

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 172

CITY NEWSLETTER

OCT. 2016

Money Magazine: Sammamish is 14th “best place to live”

Noting that Sammamish has excellent schools, major employers nearby, and “gobs of green space,” Money Magazine has ranked the city as the 14th “best place to live” among small towns all across the country.

“Money Magazine has recognized us several times before, but it never gets old,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “I think it shows that our community’s decision to incorporate in 1999, and take on the challenge of self governance, was a great choice.”

The magazine says it analyzed 60 key factors during its evaluation process, including taxes, education, and health care resources.

Although Sammamish still doesn’t have a “proper Main Street,” the magazine says the new community center, Sammamish Commons, the Farmers Market and other local events have given the city a growing “sense of place.”

To see all the rankings online, just enter these search terms – “money magazine” and “best places to live 2016.”



Residents share ideas at the city’s Sept. 8 Round-Table Meeting on Growth.

The conversation about growth is just beginning in Sammamish

SEPT. 8 ROUND-TABLE MEETING DRAWS BIG CROWD

There were no easy answers, and no obvious solutions, but the city’s Sept. 8 Round-Table Meeting on Growth produced something vital – a serious beginning to a long, community-wide discussion of growth and development.

“Sammamish has always had a plan to accommodate growth,” City Man-

ager Lyman Howard said. “But plans can change, especially if there’s a lot of community energy pushing for an adjustment.”

The more than 150 round-table participants put most of their energy behind ideas that would slow or miti-

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MAYOR’S MESSAGE

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NEW POLICE CHIEF

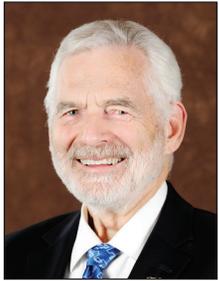
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REMOVING SICK TREES

Story on page 5

Sammamish helps create a “Welcoming America”

Last month I joined my fellow Eastside city mayors (Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland and Redmond) in proclaiming an Eastside Welcoming Week in



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

our cities, and calling on all our residents to join together to build stronger communities across the Eastside.

The inspiration for this proclamation came from the organization “Welcoming America,” which seeks to build communities that embrace immigrants and foster opportunity for all.

Basically – paraphrasing some of the Welcoming America philosophy – the vision is to help people feel like they belong in their community, hopefully a place where people respect each other and value everyone’s unique talents.

There’s a great example of that spirit in the foyer of the Sammamish Community Center/YMCA, where a map of the world is rapidly filling up with notes from foreign-born residents. Their notes, placed over their country of origin, contain names, languages spoken, and other interesting items that might serve as conversation starters.

Central Puget Sound has been rapidly becoming more culturally diverse,

and surprisingly to many, the Eastside is leading the way.

In the four counties of Central Puget Sound (King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap) during the last 25 years, the minority population has gone from 15 percent to 35 percent. Furthermore, 38 percent of the population growth during this period can be traced to the foreign born.

This has resulted in some amazing statistics. In the state as a whole, some 13 percent of the population is now foreign born, and in Seattle the number is 18 percent.

But here in Sammamish, 25 percent of the citizens are foreign born, and the numbers in Bellevue and Redmond re-

first generation American, I was told that America is a “melting pot, a place where” multiple cultures come together and merge into one amorphous whole.

However, in my home I saw the unique customs of my ancestry being preserved and practiced. So, I don’t think of America as a melting pot; I see it as more of a tossed salad, with all the ingredients retaining their individual flavors.

Here in Sammamish, as we continue to grow more multi-cultural, it’s important to not only retain our unique flavors, but to thoroughly mix our ingredients together.

And it’s a job that requires everybody to pitch in! The city needs to

continue its outreach to an increasingly diverse constituency, and our foreign-born residents need to join our boards and commissions, attend our City Council meetings, volunteer, expand our community’s frame of reference, and run for office. Let’s mix it up!

To learn more, check out the city website,

participate in our Virtual Town Hall exercises, drop by City Hall, or simply email your Councilmembers.

You’ll be more than “welcome!”



A Community Center/YMCA member at the Culture Wall in Sammamish.

spectively are 35 percent and 37 percent!

Bellevue has been very proactive in recognizing this trend, embracing it with a motto: “Bellevue welcomes the world; our diversity is our strength.”

Growing up in Wisconsin as a

City thanks Nathan Elledge, welcomes Michelle Bennett

After seven praise-worthy years as the city's police chief, Nate Elledge has accepted a new assignment.

