



City Views @ Sammamish

ISSUE 55

CITY OF SAMMAMISH NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2007

Council chooses Mark Cross to serve as mayor

After spending a year as Deputy Mayor, Mark Cross was elevated to the Mayor's position on Jan. 2 by a unanimous vote of his fellow councilmembers. Cross, who first joined the City Council in January 2004, will replace Michele Petitti, who will remain as a member of the council. Councilmember Lee Felling was selected as the new Deputy Mayor.

"Mark and Lee both have a wealth of experience to draw from as they take on these important leadership roles," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "I know they're going to do a terrific job as our city continues to mature."

Cross has a degree in urban planning from the University of Washington, and works as a senior planner for Snohomish County. A Sammamish resident since 1987, Cross is married to Pam Mauk, the executive director of the Family Resource Center in Redmond. They have two children, Will and Kathleen.



Mayor Mark Cross

INSIDE THIS EDITION

New Mayor	1
Ebright Creek restored	1
Mayor's message	2
New biennial budget	2
Storm cleanup	3
Project updates	6
Holiday spirit	7
City Hall calendar	7
Powderpuff football	8
City Hall contact information	8

Ebright Creek restoration

Where it runs through Ebright Creek Park, the narrow stream that gives the park its name used to be a mess. Choked by invasive blackberry bushes and a poorly designed footbridge, it was a bad neighborhood for fish.

But Ginger Holser, a Department of Fish and Wildlife habitat biologist, says this section of the creek has changed dramatically during her four

visits to the site.

"It's a vast improvement for fish," Holser said. "This section of the creek was highly degraded before."

As part of a creek restoration plan, the city took out the invasive plants, put in native species, and replaced the old bridge with a new span that lets the creek go its own way.

See EBRIGHT, pg. 4



*Mark Cross
Mayor*

Bob Dylan was right. You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows. Just look at the direction of the fallen trees.

December brought us our biggest wind storm since the Inaugural Day storm of 1993. Much went right with our city. Neighbors helped neighbors, and the city staff did an amazing job of coordinating emergency services. Many thanks to all of the staff, especially Deputy City Manager Pete Butkus.

I think the storm taught us all how dependent we are on basics like electricity and heat and how much a friendly neighbor can mean during a

traumatic event.

What the storm also taught us is that we as a city are not as prepared as we need to be for a wide range of emergencies. Of particular concern is our lack of a fully functional emergency shelter.

Several schools are designated as emergency shelters, but do not have emergency heat or back-up electrical supplies. Cold, dark emergency shelters are not what we need for the rain, snow, wind and earthquake events that may confront us in the future.

Providing for a fully functional emergency shelter with a back-up generator and heat must be a council priority in early 2007.

Other priorities for the coming busy year include first and foremost, the completion of a plan for our Town

Center. Low Impact Development guidelines will also be proposed in 2007, and a new Shoreline Master Program will also be developed. The Council will more fully develop its priorities for the year this month, and I look forward to updating you on the progress and ways for you to participate in future issues.

In addition to these areas of focus, I look forward to our endeavors to build strong community traditions in Sammamish, including the introduction of a farmers market on the plaza at City Hall and a wonderful Fourth of July celebration at (and over) Commons Park. See you at the market this summer!

Council adopts 2007/2008 biennial budget

Two-year plan emphasizes capital investment

After months of quality time with financial staffers, department heads, City Councilmembers – and a calculator – City Manager Ben Yazici has a new two-year budget to work with.

The round numbers for both capital and operations expenditures look like this:

- \$48 million in 2007.
- \$49 million in 2008.

At the end of 2008, the biennial budget shows a projected ending balance of \$27 million.

"I think the City Council has adopted another very thoughtful and solid budget," Yazici said. "Once again, they've chosen to invest in the

capital projects our community needs."

