

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 106

CITY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2011

DOE determination on shoreline regs due this month

Following the city's adoption of the Shoreline Master Plan Update (SMP) in October of 2009, the state's department of ecology (DOE) held a public hearing in Sammamish, gathered a wealth of information on the city's new shoreline regulations, and is now expected to pass judgment, probably this month.

"We think the DOE will approve the adopted SMP, but probably ask for a few changes or conditions," Director of Community Development Kamuron Gurol said. "This has been a very lengthy and comprehensive process for all the stakeholders, including a lot of shoreline residents, so we hope any remaining issues can be resolved quickly."

The state mandates that cities periodically update their SMP and submit the document to the DOE for review. The regulations, among other things, cover docks, bulkheads, setbacks, vegetation requirements and a variety of water quality habitat issues.

More information if available on the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) by clicking through Departments, Community Development and Shoreline Master Program Update.



Community center with a pool?

FEASIBILITY STUDY WILL CLARIFY THE OPTIONS AS COMMUNITY CONSIDERS MAJOR INVESTMENT

Although there appears to be strong support in many quarters for a city community center, possibly with a pool, how enthusiastic would Sammamish residents be if they took a hard, cold look at the construction costs, operating expenses, and impacts on the community?

To answer that question, and many others, the city last month hired Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture (BRS) of Denver to conduct a community center feasibility study. Among other

things, the study is examining options related to size, location, amenities, programming and design.

Parks Director Jessi Richardson says BRS will also issue a final report to the City Council in July that will include a market analysis, construction cost estimates, projected operating expenses, conceptual designs and a site analysis.

"BRS is a highly respected firm that

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SUB-BASIN PLANS

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A trip from the other Washington – to D.C.

Last month Deputy Mayor Tom Odell and Mayor Don Gerend attended the National League of Cities (NLC) Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C. Here is their report:

We were wearing several hats on this trip to D.C. Tom is on an NLC policy committee – Transportation Infrastructure and Services (TIS) – that meets twice a year, and Don is on the NLC Information Technology and Communications



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

(ITC) steering committee that meets four times per year.

ITC issues: The cities want to retain control of local infrastructure

and franchise agreements, whereas the telecom companies and the cable companies would prefer state or federal franchise agreements and really want a level playing field (which means making the satellite companies pay local fees also). Another issue is the desire of cities to have sales taxes included on internet sales. Without this level playing field, local retailers are carrying the tax burden while losing market share.

TIS issues: There is growing concern among many NLC delegates that the lack of modernization investment in our country's transportation system (railroads, ports, highways, waterways, and airports) is making us increasingly non-competitive on the world stage. If not soon addressed we may well find ourselves at a serious trade disadvantage to other countries. This problem

will eventually come home to roost in terms of our own jobs and the nation's finances. The TIS Committee is looking at the fixes needed and is making sure they remain a congressional priority.

In addition to lobbying Congress on behalf of all U.S. cities, we took the opportunity to speak up for the priorities of Washington state cities. Among other things, we urged the federal government to continue adequate funding of surface transportation, broadband deployment and speed, community development grant programs, and law enforcement and emergency response programs.

And then, putting on our Sammamish City Council hats, we also met with Sen. Patty Murray, Sen. Maria Cantwell, Rep. Dave Reichert, and a number of their staff people.

One of the main points we made with them was that Sammamish now has a completed Town Center Plan, complete with development regulations.

In creating the Town Center Plan, the city recognized that environmental issues would be central to a successful development. Rather than a sea of asphalt, the regulations call for 80 percent structured parking. The regulations also call for "low-impact development," which mostly means being proactive in the handling of storm water.

So, we discussed ways to obtain federal funding support for environmental sound approaches to parking, storm water management, and infrastructure. Innovations being considered in solar and geothermal energy were also important topics, and we came away feeling optimistic that these two-way conversations with our representatives back in D.C. could be quite productive.

