

CSN Candidate Forum July 20, 2009, Primary Election 2009

County Council Candidate Questions & Responses:

1-Should the cities in the county have a say in the development projects on county lands if the development affects the cities' level of services/infrastructure?

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

Yes, typically we always work with any nearby jurisdiction when something is altered or a change being proposed which is likely to affect them, as we would hope that they would consider our issues as well.

Bill Knutzen

Yes. I support strong and close County-City cooperation in land-use planning. This particularly applies where non-incorporated Growth Areas are adjacent to a city. These are areas that will eventually be incorporated into that city, so much coordination about how those areas will develop should be ensured. In many of these growth-area cases, I think the County should yield to the city's desires.

Dave Pros

All involved entities should have a "say" in the future of our county, that's why I am running for County Council, we are all part of one county. But, having a voice in projects also brings some sharing of responsibilities like costs. I always want to co-operate with our small towns and expect them to shoulder their share.

However I have found some towns want the county to make the decisions so it is the county not the city who has to pay the costs of fighting lawsuits. Each situation has it's own issues and needs to be decided on that basis.

2-Do you support the Shoreline Master Plan approved by the County Council and if not, what would you change?

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

Yes, I supported and voted to adopt this plan.

Bill Knutzen

I don't think the one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to buffers is very workable for many people. I would like to see more flexibility, to make sure that the environment is being protected, while not unnecessarily burdening a property owner with restrictions that don't accomplish anything.

Dave Pros

Much of the Shoreline Master Plan is driven by the State so changes are difficult. I do not want to be in a position of spending the precious few dollars in the budget to fight the State, however I think some of the buffering is too onerous. I live on Lake Samish and know that there are grandfathered in situations that do not affect the quality of the Lake but are a violation of the current Plan.

Most people are good stewards of their shoreline. While on the County Planning Commission, I questioned the issue of the way a dock should be placed, perpendicular to the land or parallel to the land, the consultants wanted a dock to be perpendicular to the land, after about a 20 minute discussion, both were OK. If there is not a good reason for or against something, it should be the prerogative of the land owner.

3-What zoning changes or other measures would you support to maintain and possibly expand our agricultural land supply?

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

We have around 88,000 acres zoned for agriculture, and the American Farmland Trust estimates that you need 100,000 acres to sustain this industry. So we are working hard to protect what's there, and trying to recover what's been lost. I believe the county ought to bond the conservation future's fund, to give farmers the option to sell the development rights off of their land. This provides equity for the farmer to enhance or alter his operation, and keeps the farm affordable for the next generation of farmers. When I first elected to the council, we started the Purchase of Development Rights program, to date we've put almost 1,000 acres into conservation and we've removed about 70 development rights. We still a long ways to go, but there's no shortage of willing participants, just a shortage of funds to see this program fully utilized. I am strongly committed to our sustainable agricultural industry, and will fight hard to see that it continues to thrive in our county.

Bill Knutzen

I think it is important to think outside the box when it comes to making sure agriculture stays viable in Whatcom County. Right now, dairies are going out of business left and right. I was raised on a dairy farm and worked for Edaleen for many years. It is overly

simplistic, and not realistic, to assume re-zoning land to agriculture will accomplish anything.

Dave Pros

Protecting our Ag industry is one of my top priorities. I would look at market driven Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) the same way I answered #4.

Other options include no further “up-zoning” to divide up Ag land and possible lot consolidation, but the Farmer needs some kind of compensation for a consolidation. This is a lengthy discussion.

4-What do you think the County Council's role should be in protecting the City of Bellingham's water supply?

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

I think we need to work hand in hand with the City of Bellingham to protect the drinking water source for half of the county's population. Our actions over the past seven and a half years, have been to draft and adopt new strict standards for building in the watershed (new homes have to have 100% of their stormwater infiltrated into the ground, retain native vegetation and trees, and clearing land is prohibited in the months with heavy rainfall). We have also removed approximately 3,000 development rights (i.e., kept 3,000 additional homes from being built in the watershed), put 800 acres into conservation parkland, and hope to transfer 5,000 acres of commercial forestland into conservation parkland, so that someday we'll have old growth forests around the upper reaches of the watershed vs. bare, clear cut hillsides that are vulnerable to landslides. We also need to retrofit stormwater systems around the lake to ensure that phosphorous loading is reduced. This is not just a worthy goal, but a state mandate that we received from the Department of Ecology. The issues surrounding Lake Whatcom demand center stage for anyone serving as an elected official; whether they're serving on the County Council or the Bellingham City Council, the water quality issues are extremely important and must be dealt with to avoid huge expenses down the road. I believe the health of this Lake is key to the health of our county.