Some of the larger capital investments over the next two years include:

- \$13 million for the first phase of improvements to 244th Avenue.
- \$5.3 million for work on East Lake Sammamish Parkway.
- \$3.2 million for non-motorized transportation (trails, pathways, etc.)
- \$3 million for park land acquisition.

During budget sessions with the City Council, a question came up: Does the city have a large enough staff to manage the \$44 million in capital projects planned over the next two years?

"We are a contract city," Yazici said. "Rather than hire a larger staff, we have traditionally relied on outside contractors to help us with our work.

"Since incorporation, we've done very well with the contract model. I think we should continue in that vein unless the evidence begins to argue for a different approach."

The total assessed valuation of Sammamish properties has now risen to around \$7.7 billion. That, along with other factors, has allowed the city to drop its property tax levy rate from \$2.59 per \$1,000 in assessed valuation (2006) to a projected \$2.47 per \$1,000 in assessed valuation (2007).

Storm cleanup keeps city busy

Falling trees damage homes and litter streets with debris

The high winds that battered the Puget Sound area last month were especially troublesome in Sammamish, where tall stands of trees envelop many of the city's homes and residential developments.

"Our damage assessment people have been very busy," said Assistant City Manager Pete Butkus. "We estimate that approximately 120 homes were damaged by falling trees."

In addition to helping clean up the debris, the city also simplified its permit process so homeowners could begin major repairs as soon as possible.

"When a tree falls through your roof, you're in for a tough time," Butkus said, "but the city is doing what it can to help things along."

Even if a house suffered no damage, most homes and streets were littered with storm debris. The four free drop-off sites the city arranged for residents collected in excess of 2,000 yards of debris.

Public Works Director John Cunningham says the city's operations and maintenance staff worked early, long and hard to clear roads, pick up debris, and assist Puget Sound Energy in its power restoration efforts.

"By New Year's Day, our crews had worked approximately 1,500 hours on storm-related jobs," Cunningham said. "I'm proud of the job they did."



Logs stacked along Northeast 16th Street.



Downed sign at 211th Place Northeast.



Storm debris dropped off at Bill Reams Park.



Fence damage along 211th Place Northeast.

EBRIGHT, cont. from pg. 1

“The new bridge allows the creek to migrate and go back to its natural configuration,” Holser said.

Working with Holser, the city also installed logs and stumps to reduce erosion at Ebright Creek and make it more fish-friendly. Properly placed, the new additions provide cover from predators and create slow-moving pools and eddies that allow fish to rest. Although no fish were visible during her most recent visit, Holser said there could be some cutthroat trout in this section of the stream.

The new neighborhood park, due to open in the next few weeks, is located on 12 acres just west of 212th Avenue Southeast. Although the park’s sports court, picnic shelter and play areas have changed the landscape, the habitat biologist says there’s a net benefit to the creek.

