

MT. BAKER FOOTHILLS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Meeting – September 20, 2006

Carole Sharpe, Glacier
Jan Eskola, Glacier Water District
Phil Cloward, Kendall
Catherine Miron, Maple Falls
Rebecca Boonstra, Citizens of Col Valley
Russ Angus, Foothills Chamber

Rob Staveland, Aiki Homes Inc
Carole MacDonald, Chair, EDA
Laurie Caskie-Schreiber, County Council
Thom McLaughlin, Welcome Comm Assoc
Kevin Hoult, WWU Small Business
Sharon Digby, PDS

Call to order by Carole. Welcome and introductions made.

OPENING COMMENT SESSIONS

- Rob Staveland stated that there will be a meeting about Balfour Village at the Kendall School on October 12th. 2006 from 7-9pm.

PRESENTATIONS

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – Kevin Hoult

Kevin, recently hired by SBDC, announced that he will be responsible for servicing Everson, Point Roberts, the Foothills and the Tribes. He re-affirmed the SBDC's commitment and stressed that all services are free and confidential. He has 20 years of economic development experience in Alaska.

Citizens of Columbia Valley – Rebecca Boonstra

Citizens of Columbia Valley is a member directed, section 527 non-profit political action committee founded to serve citizens, businesses and organizations. Their purpose is to:

- To provide enrichment through community outreach and informational programs on current issues that affect our community.
- To positively influence responsible management of growth and development in our community.
- To provide a forum for community involvement in the growth and development process through meaningful and unified communication with the citizens, organizations and agencies that are directly involved.
- To support issues that encourage good stewardship over our communities resources and that promote self sustaining economic viability for the Columbia Valley, its citizens and our neighbors.

Rebecca offered raffle tickets for a half of beef for \$5, proceeds to support the organization.

Visitors Guide – Russ and Carole

Carole announced that the Visitors Guide produced by the Foothills Chamber of Commerce is now available. Russ provided copies for the group.

Pandemic Flu Task Force Wrap Up Meeting – Phil

Phil attended a wrap up session of the Pandemic Flu Task Force on Tuesday. The focus was to bring participants up to date and determine where to go from here. Subcommittee reports were given. The task force expanded on UDC to include business and neighborhood preparedness. Groups will be formed for training. Phil said that the executive is satisfied with the work of the Task Force. Phil stressed that "you are on your own". The main way influenza is spread is by contact, not by air.

Phil said that the task force results and information about preparedness will be distributed, but he is not sure of the timeframe.

Welcome Community Citizens (WCC) – Thom McLaughlin

Thom gave a brief synopsis of the organization, formed in response to the proposal to locate the Secret Harbor Facility in Mosquito Lake Valley. They have been gathering information for eight months. WCC appealed the Planning and Development Services (PDS) decision to call the facility a single family residence. The public hearing date of the appeal of October 4th, 2006 has been postponed to a future date. WCC will meet tonight (Wednesday) at the Welcome Fire Hall. Thom handed out an overview of the issues and a chronology of Secret Harbor events.

East County Update – Sharon

- Foothills Subarea Plan update is in process. A workshop to discuss the Kendall Small Town was held on September 15th and 16th. A questionnaire will be distributed to the public in October to obtain public input. A Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area workshop will be held on October 14th at the Kendall School at 3-6pm, and the policy workshop has been delayed till mid-November in order to synthesize information gathered from the public questionnaire. The draft plan is scheduled for April 2007.
- Aiki Homes has submitted a package of information to the County, which is being reviewed.
- Nextel Cell Tower is still on hold
- The Conditional Use Permit for the expansion of the Deming Library was granted by the Hearing Examiner.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Marketing – Russ

Russ would like input from the committee. Would they like to engage in an economic information gathering process or are they happy with what they have to convey? Russ has been reviewing three economic studies, one of them from Sumas. He will provide a summary of the studies at the next meeting.

Infrastructure – Phil

Phil reported that the Foothills Subarea Advisory Committee held a Kendall Small Town workshop last weekend. He reported that the number one issue to come out of the workshop was the need to improve the 547 and 542 intersection. He said the Department of Transportation (DOT) did a good job with their presentation, they are open to new ideas, however, they don't have the funds to change the intersection. The intersection is considered an "intersection of interest" which puts it higher on the DOT's radar screen.

Phil said that 2.5 years ago there were 5,000 septic tanks in the east County. There have been 300-400 more people move into the area. He said that Water District 13 is in the process of renewing their Comprehensive Plan, which will set the stage for improvements to current standards. The system does not meet current standards. Hookups are available, but not without an upgrade.

He also talked about Class A water systems will be required to be chlorinated in January of 2007. Jan said that chlorination is a huge expense. There will be some exemptions from this requirement.

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber took the opportunity to inform the group about the new state requirement that all counties inventory and inspect private septic systems. Starting in July 2007, the counties will have to start a process of inspecting all systems every three years. A septic system report will be required at the time of property transfer or sale and failing systems will have to be dealt with by the buyer or seller. The County estimates there are 60,000 to 80,000 septic systems with another 20,000 unaccounted for. Laurie pointed out that this will be very expensive for the County and very lucrative for inspectors who will need to take a 3-month course to become Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Specialists.

Recreation and Trails – Jeff

Nothing to report, not present.

Sustainability Committee – Alan

Nothing to report, not present.

Steering Committee – Carole

Carole said that the Steering Committee, Phil, Rob and Rick, will come up with nominations for officers in October. The officers will be voted on in November at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). At the AGM the EDA's effectiveness and efficiency will be reviewed, strategic plan updated, an annual budget proposed and Steering Committee membership ratified.

Cell Phone – Carole Sharpe

T-Mobile is constructing a tower at the Mt Baker ski area, is in the process of permitting a tower on DNR land on Steward Mountain and looking into a mountain site in the Kendall area on DNR land.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, October 18th, 2006 at 1:00 pm in the Mt. Baker School District Office.

Submitted by: Sharon Digby