

Growth phasing repeal?

Legal battle would pose enormous financial risk

Facing tough legal challenges from a regional growth board and several developers, the City Council will consider the repeal of its growth phasing ordinance at its May 16 meeting.

The ordinance, in place since last August, was designed to control the pace of growth after the city's six-year development moratorium lifted last year. The measure was to have allowed 420 residential lots during the first year of its life, 420 more during

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Looking northwest in the Town Center planning area toward the intersection of 228th Avenue and Southeast Fourth Street.

Town Center feedback flowing fast to city website

When the Sammamish Town Center web page pops open, the first thing you see is an aerial photograph, roughly centered on the intersection of 228th Avenue and Southeast Fourth Street.

Staring straight down from outer space – or from a few thousand feet, anyway – the 240 acres inside the Town Center frame look lightly developed. From the stratosphere, it looks like a canvas, just waiting for the creative vision residents have been in-

vited to provide.

“The Town Center webpage has been getting a lot of traffic,” Webmaster Andy Stringer said. “We’ve had almost 4,000 visits to the page since we set it up in November.”

In recent weeks, the webpage has added surveys and comment options so residents can weigh in with their opinions about what the Town Center should look like. At press time, around 108 people had taken the time

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Mayor Michele Pettiti

This month, I wanted my message to focus on youth, so I went straight to the source and immersed myself in the thoughts and feelings of young people.

After seeing so many Boy Scouts in our City Council meetings over the years – they visit us to fulfill their citizen badge requirements – I decided they would be a great resource. I have sometimes wondered if they really “got” what we were discussing in our council meetings, but after chatting with John Lee, William Boos, Eric Thies and Alex Belleba, I was duly impressed!

These boys – 6th and 7th graders all, with visions of Eagle Scout status in their future – gave me a list of amenities they thought the youth in our community need. It included a pool and water park, a youth “hangout,” and more safe pathways and bike lanes so

they could get around town without parents having to drive them. A Red Robin, Outback Steak House, and Qdoba restaurant were also on the list.

When I asked them why they were in scouting, I didn’t get the “kid” answers I was expecting. Among their responses: It builds character, looks good on college applications, helps with career ideas, and improves your chances of entering the Marines as an officer. One boy did respond in the manner I anticipated: He said he did it to have fun with his friends, a sentiment the rest of the boys quickly agreed with.

I gathered further intelligence by attending the Youth City Council, a senior project organized by Robert Baxter, one of our Youth Board members. Robert presided as Mayor, while Nabeela Arshi, Dan Falkin, Lauren Hawkins, Michelle Treasurer and Laura Hawkinson served as councilmembers. Maggie Harlow took on the role of city clerk.

After listening to public comment, and reports from each

councilmember, the Youth City Council discussed the needs and wants of youth that had been brought up, and created a list of the top ten youth priorities in Sammamish. That list, which will be presented to the “real” City Council at the its May 2 meeting, included the following:

- A job fair for kids who are looking for part-time work.
- A teen center.
- Better bus transit options.
- Youth participation in a Farmers’ Market.
- More youth programming on the city’s cable TV channel 21.

As I watched the Youth City Council and chatted with the Boy Scouts, I was impressed with their engagement and knowledge. These kids are really paying attention to their community, and tracking their own needs. As a City Council, and a community, we really need to return the favor and pay attention to them!

New chief: Brad Thompson

City Manager Ben Yazici has selected a 28-year veteran of the King County Sheriff’s Office to serve as the city’s second police chief. Brad Thompson, who most recently served as Administrative Captain in King County’s Precinct #4, replaces Dick Baranzini, who recently retired after more than six years as the city’s first police chief.

Yazici says Thompson rose to the top of the candidate list because of his experience, administrative skill and talent for leadership. In addition to his long tenure at the Sheriff’s Office, Yazici noted that Thompson recently served in Iraq and Afghanistan with the Army Reserves.