He is now the "Chief of the King County Airport Firefighter and Police Unit," or, as City Manager Lyman Howard put it at the Sept. 20 City Council meeting, "The King of Boeing Field."

Before presenting Elledge with a farewell plaque, Howard also said:

"He's done a fantastic job of combining a professional approach with a personal touch. He's articulate, reasonable, friendly – just the kind of guy you'd want to run into, whether you're in trouble, or just wandering around City Hall."

The city of Sammamish contracts with the King County Sheriff's Office for its police services. When it's time to

hire a new chief, the Sheriff's Office presents the city manager with a list of candidates to choose from.

In this case, Howard selected Capt. Michelle Bennett, a veteran officer who's been with the Sheriff's Office since 1990, serving 10 years as Maple Valley's police chief and, most recently, as the Administrative Services Captain for the Sheriff's Office in its Seattle headquarters.

Bennett, who took

over in Sammamish on Oct. 1, has a Master of Science Degree (Psychology/Organizational Development and Behavior) and a Doctorate in Education.

"We were very happy to see Michelle on our list of candidates," Howard said. "She's run a city police department before, and she has terrific credentials. We're confident she'll pick up right up where Chief Elledge left off and do a great job for our residents."



Police Chief Nathan Elledge receives a farewell plaque from City Manager Lyman Howard on



Since Oct. 1, Michelle Bennett has been the city's new police chief.

Central Washington board of trustees will visit city

When James Gaudino, the president of Central Washington University, visited Sammamish recently, he gave city officials the impression that his school was quite interested in the possibility of starting up a mini-campus in the old Mars Hill Church, now a city-owned building at 120 228th Ave. N.E.

Now the university's board of trustees is coming to town. They'll visit the building on Oct. 20 and converse with City Councilmembers and staff. Although no proposals have surfaced yet, the university is interested in launching a "running start" program for high school students, and then expanding its curriculum for students of all ages.

City monitors water investigation

After minute amounts of "perfluorinated" compounds (PFCs) were detected in several wells in the Lower Issaquah Valley, Sammamish Plateau Water has assured the city that the water it supplies to Sammamish residents is safe.

PFCs were recently discovered in soil samples taken at the East-side Fire & Rescue headquarters in Issaquah. The city of Issaquah, the fire consortium, and the water district are working together to further investigate potential sources.

Sammamish Plateau Water, which draws some of its water from the Issaquah Valley wells, has detected minute amounts of PFCs in two of its wells. All test results, however, are well below the Environmental Protection Agencies (EPA) recommended health advisory levels. The EPA does not currently regulate PFCs in drinking water.

For more information, call Sammamish Plateau Water at 425-392-6256.

GROWTH, cont. from pg. 1

gate the impact of growth.

“People were very concerned about the clearing of trees, traffic congestion, crowded schools, big houses on small lots, etc.,” Howard said. “It was very clear that the uptick in the economy has produced a level of development many are uncomfortable with.”

The city gathered a great variety of comments at the meeting, but some major themes emerged:

- Build more roads, and build them sooner so they keep pace with residential development
- Impose design standards on residential and commercial development so the results are more compatible with the character of neighborhoods and the city as a whole
- Find a way to pace the growth so it occurs at a more manageable speed.
- Keep more trees

“We started the meeting with a presentation about the Growth Management Act, residential targets assigned to the city, and the limits of municipal power,” Howard said.

“So I think most of the participants understood that we can’t just wave a wand and stop growth.

“But several things did come up that we need to explore further as we continue this community conversation.”

Among the suggestions:

- Use bonded debt to build roads before residential growth creates congestion. Currently, the city relies on developer impact fees to help pay for roads, but that funding isn’t available in advance.
- Buy up land and preserve it as open

space so it can’t be used for residential development.

- Retain tree buffers along roadways to screen off new residential developments.
- Obtain better bus service.

“The city currently has no bonded debt,” Howard said. “So that’s certainly an option. But how does the larger community feel about that? I think our City Council would love to dive a little deeper into that topic before it makes any decisions.”

The city is continuing to gather information. In addition to the round-table meeting, the city has also launched



Councilmember Christie Malchow (left) listens at her table.

a Virtual Town Hall on Growth. This online, public-input tool will keep the growth topic open until the end of October. Any resident interested in participating should just go to the city website at www.sammamish.us. At press time, more than 360 people had responded to the online survey.

The city is also going to conduct a random, statistically valid community survey later this year. Although the survey will measure community sentiment on a broad variety of topics, several of the questions will touch on growth and development.