Oh, one more local issue that we

once again reminded our Senators about: Sammamish, with a population of some 46,000, still does not have a post office. The Senators had heard this many times before, from Sammamish councilmembers as well as from you citizens (it wouldn't hurt if you sent them email reminders of that fact), and they accepted the input once again.

Various Obama administration and other officials addressed the NLC conference, with the keynote speaker being the First Lady, Michelle Obama. She was promoting the effort to make America healthier, focusing on our children. Childhood obesity is an epidemic, with about one third of our children overweight or obese.

In addition to the long-term implications for future health care issues (and costs), today one third of our military recruits cannot pass the entrance physical! Obviously, this has very serious implications for our national security. To learn more about her initiative, go to www.letsmove.gov.

Although our City Council chamber is a long way from the halls of Congress, representing Sammamish and other cities in the nation's capital was a valuable and illuminating experience for both of us. With new knowledge and energy, and stronger connections to our representatives in D.C., we look forward to getting back to work on the issues that matter to all of you – the residents of Sammamish.



*Tom Odell
Deputy Mayor*

Spirit of Sammamish Award goes to Laura Walker

AT NINTH ANNUAL SAMMI AWARDS

She started a Girls Scout summer camp at Beaver Lake Park that now draws around 500 participants annually, and for that public-spirited contribution to the community, Laura Walker last month was honored with the “Spirit of Sammamish” award at the ninth annual SAMMI.

Walker’s recognition capped an evening of celebration at Eastridge Church that also recognized generous Sammamish residents in nine other categories.

Joining Walker on the honors list were Donna Gelinas (Arts), Keenon Kennedy (Business), Tyler Croshaw (Courage), Josue Lopez (Teen Spirit), Gretel von Barga (Learning Promotion), Jovahn Cruz (Trevor Price Award), Man Jae Lee & family (Unsung Hero), Elaine McEnery (Environmental), and Anne Ginther (Youth Advocate).



Laura Walker, Spirit of Sammamish Award recipient.

See DRAFT plans to keep sub-basins healthy

What is a sub-basin, and why does drainage engineer Eric LaFrance pay so much attention to them?

To help answer those questions, LaFrance pulled out a map and pointed to a 1.3-square-mile area west of City Hall bounded by a black line.

“Any rain that falls inside that black line drains into Ebright Creek,” LaFrance said. “That’s the Thompson sub-basin.”

And why is it important?

“Because sub-basins need to be healthy, and if we ignore them, they could develop erosion or water quality issues,” he said. “The sub-basin plans we work on are like health physicals. We need to check all the vital signs and make sure the long-term prognosis is positive.”

On Wednesday, April 27, at 6:30

p.m., LaFrance will unveil two of those sub-basin plans at a City Hall open house.

The two plans, in draft form pending the inclusion of additional public comment and eventual adoption by the City Council, are for the Thompson and Inglewood sub-basins. The Inglewood sub-basin, which covers 2.6 square miles, includes the Safeway shopping center and drains into George Davis Creek. The Inglewood plan is an update; the Thompson plan is brand new.

“Both of these sub-basins are a priority because we need to understand and accommodate any impacts the proposed Town Center may have on them,” LaFrance said. “Obviously, it’s better to anticipate impacts than to just react to them.”

The Thompson draft plan calls for a new culvert that will eliminate a fish barrier on Ebright Creek, one of the last remaining spawning streams for Lake Sammamish Kokanee salmon. Wetland restoration and habitat enhancement work is also in the plan. The Inglewood draft plan calls for two new stream culverts and similar wetland restoration.

“The plans address issues residents have brought to us, and we’re looking forward to more public input at the open house,” LaFrance said. “Right now, both sub-basins are in pretty good health. We need to keep them that way.”

Barring unforeseen problems, the Council is expected to adopt both plans this year.

COMMUNITY CENTER, from pg. 1

has enormous experience with community centers,” Richardson said. “I think they inspired a lot of confidence when they made their initial appearance before the council on March 8.”