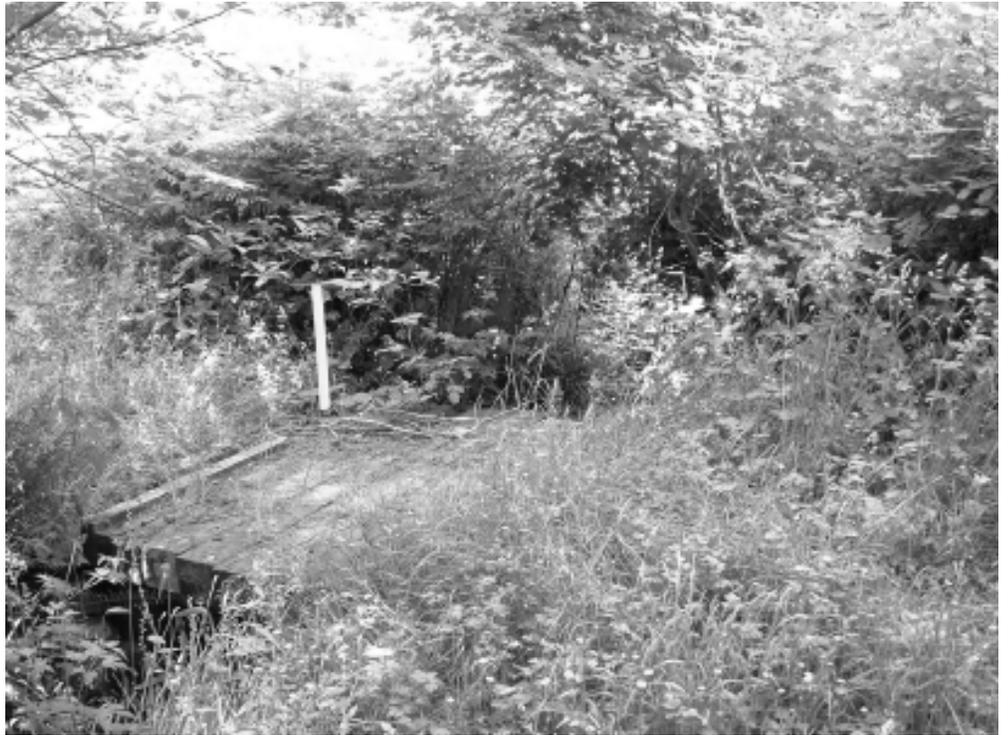
“You can easily mingle development of a park with positive benefits for a stream,” Holser said. “Ebright Creek Park is a good example.”

The new park will fill a void in the western part of the city, which had few public spaces at incorporation in 1999.

“This should be a great gathering place for kids, families and all our residents in the western part of the city,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “It’s another step forward as we fulfill the community’s goal of having more recreational opportunities.”

When residents enter the park from 212th Avenue, they will find

The “OLD” Ebright Creek



Choked by blackberry bushes and other invasive, non-native plants, this is what Ebright Creek looked like before it was restored in the new park. The picture to the right shows the same location last month.



In 2004, before the restoration at Ebright Creek Park, this debris dam constricted water flow along the narrow stream bed.

The “NEW” Ebright Creek



A larger, well-designed bridge and some newly installed logs and stumps make Ebright Creek healthier and more fish-friendly.



Ginger Holser, a Department of Fish and Wildlife habitat biologist, points something out to the contractor at Ebright Creek.

a small parking lot on the left and a sports court on the right. Beyond that lies a wetland, traversed by a curving wooden boardwalk.

When visitors reach the western end of the boardwalk and step onto slightly higher ground, they will find a stand of tall evergreen trees overlooking a large play field, picnic shelter and playground. A sizable restroom structure has been built nearby.

Continuing to the west, visitors will encounter Ebright Creek, an “intermittent” stream that often goes dry during the summer. A wooden viewing platform will provide a great vantage point for those interested in observing its delicate flow.

Across the new wooden bridge lies a long and graceful loop trail that extends all the way to the western edge of the park. Surrounded by trees and bordered by a wooden fence, the pedestrian loop passes around an open meadow.

“It’s going to be really pretty and pleasant over there – a nice turnaround spot when you take a walk through the park,” Yazici said.

When the city bought the 12 acres of park land in 2001, it paid \$950,000. Battered by decades of use as pastureland, the site was badly in need of a makeover. The construction budget for the park was \$3.5 million.

“It’s a great-looking place now,” Yazici said. “The designers did a very nice job of integrating the man-made and natural features. I think Ebright Creek Park is going to be a hit.”