“Of course, residents can do more than just answer surveys,” Howard said. “They can also go to City Council, Planning Commission and other meetings to follow the process and offer their thoughts along the way.”

Here are some of the key opportunities:

- Oct. 11 – City Council will discuss the proposed 2017-18 biennial budget.
- The City Council will discuss the annual capital budget this spring.
- The city’s Urban Forestry Plan, Non-motorized Plan, and Land Acquisition Strategy will be discussed in 2017.

To keep track of topics and when they’ll be discussed, residents have two primary options:

- Go to www.sammamish.us and open up the city calendar in the lower, left-hand corner of the home page.
- Sign up for email alerts that will notify you about City Council, Planning Commission and other meetings. Just go to the www.sammamish.us and click on the “Email Alert”

icon in the upper, right-hand corner of the home page.

“This community conversation about growth has gotten off to a good start,” Howard said. “The City Council is going over the public input we’ve already received, and they’re asking for more.

“We’ve also posted all the public input on our website, so I hope everybody in the community will take a look and help move the conversation forward.”

(NOTE: See the top of page 5 for a list of resources on the topic of growth.)

Info on Growth:

AT WWW.SAMMAMISH.US

- Summary of Round-Table written comments
- Verbatim Round-table written comments
- Link to Round-Table Power Point
- Link to video of Round-Table meeting
- Summary of Virtual Town Hall on Growth Comments
- Virtual Town Hall verbatim comments
- Link to summary of Growth Management Act

Sampling of written comments from Round-Table meeting on Growth

Growth needs to be phased – Trees should be kept and honored – Revisit acceptable traffic capacity; 228th is not acceptable now – Stop issuing variances – Retain heritage trees – Architecture committee should enforce standard of homes – Public transportation; need more – Apply best available science – New houses are too big – Wildlife should be considered more – Really appreciated the presentation – Pre-fund infrastructure – Aesthetics should be a priority – I would like to see more staff hired for enforcement – Buy land to protect wildlife corridors – Adopt strict architectural standards – It took me 50 minutes to get to this meeting from Beaver Lake – No more growth until infrastructure gets fixed – No! field house behind Pine Lake Middle School – Stormwater retention should not look like a concrete building – Good meeting – Moratorium on growth until the city can assess the infrastructure – Hire more staff! – Enforce regulations equally, completely – Better city oversight of development – The city should buy land so it doesn't get developed – Building homes cheek by jowl is a negative – Affordable housing for teachers, public service people – Growth is taking away the green space

Sahalee Way Open House set for Wednesday, Oct. 19

As the city prepares to sign a design contract for improvements to Sahalee Way, residents are being invited to attend an Open House on Wednesday, Oct. 19, 6-7:30 p.m., at the Boys and Girls Club, 825 228th Ave. N.E.

This will be the third Open House for a 1.75-mile project that will stretch along Sahalee Way from Northeast 25th Way to the northern city limits. Among other things, the improvements will include a median strip with turn pockets, a sidewalk on the west side, bus turnout locations and improved lighting.

The preferred design option to be presented at the Oct. 19 Open House will reflect the public input received from residents at the first two public meetings. It's anticipated construction will begin in 2018 or 2019.

For more information, contact Project Manager Jed Ireland at jireland@sammamish.us or 425-295-0563.

Removing sick trees at Pine Lake Park

The tall Douglas Fir trees at Pine Lake Park are beautiful but, unfortunately, they're also vulnerable to what's called "laminated root rot." And when their roots weaken, the trees become dangerous to park visitors and nearby homes.

So, beginning the week of Oct. 10, 18 "significant" trees will be cut down. That's 18 out of 225 that were assessed, all of them near the parking lot at the northern boundary of Pine Lake Park.

"In addition to protecting residents from falling trees, this will also slow down the spread of the disease," Parks Director Angie Feser said. "We'll be removing a primary source of the fungus that can travel through the soil."

Douglas Fir trees are not native to Pine Lake Park. As the city replaces the diseased trees, it will plant conifer and deciduous varieties that are not vulnerable to laminated root rot.

"We'll take similar steps throughout our city in the years ahead as part of our urban forestry management approach," Feser said. "It's always sad to see trees fail, but this is what we have to do to keep our tree canopy as healthy as possible."

Some of the trees to be cut down may still look healthy to the casual observer, but an arborist has confirmed that all of them are "zombies," trees that have no chance of surviving long term. The symptoms of the disease typically show up last in the upper sections of the tree.

