attitude and method needs to change!

How does this affect the York neighborhood? To answer this question, I must first define the specific areas of the York Neighborhood suggested as important in my discussion. I am talking specifically about the area contained within the border streets of Ellis, State Street and Holly Streets. I am also talking about the Lakeway Corridor to the freeway interchange. I also must include the former RH zoned area around the market area of State and Ellis and to a lesser extent, the Whatcom creek frontage area.

### **Adverse Social and Economic Impacts if Proposed York Neighborhood Changes do Occur-**

What happens to the area if the proposed changes presently being considered do occur? Any land planner or developer will tell you the more an area is divided-up into smaller sub-areas, each with its own set of development conditions, then less chance any development will occur. The York neighborhood changes as proposed will do little to promote development, and as a result, the present decay and malaise will continue. The old houses will get older and much needed repairs will continue to be needed. As the area deteriorates, the direct relationship of safety and security of residents will continue to decline.

Yes, some new structures will be built in the area as defined, and I am certain that when completed each will reflect the design standards of the current York neighborhood. When this happens however, a few new buildings designed for the next 50 years will add only more difficulty for considering the area in the future as an area that could be used for different purposes. This would also limit future mid-rise housing and business related building from occurring.

Most important however, the proposed changes would not help to re-direct future growth in the downtown area. This appears to 'fly in the face' of growth management advocates! It certainly does not reflect the approach taken by other cities as a response to growth restrictions put in place by the Growth Management Act. These cities have gone to great lengths to encourage residential and business development downtown as opposed to taking up more undeveloped land in the surrounding area!

What about the historic value of preservation? I do see room for individual properties to be saved as examples of our heritage. There are two old homes on Forest Street that should be saved. With few exceptions most of the remainder of the buildings however should either be moved to another location or given to people as "tear-downs". The lack of foundations and the absence of reinforced masonry plus the 'knob and tube' wiring from the 1920' s, structural deterioration and attempted owner modification of original architectural design makes few of the homes even worth saving.

The amount of money and work necessary to restore the majority old houses makes them beyond the reach of the economic capabilities of the average wage earner. It would be cheaper and better to 'bulldoze' most of the structures down and build again from the dirt. (Please understand, I know a lot about this subject. I have spent most of my life restoring and building re-designed structures, millwork and period furniture. I am presently rebuilding the old masonry fire station that I own at Nugent's Corner on the Mt Baker Highway.)

What about the history of the York Neighborhood? Many argue that anything old

must be preserved! Being old to my knowledge is not history. Events, people and wars create history! If General Pickett had a secret mistress who once lived in the York neighborhood, this might qualify the house, not the entire neighborhood for historical status. Perhaps I am wrong? I do not recall any event or person famous in history that has even a remote relationship with the York neighborhood. As a retired teacher of Northwest history and other subjects, I cannot recall anything historical about the area other than it being an old working class neighborhood?

**What will be the consequences when values of a special-interest preservation group whose tactics place their individual self-interest ahead of what is good for the city, fellow citizens and other neighborhoods?**

The real question that needs to be asked is do we allow a few self-styled preservation activists to determine the future for all the citizens of the City and County? Yes, I understand the need to protect the way of life and the environment of our city. It is a great place to live if you have a nice home and a good job. The question remains however of how long citizens can maintain their lifestyles with less tax revenue, shrinking government employment and further decline in resource-based manufacturing? The current paradigm of thinking must change! We cannot continue to ignore the futures of our young people and their need for living wage jobs. Nor can we continue to make decisions based just on consensus and compromise of different groups and individuals. Placating a few people who would like to see old houses be defined as historic to protect their own vested interests must not be allowed to happen in the York Neighborhood. **Vision and the needs of the majority must become the driving force behind decisions by city decision makers.** This must be done to build for the future of our children!