The feasibility study will try to answer many questions:

- Where should the community center be located?
- How big should it be?
- Should it have a pool and other aquatic features in addition to a gym, indoor track, meeting rooms, multi-purpose space and other amenities typically found in a community center?
- How much will it cost to build?
- How much will it cost to operate?
- Will it make enough money to be self-sufficient or will the city need to subsidize it?
- At what level should the user fees be set?
- What does the community want?

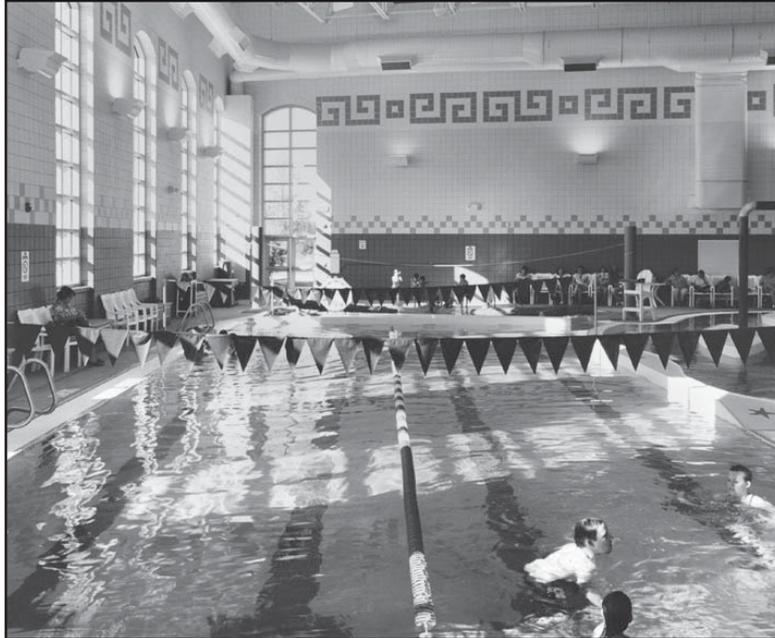
To answer that last question, BRS and the city are engaged in a vigorous and inquisitive conversation with Sammamish residents.

A series of four public meetings began on March 9 at City Hall, with the first session asking residents to state their “Hopes, dreams and fears.”

“We’re also going to have public meetings in April, May and June,” Richardson said. “Each meeting will have a different focus so we can gather public input on all of the important issues.” (See the meeting schedule on

this page for more details.)

To reach beyond the meetings, and gather feedback from residents who may be too busy to attend, Richardson is also planning to set up shop at grocery stores, schools, coffee shops and the city’s Farmers Market. Online “we-



Meeting schedule:

Monday, April 11, 6:30 p.m.

Focus on market analysis and programming.

Monday, May 9, 6:30 p.m.

Focus on design concepts and budget options.

Monday, June 13, 6:30 p.m.

Focus on preferred design, site analysis, budgets and operation alternatives.

Tuesday, July 12, 6:30 p.m.

Final BRS report to City Council (Report will contain recommended design concept, location and cost.)

binars” will also be part of the outreach effort.

“We need thoughts and opinions from as many people as possible,” Richardson said. “We know people can’t always come to our meetings, so we’re going to go where the people are.”

To get more detailed information from a representative sample of Sammamish residents, the city has tentative plans to conduct two rounds of focus groups.

The first round would test a range of concepts for the community center. The second round would test a final concept – the design and approach BRS will include as a recommendation in its final report to the council on July 12.

Although the city set aside \$6.3 million in the 2011 budget for potential

expenditures related to a community center, City Manager Ben Yazici says no decisions on a community center have been made.

“The council approved a feasibility study because they want answers,” Yazici said. “They’re not going down this road, even a little bit, unless the numbers add up and they think it makes sense to present something to the community.”

For more information on the community center feasibility study, go to the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us), click on Departments, Parks and Rec, and then go to the Projects list.