Bill Knutzen

We should make sure the water is adequately protected. That means taking a look at all of the input to the lake and asking ourselves what it will take to ensure a clean lake for future generations. Then we must have the will to follow through and do those things. We can fund watershed improvements by paying for them with revenue from the watershed landowners and the water users themselves.

Dave Pros

Major. This could be a very long answer but I want to address one area where I disagree with my opponent.

I have studied a variety of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs across the county and believe we can have a viable TDR program.

In Aspen Co, TDRs sell for \$300,000+, if we could have a market driven program (not taxpayer driven) that gets \$50,000 or more for a TDR here in Whatcom County, I think we would have a lot of very happy sellers and be on the right path for a cleaner reservoir.

If we do not keep Lake Whatcom clean, it means more chemicals need to be added to keep it drinkable and clean up costs will continue to escalate. Right now clean up is the least expensive it will ever be.

Also, the State has recently made funds available to assist in storm water retention systems.

5-Puget Sound gives us a reading of our biosphere. What would you do to support the Puget Sound Partnership's recommendations to preserve natural watersheds?

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

I serve on the Marine Advisory committee (MRC), and as I mentioned earlier, I helped craft the revised critical areas ordinance, as well as the new Shoreline rules. Both of these bodies of work have goals about reducing any loss or degradation to our sensitive marine waters and watersheds around this county. We have adopted low impact development standards for the Lake Whatcom, Lake Padden, and Lake Samish watersheds, and we have created a special stormwater district for Birch Bay. All of these actions are part of an overall strategy to have no net loss in any natural function within our marine and freshwater watersheds. I will continue to advocate for protection of these vital areas, because I believe what makes our county special- is the environment that we live in. It's a beautiful place, and we have to take bold actions to ensure that it remains that way.

Bill Knutzen

Similar to Lake Whatcom protections, we've got to step up as a County and as a region to take responsibility for Puget Sound protection. Where we need to be careful is to avoid unnecessary or overly-burdensome regulations that don't have any positive effect.

We should also be putting political pressure on our Canadian neighbors who in some cases still dump their sewage and their industrial waste directly into Puget Sound.

Dave Pros

While I support preservation of natural watersheds, I would need to review all budget items to make sure we can afford to do what is necessary at this point in time. I am very slow to obligate taxpayers to additional expenditures.

6-Do you feel the new septic system rules are fair to the property owners and the environment?

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

Yes, I believe they are fair and necessary...they've been a shock to many rural residents, because unfortunately most people believe that septic systems can run forever with very little attention. But studies have shown that if they aren't properly maintained they can cause havoc to our marine and freshwater systems. So everyone needs to do their part to make sure that they aren't part of the degradation problems that are affecting the Northwest Straits and our freshwater lakes and streams.

Bill Knutzen

This is another example where a sledge-hammer was used to swat a fly. Yes, there needs to be accountability and responsibility for owners of septic systems. But to jump to a conclusion that each must go through a costly and – in 95% of the cases – useless process was a mistake by the current County Council. I will support stronger regulation and enforcement against polluters, but I don't think it's fair to simultaneously punish the responsible and concerned homeowners.

Dave Pros

No, it is not "fair" to either side, but it does need to be addressed. This should have been dealt with long ago. Like many other infrastructure problems, putting correction off ends up being very unfair, but septic problems need attention.

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Port Candidate Questions & Responses:

1-How do you envision the Port of Fairhaven future?

John Blethen

My vision for Port property includes: continued jobs in water dependent industries, with some tourism focused around the Alaska Marine system, but with better public access to the shorelines and the water and with better protection of the shore edge. I am looking for a balance of sustainable jobs, public access, with an environmental balance. We need to get that anaerobic wood waste off the bottom of the Bay, make a reasonable shore edge around the lagoon, and deal with storm water.

Ham Hayes

Mr. Hayes is traveling and will provide printed answers at the Forum on July 20th.

Scott Walker

The Fairhaven waterfront area owned by the Port of Bellingham has a long history of marine trades and varied uses, such as the salmon cannery and shipyard, boat repair and factories, and boat moorage and launching. That mix endures today, and should into the future. The working waterfront makes this area unique, and not just shops in an historical district. The best example of historical building preservation was done by the Port in converting the old Pacific American Fisheries headquarters into the current Amtrak and Greyhound stations, small businesses and offices. I believe all new construction should adhere to the historical style.

2-How will you improve public access between Fairhaven Village Green and the shoreline?