“Brad is an excellent choice for our community,” Yazici said. “I think he will communicate well with both our residents and our officers.”

Thompson, who started his new job on April 3, says he’s been impressed with the professionalism and commitment of city personnel.

“I’m excited to be part of a great team,” Thompson said.



Police Chief Brad Thompson

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to submit detailed comments.

Residents have three options when they arrive at the webpage:

- **Vision Comments:** Residents can identify the uses and services they would like to see in the Town Center. They can also express concerns and ask questions.

- **Visual Preference Survey:** While looking at photographs of actual open space, housing, and commercial efforts from around the country, residents can rate their response to specific images on a 5-point scale that ranges from “fantastic” to “unacceptable.”

- **Sketch Comments:** After looking at three initial sketches illustrating what the town center could look like 20 years from now, respondents can comment on their “likes” and “concerns.”

Town Center Webpage:

www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/TownCenter.aspx

The sketches and pictures have been used to stimulate ideas and reactions, said Cristina Van Valkenburgh, the Town Center project manager.

“We won’t have real alternatives to look at until early summer, when residents will be able to comment at a community forum,” Van Valkenburgh said. “Once we digest all the public input we’ve been getting, I’m sure the real alternatives will look quite different from these initial sketches.”

The effort’s general goals, however, have already been set by a broad Town Center Vision Statement, adopted by the City Council on March

7. That Vision Statement, available on the Town Center webpage, calls for a “vibrant, urban, family-friendly gathering place in a healthy natural setting.” Among many other things, it asks for open spaces, scenic views, mixed-use development, a variety of housing types, and a “range of commercial, recreational, cultural, educational and personal services and activities.”

Sammamish Commons, a 30-acre park and civic complex, will anchor the southern end of the Town Center. The Commons, due to open in late July, will feature trails, play areas, public spaces and a new City Hall building. It also has space for a future library or community center.

To ensure easy access, the City Council vision calls for a network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways to connect and integrate the Town Center, both internally and to the rest of the community.

“Within the general frame of the City Council’s Vision Statement, we need to add specific features that reflect the community’s desires,” City Manager Ben Yazici said.

“To do that, we, as a community, need to think out loud for a while,” Yazici said. “That can be a bit disconcerting when ideas we don’t like are discussed, but that’s part of the creative process.”

“The City Council took in the recommendations of the Special Study Area Task Force last year, looked at this carefully with the Planning Commission, added its own thoughts and changes, and created a Vision Statement,” Yazici said.

“I invite all residents to look at our webpage, attend meetings, and play their part. The differing points of view need to be melded into a wonderful plan we can all be proud of.”

Opportunities for public input on Town Center

- **Public comments** via city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/TownCenter.aspx)

- **June** - Community Forum (Date and location to be announced)

- **July** - Town Center Committee (Date and location to be announced)

- **August** - Property Owners Forum (Date and location to be announced)

- **September** - Community Forum (Date and location to be announced)

- **October** - Town Center Committee (Date and location to be announced)

- **November** - Property Owners Forum (Date and location to be announced)

- **Jan. 2007** - Town Center Committee (Date and location to be announced)

- **Feb. 2007** - Community Forum (Date and location to be announced)

- **July 2007** - Community Forum (Date and location to be announced)

- All regular City Council meetings (Usually the first and third Tuesday of each month)

- All Planning Commission meetings (Usually the first and third Thursday of each month)

- Contact Project Manager Cristina Van Valkenburgh, 425-836-7971, cvanvalkenburgh@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

Trail awaits summer test

Eight weeks after it opened, the East Lake Sammamish Trail is drawing far more compliments than complaints, but the city is meeting regularly with residents who have concerns.

“Many of the concerns have to do with access and parking issues,” the city’s Tim Larson said. “That and the prevalence of pet waste.”

The county has responded to the latter by posting new signs reminding users that they must obey the “scoop” law.