Project updates:

More information available online at:
www.ci.sammamish.wa.us and
www.sammplat.wa.org



244th Avenue: This project will improve 244th Avenue between Southeast Eighth Street and Northeast Eighth Street by creating a two-lane, tree-lined street with a median and/or center turn lane, as needed. The street will include a 630-foot-long bridge structure, closing an existing gap in the corridor. Design is 30 percent complete, with construction expected to begin in late summer or early fall 2007. The construction contract is estimated at just over \$13 million. Project manager Jed Ireland can be reached at 425-295-0563 or jireland@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

Pine Lake Transit Access Road:

This \$1.8 million project will provide a new, three-lane road connection between Southeast 30th Street and 228th Avenue. The road will feature one lane in each direction, a center turn lane or landscaped median, a porous sidewalk on the south side and a soft walking path on the north side. Currently about half-way through construction, the road should be complete by early 2007. Project manager Jeff Brauns can be reached at jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us or 425-295-0561.

Northeast Eighth Street Walkway:

This sidewalk project along the north side of Northeast Eighth Street will result in pedestrian improvements between 228th Avenue Northeast and Inglewood Jr. High School. This \$434,000 project is essentially com-

plete. Project manager Jeff Brauns can be reached at 425-295-0561 or jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

Intersection improvement at East Lake Sammamish Parkway and Louis Thompson Hill Road:

With the goal of improving safety and traffic flow, this \$359,000 project will feature new signal lights and street lights. The signal poles will be installed early this year. Project manager Steven Chen can be reached at 425-295-0564 or schen@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

228th Avenue Northeast Walkway:

This \$2,040,000 project will create a sidewalk on the west side of 228th Avenue between Northeast 12th Place and Northeast 25th Way. Improvements to the east side of the roadway were recently completed. Currently, storm sewer pipe is being installed in the median. Project manager Jeff Brauns can be reached at 425-295-0561 or jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

East Lake Sammamish Parkway:

This project, stretching from Northeast Inglewood Hill Road to the northern city limits, isn't scheduled to begin construction until 2008. After environmental analysis is complete, the City Council is expected to choose a design alternative sometime in 2007. With the goal of reducing congestion and improving safety for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, this \$41 million project will have multiple stages.

Among other things, it will widen the roadway, add a median or left turn lane, provide bike lanes and build a sidewalk on the east side of the parkway. Project Manager Jeff Brauns can be reached at 425-295-0561 or jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

Beaver Lake Preserve Loop Trail:

A 1.2 mile loop trail is the centerpiece of this \$265,000 project in the Beaver Lake Preserve. It will pass through a maturing second growth cedar forest and cross wetlands. The project will also build a 10-space crushed rock parking lot, information kiosk, and portable restroom enclosure. With construction already underway, the trail is expected to open this spring. Project manager Kevin Husemann can be reached at 425-295-0583 or khusemann@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

Watermain replacement (SE 32nd St. and 212th Ave. SE):

This Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District (District) project is replacing an old cement watermain with a larger, ductile iron watermain to improve fire flows and reliability in the area southwest of Pine Lake. Completion is expected this spring. Project Manager Jim Konigsfeld can be reached at jim@sammplat.wa.org or 425-392-6256, ext. 217.

Water and sewer extension (SE Pine Lake Road and 224th Place SE):

In conjunction with the city's extension of Issaquah Pine Lake Road westward from the new park-and-ride, the District is extending water and sewer mains along the new road. This project is substantially complete. Project manager Kyle Wong can be reached at kyle@sammplat.wa.org or 425-392-6256, ext. 203.

Holiday spirit fills City Hall

Lifted by the enthusiastic singing of local school children, more than 250 people enjoyed the holiday spirit at City Hall last month.

Sponsored by the Sammamish Youth Board, the Dec. 6 event featured music, children's activities, a speech by outgoing Mayor Michele Petitti, and the lighting of a Holiday Giving Tree.

The tree, which had multiple tags listing food items, was put up by the Youth Board so members could gather food donations and put together a nice, hot meal for homeless teens in Seattle.

The Holiday Giving Tree, the choir stage, and the other attractions were set up in the lobby of the new City Hall building.



Cynthia Dean leads Rosa Parks Elementary students in song at the Holiday Giving Tree event in City Hall on Dec. 6.