John Blethen

As the marine industrial area is reconfigured, better public access to the waterfront including a secondary connector to the South Bay trail and with a stairs up the hill to the village green should be considered. The South Bay trail also needs to be relocated on the 10th Street right-of way north of Mill and off of Imus property or a permanent agreement with the Imus family needs to be reached.

Ham Hayes

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Scott Walker

The current access is down Harris to the Padden Creek lagoon, down the adjacent road to the boat launch, further down to the ferry terminal, or to the beach at Marine Park. Even if there were some other way to the waterfront it would be blocked by the railroad at tidewater, and would require access through a marine industrial area. Unless there is some attraction developed next to the railroad, it appears that access is sufficient. I'm open to suggestions.

3-What is your vision of public hand and power-boat launch facilities in Fairhaven?

John Blethen

I have known Mary and Debbi for quite a while and I am a big supporter of the small boat center! At the time of the building of the Alaska Ferry terminal, I did negotiations that identified a small boat facility as part of our agreement with the Port. We also need to develop other hand carry sites on the waterfront. With kayakers and small boaters I identified a number of potential hand carry sites during the Water Front visioning process, which I made sure got in the plan. We need a network of places to put in and many of the sites are on Port property.

Over the last 30 years I have used the boat launch to reach the San Juan Islands. It's both faster and safer for people that live on the south side. Fortunately, my boat has a very shallow draft. We need to look at some new configuration that works as the Padden estuary fills. I am not happy about proposed parking along the Bay's edge to service this area, however.

Ham Hayes

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Scott Walker

Both sites are popular, and will continue in their current uses. However, the siltation at the power boat launch continues to fill, and it is unlikely that a dredging permit will be granted by the state of Washington due to habitat loss. Therefore, at some time in the future (barring a change in current regulation) the launch will be too shallow to operate. On the other hand, the hand launch area is viable, and will be an ongoing activity. At some point in the future, it could be expanded or improved. Parking will have to be addressed.

4-Do you agree with the recently approved Fairhaven Scheme of Harbor Improvements?

John Blethen

I think that the good thing about the Fairhaven Scheme of Harbor improvements is that it provides an overview of what is on the ground and planning that has been done. It's also short term and really doesn't commit to long term planning. I think we could do better transitioning to longer term thinking. There also seems to be little respect or understanding of the importance of the shoreline.

Ham Hayes

Mr. Hayes is traveling and will provide printed answers at the Forum on July 20th.

Scott Walker

Yes.

5-How will you assure a cleanup of upland sites, eg, Burlington Northern property, at the downtown waterfront?

John Blethen

I am not sure about referencing the Burlington Northern site- there will probably be some clean-up required when the railroad moves back against the bluff. If we are talking about the GP upland site which just released its first DOE document (the rules), then I think we need to insist that the land be cleaned to residential standards, not commercial. We need to make sure that this site is clean. If we are going to use tax payer's money to do this then we need to make sure that the tax payers get the benefit and that this property not be sold off at a bargain. If we do a leasing system then we need to make sure that returns a fair assessment to the City and County to offset infrastructure costs and property tax loss.

Ham Hayes

Mr. Hayes is traveling and will provide printed answers at the Forum on July 20th.

Scott Walker

I assume the question is based on the Georgia Pacific property. Burlington Northern owns the right of way where they currently have tracks through the site. They have plans to relocate back toward the bluff to eliminate the turns and slower route. That property was acquired by the Port in the sale of the GP industrial site. Properties will

have to be traded, and the cleanup would be contractually specified during that transaction. BN is responsible for any contamination on its property, although that particular land is not heavily contaminated.

6-How do you feel about increasing the number of port commissioners from three to five or more?

John Blethen

I think 5 commissioners might do wonders for public process! For too long the Port has been a publicly owned but privately run organization. The way to affect change in the Port is to change the players and then change the rules!

Ham Hayes

Mr. Hayes is traveling and will provide printed answers at the Forum on July 20th.

Scott Walker

This is a decision that the voters will have to make. The commission cannot change the number without a public vote.

In my experience, most port decisions are business decisions and well researched before coming to a public vote. The experience and judgment of the commissioners have more to do with the quality than the number of people. I have never looked back and thought a better decision would be made if we had more commissioners. The upside, of course, is that there would presumably be more varied representation on the board. The ports of Seattle and Tacoma have had five commissioners for over 90 years. Most smaller ports have three.

The down side is that the commission becomes more of a political entity, like the Bellingham city council or the Whatcom county council. Any two council members can legally meet to discuss issues, as well as how they will vote in the public meeting. With three commissioners, issues (except in specific cases) cannot be discussed with each other or agreed upon unless in a public meeting. There are also the election costs, pay, and benefits that would be increased with five commissioners. It is calculated that additional cost to the taxpayer would be \$125,000 a year.