“The pressure test will come this summer when usage increases,” Larson said. “That’s when the system may spring a few leaks.

“We’ll stay in problem-solving mode with the county and do our best to address the problems that come up.”



A lone runner enjoys the sunshine along the new King County trail.

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its second year, and then expire in August 2007, lifting restraints on development.

“Unfortunately, the Growth Management Hearings Board found fault with our ordinance,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “We don’t agree with their reasoning, but we have to weigh the risk of challenging the decision.

“It’s possible, if we lose to the board in court, and to the developers who are challenging us on a number of issues, that Sammamish residents could be on the hook for tens of millions of dollars in damage awards,” Yazici said. “That’s a risk to our taxpayers we can eliminate by repealing the ordinance.”

The growth phasing ordinance emerged after long-term consideration

of the issue by the city’s Planning Commission, City Council and a broad range of stakeholders. The measure would have allowed the city to easily meet its current growth targets, as mandated by the state’s Growth Management Act (GMA) process, but the hearings board ruled that it didn’t comply with state law.

“Our community made a good-faith, well-thought-out effort to meet the GMA’s goals,” Yazici said. “But I think it’s time to turn the page, and use other tools to manage growth.”

According to Director of Community Development Kamuron Gurol, those tools include impact fees and the GMA’s concurrency rules.

Concurrency requires that plans for roads and other infrastructure be in place for existing or anticipated

growth, with construction of the infrastructure to take place no later than 6 years after the growth becomes reality. If infrastructure falls too far behind growth, communities can halt the acceptance of new development applications.

Impact fees are paid by developers to help offset the cost of additional infrastructure needs created by new residents. A city can raise or lower those impact fees, within allowable limits, to help pay for needed infrastructure.

“The six-year development moratorium the City Council imposed after Sammamish incorporated in 1999 allowed the city to make progress on infrastructure,” Gurol said. “We will use the tools we have available in a responsible manner.”

Poor soil boosts budget for Commons

The cost of constructing Sammamish Commons, a 30-acre park and civic complex in the geographical center of the city, has gone up.

Due largely to poor soil conditions and a very wet winter, the bottom-line budget figure will rise from \$16.6 million to \$18.8 million.

That final figure could rise to \$19.1 million if the City Council decides to finish the interior of the top floor. In the original plan, a portion of the top floor was to remain unfinished until expansion required its completion.

The City Council received a thorough briefing on the issues at its April 18 meeting and was scheduled to approve the budget adjustment at its meeting on May 2.

“Our contractor had to bring in

a lot of granular material to replace unexpectedly poor soil,” Assistant City Manager Pete Butkus said. “When we had the second wettest January in history, that just made the problem worse.”

The soil problems accounted for about half of the budget increase, Butkus said. The remainder can be traced to a number of smaller adjustments and improvements to the project. As examples, Butkus pointed to an improved irrigation system, better drainage systems, and the addition of more ice and water shields to the new City Hall building.

“These changes should provide a lot of benefits,” Butkus said. “Our play fields will stay drier, our outdoor facilities will be usable more months out of the year, and the

overall project will be even friendlier to the environment.”

Sammamish Commons, which is designed to provide the city with a social, recreational and civic focal point, broke ground in June 2006. Located near Skyline High School, just west of the intersection of 228th Avenue and Southeast Eighth Street, the finished project will feature park facilities, trails, gathering places, a new City Hall, and room for an additional large building such as a library or community center.

The new City Hall will provide approximately 40,000 square feet of work space on two floors with a 20,000-square-foot underground parking garage. City staff and police personnel are expected to move in to the new building in late July and early August.

Youth Board stays busy

Carrying proceeds from a benefit concert they sponsored in January, the Sammamish Youth Board visited Children’s Hospital in Seattle.

Accompanied by Lynne Handlos, the city’s recreation coordinator, three members of the youth board presented a \$500 check to a hospital trustee.