Email updates on the feasibility study are also available by clicking on the “Email Alert” icon in the upper, right-hand corner of the website homepage.

Q & A on Community Center

WITH PARKS DIRECTOR JESSI RICHARDSON

Q: Why did the city decide to do a feasibility study on a community center?

A: For many years, our community surveys have shown pretty strong public support for a community center, and a lot of residents have been enthusiastic about it when they talk to our council members. It's clearly something our community wants to look at.

Q: Based on that, is the city going to go ahead and build something?

A: No. Far from it. I think the City Council and most of the community realize this is a substantial investment that needs to be vetted very carefully. BRS, the firm we're working with, says many of the communities they do feasibility studies for don't build anything.

Q: If we built a community center, would it have a pool?

A: A pool has a lot of support in our surveys so the feasibility study will take a close look at that. Having a place for people of all ages to splash around, swim and get into a jacuzzi is obviously very appealing to a lot of families, but it's not a foregone conclusion.

Q: Aren't aquatic facilities really expensive to operate?

A: The council and staff visited a lot of pools to get better educated on that topic, and it depends on what you build. Some aquatic facilities have very good cost recovery and pay for operations through user fees. Others need

to be subsidized. Generally speaking, though, modern aquatic facilities are a lot better at paying their own way than older versions.



Parks Director Jessi Richardson

Q: Will an aquatics facility have a competitive pool for swim teams to use?

A: That's a key question. A competitive pool would be enormously beneficial and convenient for our swim teams. On the other hand, aquatic facilities with competitive pools generally don't take in as much in user fees, so cost recovery could be reduced. Obviously, that's something the community will really need to weigh in on.

Q: Is this the time for a community to consider something like this? The economy is still struggling.

A: That's a great question. And I

think the answer probably depends completely on the individual. Some people will probably feel like holding off until the economy gets healthier and everyone feels a lot more prosperous. On the other hand, some families may feel that we need to build something like this before all their children grow up and leave town.

Q: Is it true that a community center will cost us less if we build it during this recession?

A: This kind of facility is never going to be inexpensive, so let's get that established as clearly as possible. But it is true that the bidding environment is better for the buyer during a recession. For example, the engineers' estimate for the 244th Avenue bridge project was \$12.9 million. But in this economic environment, the winning bid came in at \$9.3 million. Those kinds of savings are something to consider.

Q: What is a community center going to cost?

A: It totally depends on what the community decides it wants. We've visited a lot of facilities in recent months. The least expensive community center with a pool we saw was in Federal Way. In today's dollars, it would probably cost about \$25 million to build. So that's probably the bottom of the scale, and depending on what residents want, it could be more than that.

Applications open for Sammamish Youth Board

The Sammamish Youth Board is recruiting members for the 2011-2012 school year. Applications will be available on the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) beginning on April 11. The applications are due at Sammamish City Hall by the end of business on Monday, May 9.

For more information about the youth board or the application process, please contact the city's Lynne Handlos at lhandlos@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

Celebrate Earth Day at the Lodge at Beaver Lake

If the goal is to celebrate planet Earth in all its glory, where better than near the Lodge at Beaver Lake Park? The city venue, a harmonious blend of trees, water, open space and man-made buildings, will start hopping at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 30, with the year's first "Sammamish Walks" event. After a jaunt around the park, participants will have a long menu of activities to choose from:

- A raptor display
- Fishing demonstrations
- Wildlife photos
- Food and entertainment
- Crafts and games

Designed for families and individuals of all ages, Earth Day at Beaver Lake Park will also celebrate the city's recent designation as a Community Wildlife Habitat, an honor from the National Wildlife Foundation that only 12 cities in the entire state have managed to earn!