Mixed use on 228th is really coming on

TRF PACIFIC PROJECT FITS TOWN CENTER PLAN VISION

“The Village at Sammamish Town Center,” rising methodically at the intersection of 228th Avenue and Southeast Fourth Street, will feature a Metropolitan Market grocery store, restaurants, medical offices, work spaces, apartments and much more.

It is, as the Town Center Plan calls for, a “mixed-use” development – a place where people can live, work, shop and socialize.

TRF Pacific, the developer, recently gave Councilmembers and



Tim Russell of TRF Pacific (left) recently took Mayor Don Gerend, Councilmember Kathy Huckabay and Director of Community Development Jeff Thomas on a tour of “The Village at Sammamish Town Center.”

city staff a tour of the project, pointing out everything from elevator shafts to environmentally friendly design items. Many of the spaces are

expected to open early next year.

“The Village” will occupy six acres. The entire Town Center planning area covers a total of 240 acres.

Rake it! Or leave it!

Fall is here and most of us have begun the task of leaf removal from our lawns. Here are some smart ways to dispose of your yard full of leaves:

1. Rake it! Follow the guidelines of your community for curb-site pick up. If you're asked to put leaves in the street, wait until just before collection day. Never rake them into or near storm drains, ditches, creeks or the river. Decaying leaves use up the water's oxygen, harming stream inhabitants.
2. Leave it! Mulch leaves by running over them with your lawn mower at next cutting. Leaves and grass clippings are the best fertilizer for your lawn.
3. Or, Rake it and Leave it! Rake leaves into a compost pile for a nutrient-rich fertilizer to use on your garden next spring.



Mental health workshop

Monday, Oct. 24, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Sammamish Community Center/YMCA

Hosted by: NAMI
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Open to the public

For more information, contact Melissa Graham
melissa@nami-eastside.org, 425-885-6264

Volunteer with schools!

Lake Washington School District
“LINKS” Program – Work with students one hour per week
425-936-1410, nwehr@lwsd.org

Issaquah School District
“VOICE” Program – Help with academic, social and life skills
425-837-6801, voice@isfdn.org

CITY CALENDAR

OCTOBER

Thursday, Oct. 6

- Finance Committee Meeting, 9 a.m.
- Planning Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 7

- Transportation Comm Mtg, 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, Oct. 8

- Sammamish Arts Fair, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 9

- Sammamish Arts Fair, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 11

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

Tuesday, Oct. 18

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

Wednesday, Oct. 19

- Transportation Comm Mtg, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 20

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

Monday, Oct. 24

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

Monday, Oct. 31

- Halloween Happening, 3-4:30 p.m.
City Hall

NOVEMBER

Tuesday, Nov. 1

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

Wednesday, Nov. 2

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

Thursday, Nov. 3

- Finance Committee Meeting, 9 a.m.
- Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 4

- Transportation Comm Meeting, 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 8

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

Tuesday, Nov. 15

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

Wednesday, Nov. 16

- Transportation Comm Mtg, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, Nov. 17

- Blood Drive, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 28

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

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.

10th Annual Sammamish ARTS Fair

fine arts - performance arts - arts activities - admission FREE



October 8th & 9th, 2016

www.sammamishartsfair.wordpress.com

At Sammamish City Hall – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ECRWSS

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Councilmember



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Councilmember

Halloween Happening



Mon, Oct 31 3-4:30p at City Hall

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

801 228th Ave. SE, Sammamish, WA 98075
 Phone: 425-295-0500 • Fax: 425-295-0600

www.sammamish.us

Don Gerend, Mayor
 dgerend@sammamish.us
Ramiro Valderrama, Deputy Mayor
 rvalderrama@sammamish.us
Tom Hornish, Councilmember
 thornish@sammamish.us
Kathy Huckabay, Councilmember
 khuckabay@sammamish.us
Bob Keller, Councilmember
 bkeller@sammamish.us
Christie Malchow, Councilmember
 cmalchow@sammamish.us
Tom Odell, Councilmember
 todell@sammamish.us

Lyman Howard	City Manager
Jessi Bon	Deputy City Manager
Aaron Antin	Finance Director
Angela Feser	Parks Director
Beth Goldberg	Admin Services Director
Steve Leniszewski	Public Works Director
Jeff Thomas	Community Dev Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Nathan Elledge	Police Chief
Jeff Clark	Fire Chief
Michael Kenyon	City Attorney

Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
Contact Communications Mgr Tim Larson
 425-295-0555, tlarson@sammamish.us