That was last month. This month, the Youth Board is sponsoring the first ever “Sample Sammamish!” If, on Saturday, May 13, you patronize Sherm’s BBQ, the Pine Lake Ale House, The Bubble Shack and Yoko Teriyaki, you’ll be giving support to the American Cancer Society.

Sherm’s BBQ is in the QFC shopping center, the Ale House is in the Safeway shopping center, and both the Bubble Shack and Yoko Teriyaki are in Klahanie.



Laurie Boehme of Children's Hospital (left) accepts a check from Sammamish Youth Board members Carrie Hollenbeck, Robert Baxter, and Maggie Harlow, and Sammamish Recreation Coordinator Lynne Handlos.



Babies relax at Beaver Lake Park as their moms work out.

Baby Boot Camp

Parks and Recreation program underway

Moms who don't want to leave their babies behind when they exercise have found the perfect solution at a city-sponsored program at Beaver Lake Park.

The program, provided by Baby Boot Camp, a private enterprise, is offered under the umbrella of the city's Parks and Recreation Department.

Interested moms, who must be at least six weeks postpartum to participate, should call Stefanie Harris at 425-281-1635 to register.

Information on the strength and conditioning program is also available at www.babybootcamp.com.

The first six-week session started on April 17. The classes, which run from 10 to 11:15 a.m., are held Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

The next session begins on June 5, with a third session scheduled to start on July 17.

Do you want a park bond and levy package?

City conducts study to gauge resident interest

In the city's 2005 community survey, residents indicated, by a margin of almost three to one, that they would be willing to support a bond to pay for more park improvements.

To investigate the subject further, the city is now launching a multi-dimensional study to gauge the community's interest in a park bond and levy package.

The Parks and Recreation Commission took one of the early steps at its May 1 meeting, inviting stakehold-

ers and user groups to offer their perspective.

An important next step is a much more detailed community survey. A broad sampling of residents will have the opportunity to respond to the survey in the next few weeks.

"We'll also have some more stakeholder meetings and three or four meetings for the general public," Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Watling said. "We want to get a good fix on what kind of parks people want, the

bond size they would support, and how they feel about an operations and maintenance levy to take care of the new facilities."

Watling will take the study results to the City Council late this fall. He encourages residents to keep their eye on the city newsletter and website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) for updates on the public process.

Those with questions can contact Watling at 425-443-8809 or jwatling@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

Residents invited to Open House for Parkway project



East Lake Sammamish Parkway

Proposed improvements to the northern end of the East Lake Sammamish Parkway will be on display at an Open House later this month.

Residents are invited to join with the project team to:

- Hear an update on the preferred concept currently being analyzed.
- Learn about the results of recent environmental analysis.
- Review the project timeline.
- Ask questions and provide input.

The Open House is scheduled for Wednesday, May 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m., at Inglewood Junior High School, 24120 N.E. Eighth St.

The goals of the Parkway project include improved safety, congestion relief, left-turn lanes, and increased bicycle and pedestrian access. The improvements are designed to promote smoother traffic flow, reduce accidents

and provide a more attractive roadway.

More information is available at the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) by clicking on the “projects” tab and scrolling down to “East Lake Sammamish Parkway.”

Residents with questions about the project may also contact the city at elsp@ci.sammamish.wa.us or 425-836-7925.

CITY HALL CALENDAR

MAY

Monday, May 1, 2006

- Parks and Recreation Comm. Mtg, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

- City Council Meeting, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District
- Sammamish Town Center Committee Public Meeting, 6:30 pm - 8 pm
Sammamish Hills Lutheran Church

Thursday, May 4, 2006

- Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

- City Council Study Session, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Thursday, May 11, 2006

- Property Owner Forum, 6 - 7:30 pm
Sammamish Hills Lutheran Church

Friday, May 12, 2006

- City Council Retreat, 10 am - 5 pm
Beaver Lake Lodge

Monday, May 15, 2006

- City Council Study Session, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