If you want more information on the event, please contact Dawn Sanders at 425-295-0556 or dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

It may be chainsaw weather, but please get a permit

This is the time of year when City Hall starts receiving reports from residents that trees are coming down, perhaps in violation of the rules. So here's a refresher: A tree removal permit is required from the city to remove a deciduous or coniferous tree over a certain circumference. If a deciduous

(leafy) tree is over 12 inches in diameter, or a coniferous (evergreen) tree is over eight inches in diameter, a permit is required to take it down. The diameter should be measured 54 inches up from the base of the tree. In critical areas or buffers, all trees, regardless of size or type, require permits.

For an application packet, go to the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) and click through permits, building permits, and select "tree removal application packet." Such permits can usually receive same-day approval. To learn more about the permit process, and limitations that may apply to a specific site, call 425-295-0500.

Artist reception on April 15

Residents are invited to meet nationally known artist Brian Bonebrake at a reception on Friday, April 15, 6-8 p.m. at City Hall. The dates for Bonebrake's exhibit, also at City Hall, are available on the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) by clicking through Advisory Boards and Arts Commission.



Marketing tips for non-profits

Let the experts teach you how to better market your non-profit organization at a brown bag lunch on Tuesday, April 26, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at City Hall.

Panelists will include Debbie Berto, publisher of the Sammamish Review; Kristin Heffley, Caffeinated Communications; Brad Wong, Sammamish.Patch.com; Barry Boone, Earthbongo; and Deb Sogge, Chamber of Commerce.

Beverages will be provided, but attendees should bring their own lunch, and RSVP at dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

CITY CALENDAR

APRIL

Tuesday, April 5

-City Council Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 6

-Parks and Rec Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 7

-Planning Commission Mtg,
6:30 p.m.
-Community Garden Steering
Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
-Front Porch Theater, 7-9 p.m.
Sammamish Library

Monday, April 11

-Community Center Feasibility
Study, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 12

-City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 15

-Art Exhibit Reception,
Brian Bonebrake, 6-8 p.m.

Saturday, April 16

-Recycling and Disposal Event,
9 a.m.-3 p.m., Eastlake High School
-Sammamish Disaster Readiness Fair,
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Monday, April 18

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
-Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 19

-City Council Office Hours,
5:30-6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 20

-Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, April 21

-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 23

-Planting at Illahee Trail,
9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Tuesday, April 26

-Non-Profit Panel & Brown Bag
Lunch, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Wednesday, April 27

-Sub-basin DRAFT Plan Open House
6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 30

-Earth Day & Volunteer Event,
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Beaver Lake Park
-Sammamish Walks, 10 a.m.- noon
Beaver Lake Lodge

MAY

Tuesday, May 3

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 4

-Parks and Rec Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 5

-Community Garden Steering
Committee Meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, May 9

-Community Center Feasibility Study,
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 10

-Joint Meeting/City Council and
Parks & Rec Commission, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, May 16

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
-Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 17

-City Council Office Hours,
5:30-6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 18

-Sammamish Farmers Market, 4-8 p.m.
-Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, May 19

-Planning Comm. Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 21

-Volunteer Event at Illahee Trail,
9 a.m.- noon
-Sammamish Walks, 10 a.m.- noon
Pine Lake Park

Wednesday, May 25

-Sammamish Farmers Market,
4-8 p.m.

Monday, May 30

-Memorial Day,
City offices closed

PLEASE NOTE:

All meetings and events at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.



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Tom Odell
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Nancy Whitten
Councilmember



John Curley
Councilmember



John James
Councilmember



Mark Cross
Councilmember



Michele Petitti
Councilmember

Sammamish ARTS FAIR

Sponsored by the
City of Sammamish Arts Commission
Fair dates: October 8 & 9, 2011

CALL TO ARTISTS

Artwork submission deadline May 15th 2011

For more information, visit
www.sammamishartfair.wordpress.com

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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Pete Butkus	Deputy City Manager
Kamuron Gurol	ComDevDir/AsstCityMgr
Lyman Howard	FinanceDir/AsstCityMgr
Laura Philpot	Public Works Director
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