**What should happen in our view for the future!**

The previously defined Western York Neighborhood should be designated a **'Future Urban Growth Area'**. It should be promoted as such, and the needed city planning should be directed at making it happen. The economic realities of the present time dictate a different response from the city. The old approach of appeasement of a few claiming to represent the many must stop! Do you think the majority of people in Bellingham would rather see unemployment closer to the 2% as is presently the case in Bellevue? Do you think the 70% plus renters presently living in the York neighborhood would be happy to move if it would mean the greater potential for a decent job and a better place to live in the future? I think the answers are obvious!

The question is where will the money come from to improve the infrastructure

and pay for the needed planning policy development? I do not claim to have all the answers on where should the money be found. I do know other cities have relied heavily on neighborhood "Local Improvement Districts" (L.I.D.s), and available federal stimulus funds. With regards to the expense of creating the infrastructure, it should be pointed out that much of the infrastructure is presently in place as opposed to starting new. Once corporations and developers know the area is available for mid-rise development and an area development plan with clear, development rules is in place, I feel development will occur. The rules must be clear and the economic incentives must be in place. Most important, the city has to be committed to make it happen efficiently and quickly once application has been made.

There should be incentives for lot consolidation and clearly defined, and strict design standards to be followed. One incentive could include higher density by developing taller buildings on larger, consolidated land parcels. All parking should be underground except where such development is impossible. All building designs should be subject to a detailed design-review process during the preliminary plan development phase of construction. (I admit I do not know how much of this already in effect?)


Would it be attractive to developers and corporations? We already have the precedent of modern development and potential future financial services companies as a result of the new Whatcom Credit Union buildings. We have the under-utilized hospital building at the old St Lukes location. This connection with St Joseph Hospital might be attractive to medical research companies. We have the need expressed by the University to have public-private research parks, as has done with great success in other university towns around the country, for doing research partnerships by the University with fortune 500 companies. The location extending from and adjacent to the traditional center of town (State street and Holly street) would be attractive to medium-rise buildings for residential and work loft development. Existing and proposed fiber-optic networks in the State street corridor could and can be attractive to high tech companies and small start-ups alike. Because of the natural amenities of the area and the lower land acquisition costs in the York neighborhood area, companies would find the area a cost saving move for their employees and a better bottom-line performance for stockholders.

As to the present downtown area, I feel that concurrent development in the designated York neighborhood area plus the present activities of the Port and City on the waterfront would be a very good situation for the older buildings of the C.B.D. This type of development would encourage cross traffic between areas. It would allow the older part of town to remain a crossroads between the areas. Because of the development rules and the high costs of re-development of the older buildings in the downtown area, higher rents in these buildings is going to

be necessary for renovation to occur. If just the waterfront is allowed to develop, the town I remember as a boy will become the new 'Old Town' . It could become the poor stepchild to the new waterfront area. This must be considered in future planning! ; Unique and high value shopping plus pedestrian and bicycle friendly corridors will be the key. ( Do you wish proof as to it being possible? I suggest the reader to travel to Bellevue any weekend and see for yourself the number of cars parked at Bell Square with Canadian license plates!)

A new and modern skyline from the Lakeway main entrance to Bellingham down to State Street would greet the visitor. The heritage buildings of the older C.B.D, the lettered-Broadway street area and Fairhaven will mix the old with the new. The area east of Ellis to the Freeway could be better supported with new tax revenue and it too could be designated a heritage site. The entire downtown, waterfront and western York neighborhood could be revitalized.

Thank you for considering our thoughts!



Gary L. Richardson

Owner of properties @ 1304 and 1306 Garden Street

Tel. 360.592.5518

Email: [gary@benchsoft.com](mailto:gary@benchsoft.com) or [janet@benchsoft.com](mailto:janet@benchsoft.com)

Please note: My property is presently classified as CBD Approach. What this means is I do not have an economic incentive for the changes I just proposed. My letter to you reflects what we consider important for the City. Our hope is you will not just reject but instead, reflect! Perhaps in this way a better outcome can be achieved?