- City Council Meeting, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

- Arts Commission Meeting, 7 pm - 8 pm
Sammamish City Hall

Thursday, May 18, 2006

- Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Monday, May 22, 2006

- Parks and Recreation Comm. Mtg, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Wednesday, May 24, 2006

- East Lake Sammamish Parkway Open House, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Inglewood Junior High School

Thursday, May 25, 2006

- Sammamish Youth Board Meeting, 6 - 7:30 pm
Sammamish Library

Monday, May 29, 2006

- Memorial Day, All day
City offices closed

JUNE

Thursday, Jun 1, 2006

- Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Jun 6, 2006

- City Council Meeting, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Jun 13, 2006

- City Council Study Session, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Thursday, Jun 15, 2006

- Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Monday, Jun 19, 2006

- City Council Study Session, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Jun 20, 2006

- City Council Meeting, 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Wednesday, Jun 21, 2006

- Arts Commission Meeting, 7 - 8 pm
Sammamish City Hall

Monday, Jun 26, 2006

- Parks and Recreation Comm. Mtg., 6:30 - 9 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

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

The Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District is located at 1510 228th Avenue NE.

SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL



*Michele Petitti
Mayor*



*Mark Cross
Deputy Mayor*



*Jack Barry
Councilmember*



*Lee Felling
Councilmember*



*Don Gerend
Councilmember*



*Kathleen Huckabay
Councilmember*



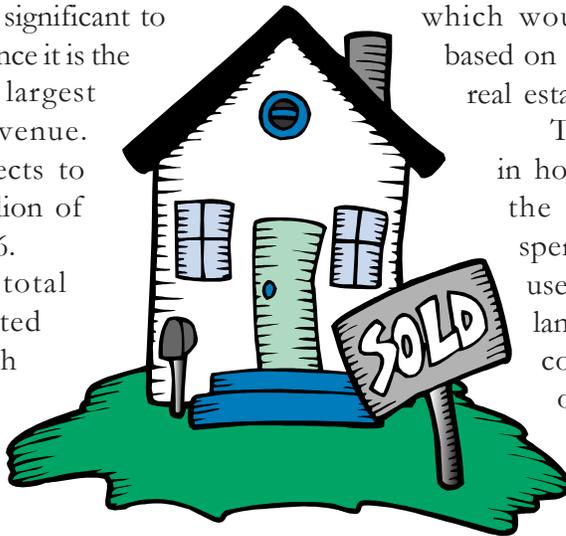
*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*

How much is the REET?

A new tool on the city's website

Real estate excise tax (REET) is a tax paid by the seller on the price of real property when it's sold. REET is very significant to Sammamish since it is the city's second largest source of revenue. The city expects to collect \$4 million of REET in 2006.

The total REET collected in Sammamish is 1.78% of the selling price. Of that, 1.25% goes to the state of Washington, while the remainder goes to the city.



A new tax calculator available on the city of Sammamish website allows users to calculate the REET which would be assessed based on the value of their real estate.

The city is limited in how its portion of the REET can be spent. Half can be used only for parks land acquisition and construction. The other half can only be spent on transportation improvements. If you're interested in trying it out, please go to www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/REET.aspx.

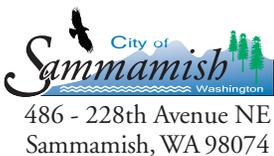
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- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Ben Yazici | City Manager |
| Pete Butkus | Assistant City Manager |
| Delora Kerber | Public Works Director |
| Kamuron Guro | Community Dev Director |
| Lyman Howard | Financial Svcs Director |
| Jeff Watling | Parks & Rec Director |
| Mike Sauerwein | Admin Svcs Director |
| Steve Hartwig | City Engineer |
| Bruce Disend | City Attorney |
| Melonie Anderson | City Clerk |
| Richard Baranzini | Police Chief |
| John Murphy | Fire Chief |
| Tim Larson | Communications Manager |



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