

# MT. BAKER FOOTHILLS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

## Meeting – January 19, 2005

Carole MacDonald – Chair, The Inn at Mount Baker  
Alan Seid, Cascadia Training & Mediation  
Phil Cloward, Mt. Baker Foothills Chamber  
Lou Piotrowski  
Anthony Kelley, Kelley Insurance  
Jack Kinter, Mt. Baker Experience  
Louise Mugar, Mt. Baker Experience  
Mike McFarlane, Whatcom County Parks & Rec.  
Amy Pederson, Whatcom County Planning Division

## Mt. Baker School District Office

Jeff Margolis, Everybody's Store  
Carole Sharpe, Glacier  
Francis Ayley, 4<sup>th</sup> Corner Exchange  
Russ Angus, Angus & Associates  
Jeffrey Utter, Home & Energy Solutions  
Leslie Gold, Maple Falls  
Ellen Barton, WCOG  
Dodd Snodgrass, Port of Bellingham  
Roland Middleton, Whatcom County

## Guests:

Pat Milliken, Community Planning Consultant  
Lonnie O'Neal, Cascade Natural Gas

Kathy Berg, Birch Bay Steering Committee  
Brandon Haugness, Cascade Natural Gas

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## **OPENING COMMENTS**

Call to order by Carole. Welcome and introductions made.

## **Open Comment Session**

- *Jeff U.* mentioned that the new "Van Zandt Underground" (music) will be starting up at the Van Zandt Community Hall on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month.
- *Francis* distributed a brochure on the 4<sup>th</sup> Corner Exchange (local currency system) and invited people to attend upcoming monthly meetings held in the WECU building in Bellingham. For more information, the website is [www.4thcornerexchange.com](http://www.4thcornerexchange.com).
- *Ellen* gave an update on the Trail Net meeting on January 20<sup>th</sup>.
- *Phil* urged everyone to go to the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation plan update meetings. Mike McFarlane indicated that it would be a good opportunity for folks to mention issues and ideas that should be addressed in the update process. Mike distributed a schedule of upcoming public workshop meeting dates and locations. The schedule is also available on the County Parks website.
- Representatives from Cascade Natural Gas spoke about what would be needed and what was previously estimated for gas installation costs to serve the Kendall/Columbia Valley area. (Schedule for a future meeting.)
- A letter from the North Fork Community Resource Center was distributed indicating that Georgina Head will be acting as interim President until future officer election takes place.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Charter Review Commission update – Jeffrey Utter, Charter Review Commission**

The first meeting of the Charter Review Commission was on January 10, 2005. The review commission will be meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Whatcom County Courthouse Annex. They are hoping to hold meetings throughout the county for people to attend and find out what is going on, as well as several additional meetings that would be strictly for public input. They are looking for good locations/areas where they can hold public input meetings that will have a regional draw. Committee suggestions for locations included the Kendall Elementary School and the Mt. Baker High School. There will be a website for the Commission and Jeffrey will continue to provide updates at EDA meetings.

### **Birch Bay Community Plan process – Kathy Berg, Birch Bay Steering Committee**

Kathy gave a background summary of the Birch Bay Community Plan process. The plan update originated with a need to be able to bring the community together and find a way to communicate with service providers/agencies to participate in, and have a say in, issues affecting their community. Each neighborhood elected representatives (1 representative & 1 alternate) that would participate as Birch Bay steering committee members. Representatives included part- and full-time residents, BP, Canadians, developers, business owners, etc. The whole community planning process took 4 years. The Birch Bay plan was adopted in September 2004 and they are just beginning to move forward with plan implementation. She noted that the steering committee was/is only as representative as those who choose to participate in the process. The committee didn't/won't solve all problems, but it has provided an

opportunity to identify people and resources that can be brought together to make things happen. Kathy also emphasized the importance of public input.

**Foothills Subarea Plan preparations for 2006 update – Pat Milliken, Community Planning Consultant**

Amy gave a brief overview of preliminary work that Pat has been hired to facilitate in order to prepare for the 2006 *Mt. Baker Foothills Subarea Plan* update. County funds are assigned to the update process in 2006.

Pat talked about the Birch Bay plan update process and noted that the Foothills process will be different due to the nature of the area, issues affecting the Foothills, and the people/parties that will be involved. The strategy to get people involved in the Foothills process will likely be different than what was used in the Birch Bay process. There was discussion of facilitating a non-stakeholder process that would allow everyone to come to the table and have an equal opportunity to participate in the planning process rather than facilitating a stakeholder driven process. Stakeholders (e.g. WSDOT, School District, Fire District, Mt. Baker Ski Area, etc.) would still be invited to participate as they are key components to the framework of the Foothills community. It will be important, and a high priority, to get a broad cross-sectional representation of the Foothills community in the planning process.

It was emphasized that the County will facilitate the update the process. The EDA's general role in the process was also discussed. It was mentioned that the public perception of an "economic development association's" involvement in facilitating the process may be of concern.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Marketing – Russ Angus**

Russ referenced the Waterfront Futures process as a good visioning process/materials to review for public input. He also distributed an outline of Marketing Committee 2005 strategies for discussion and formulation. The key items identified included: 1) Promote Existing Recreational Trends, and 2) Develop Regional Market Plans for other Tourism and Affinity Market Segments. The Marketing Committee is looking for input on what additional marketing items should be further discussed or explored by the committee. He suggested that the Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center may be a good marketing example that could be used as a conceptual model for the Foothills. See [www.northerngreatlakescenter.org](http://www.northerngreatlakescenter.org).

**Recreation and Trails – Jeff Margolis**

Jeff emphasized that the EDA needs to take responsibility for Chain of Trails. The EDA is a co-sponsor and needs to take more of a lead and get involved again.

Ellen announced that the Draft Chain of Trails Plan is done and that people can contact her for copies or more information. Also see the Trail Net website for more information: [www.whatcomtrailnet.com](http://www.whatcomtrailnet.com). She would still like some feedback on the inventory included in the plan (some things still need to be confirmed). With regard to Ellen's time, her grant funding was done as of December 31, 2004 and she has been reassigned to the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Therefore, Chain of Trails needs to be picked up by someone else. Communicate with Trail Net. Distributed: "The Chain of Trails" brochure

**Cellular phone/tower – Carole Sharpe**

Carole has contacted Rob Pochert who has in turn been in contact with T-Mobile regarding a feasibility study for a cellular tower in the Foothills.

**Commerce corridor – Jeff Margolis**

The Legislative Transportation Committee has not made a recommendation regarding the commerce corridor. The overall concept seems to be at rest now, though a revised plan for a 3-lane truck route between Seattle and Chehalis may be pursued.

**Meeting Adjourned at 3:00.**

**NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday, February 16, 2005 at 1:00 pm in the Mt. Baker School District Office