CITY HALL CALENDAR

JANUARY

- **Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2007**
City Council Meeting, 6:30-10 p.m.
City Hall
- **Monday, Jan. 8, 2007**
Neighborhood Connections Mtg., 6:30-8 p.m.
City Hall
- **Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2007**
City Council Study Session, 6:30-10 p.m.
City Hall
- **Thursday, Jan. 11- Saturday, Jan. 13, 2007**
City Council Retreat, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Alderbrook - Union, WA
Planning Commission Mtg., 4-6:30 p.m.
City Hall
- **Monday, Jan. 15, 2007**
Town Center Committee/Property Owners Forum, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
City Hall
- **Monday, Jan. 15, 2007**
City offices closed
City Hall
- **Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2007**
City Council Meeting, 6:30-10 p.m.
City Hall
- **Thursday, Jan. 18, 2007**
Planning Commission Mtg., 4-6 p.m.
City Hall
- **Thursday, Jan. 18, 2007**
Town Center Committee/Property Owners Forum, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
City Hall

- **Monday, Jan. 22, 2007**
Parks and Rec. Commission Mtg., 6:30 p.m.
City Hall
- **Thursday, Jan. 25, 2007**
Sammamish Youth Board Mtg., 6-7:30 p.m.
Sammamish Library
- **Thursday, Jan. 25, 2007**
Planning Commission Mtg., 4-7:30 p.m.
City Hall

FEBRUARY

- **Thursday, Feb. 1, 2007**
Planning Commission Mtg., 4-7:30 p.m.
(Tentative: Town Center DEIS Open House)
City Hall
- **Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2007**
City Council Meeting, 6:30-10 p.m.
City Hall
- **Thursday, Feb. 8, 2007**
Town Center Developers Forum, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
City Hall
- **Thursday, Feb. 8, 2007**
Town Center Committee/Property Owners Forum, 7-8:30 p.m.
City Hall
- **Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2007**
City Council Study Session, 6:30-10 p.m.
City Hall

- **Thursday, Feb. 15, 2007**
Sammamish Youth Board Mtg., 6-7:30 p.m.
Sammamish Library
- **Thursday, Feb. 15, 2007**
Planning Commission Mtg., 6:30-8:30 p.m.
City Hall
- **Monday, Feb. 19, 2007**
City Hall closed for President's Day
- **Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2007**
Joint meeting: City Council, Town Center Committee, Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
City Hall
- **Monday, Feb. 26, 2007**
Parks and Rec. Commission Mtg. 6:30 p.m.
City Hall

NOTE: Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.

SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL



*Mark Cross
Mayor*



*Lee Felling
Deputy Mayor*



*Jack Barry
Councilmember*



*Don Gerend
Councilmember*



*Kathleen Huckabay
Councilmember*



*Michele Petitti
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*

Powderpuff Football is a hit!



Players from Eastlake and Skyline High School pose with Gabbi Gershowitz (front row, center) after a Dec. 4 powderpuff football game that raised \$3,000 for the Make-a-Wish Foundation, a group that grants wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses. Others supporting the event in-

cluded the Sammamish Youth Board, Starbucks, and the Fox Sports Network (FSN). In addition to putting highlights on TV, FSN contributed an additional \$1,000 to Make-a-Wish.

Emceed by former Mariner pitcher Jeff Nelson, the game was played at Eastlake High School.

City of Sammamish Offices

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Ben Yazici	City Manager
Pete Butkus	Deputy City Manager
John Cunningham	Public Works Director
Kamuron Gurol	Community Dev Director
Lyman Howard	Finance Dir/Ass't City Mgr
Jessi Richardson	Parks & Rec Director
Mike Sauerwein	Admin Services Director
Steve Hartwig	City Engineer
Bruce Disend	City Attorney
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Brad Thompson	Police Chief
John Murphy	Fire Chief
Tim Larson	Communications Manager



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