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City Council Candidate Questions & Responses:

1-Would you support the commitment made by Mayor Asmundson and the four council members of \$8M to be made available from Greenways or other funds for the City's acquisition of Chuckanut Ridge?

Catherine Chambers

I support the city's acquisition of Chuckanut Ridge through the use of Greenways or other funds. Clearly, this area is a very important natural habitat and not only supports a diverse wildlife habitat but also provides significant habitat connectivity with natural corridors. Downstream from this area is of course Bellingham Bay/ Puget Sound another critical area which is seriously impacted by runoff from developed areas consisting of impervious surfaces. According to the experts who have studied this area the major contribution of this area is it's designation as a forested wetland. If this area is disturbed with development not only have we impacted the wildlife habitat we have also removed the trees and ground cover which absorb the water which will surely run downhill. I appreciate and would refer to the guest column for the Bellingham Herald written by John McLaughlin, Department of Environmental Sciences at Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University. In this column, John proposed a decision framework to evaluate the merits of projects and land acquisitions proposed for Greenways funding. Now that we have the results from the Whatcom County Values and Beliefs Survey it may be possible to weigh criteria based on the expressed community values. The biggest question with the purchase of this property is of course the price tag. The county auditor values the entire property at 2.5 million and according to records the owners paid 14.1 million. The EIS final report has not come in yet, however, given the wetlands and steep slopes on the property; development will be limited. Also, under the requirements of the neighborhood plan and city code the owner will have to build a new arterial at their own expense including other expensive infrastructure improvements such as sewer, water and gas main extensions. In addition to the environmental concerns is the impact to the neighborhood and Fairhaven Middle School requiring the replacement of the 12th Street Bridge and the increase in traffic during construction with large trucks and equipment not to mention the noise of construction itself and increased traffic after development.

Now the purpose of infill is to limit sprawl, decrease our use of fossil fuel and provide more pedestrian friendly neighborhoods. This proposed development does not meet our needs for infill. It spreads development out into areas which will need paved roads and cars to access the area. It is necessary for the Greenways Committee to adequately review the property in terms of our community values and bring forth a proposal.

Currently, the Southside designation takes in all areas south of Whatcom Falls. There has been property available in other areas for purchase that have also been put on hold while awaiting the EIS on the Chuckanut Ridge property. However, again I would like to see a process like that suggested by John McLaughlin for rating individual projects. All proposed property acquisition will be brought forth to the city council for approval or denial. As a city council representative I will expect to see thoughtful and reasoned criteria for any proposal in order to make a decision. Even though there was a commitment by Mayor Asmundson and four council members; any proposal will come before a new council and be voted on accordingly.

Michael Lilliquist

Rather than focusing on Greenways funds as the key, I believe the conversation on Chuckanut Ridge needs to start elsewhere. In the end I hope public purchase will play a role, but I would look first to other ways to secure and protect as much of this urban forest treasure as possible.

Chuckanut Ridge is a rare and invaluable community asset that ought to be protected from development regardless of where it is located. It is also a poor choice for large multifamily development, due to Critical Areas concerns, traffic impacts, school impacts, and effects on neighborhood character. From a community planning perspective, when we are moving away from large residential-only developments and reliance upon the automobile and are moving towards downtown redevelopment and mixed-use urban centers, the Fairhaven Highlands proposal runs against our community's vision.

In my view, these and other reasons argue against the development of Chuckanut Ridge, and I would work to eliminate the harm that such development would bring. I have walked the property and looked at this project from all sides. Personally and through organizations, I have raised these issues to our elected officials, and I drafted the Coalition of Southside Neighborhoods' public comment letter on the scope of the EIS to ensure that these concerns were properly addressed.

Various legal, regulatory, and financial matters complicate the issue. For example, the development potential and value of the property is difficult to determine until the appropriate regulations and mitigation requirements are known. Only after these issues are settled will it be the proper time to consider public purchase of some or all of Chuckanut Ridge.

Christopher Morrison

After the environmental impact statement is released and the issue is reconsidered by City Council, if the opportunity to purchase the property is available and within the city's means, I would recommend the city provide \$8 million to purchase the property. However, it is my feeling that community members should help the city seek creative solutions and have contingency plans.

2-Will you support the requirement that the developer will pay for and build the 24th Street connector (or widen the 12th Street Bridge) if the density is larger than the two lots per acre as originally zoned on Chuckanut Ridge?

Catherine Chambers

As I mentioned above, I would support the requirement that the developer pay for and widen the 12th street bridge if the density is larger than the two lots per acre as originally zoned on Chuckanut Ridge.

Michael Lilliquist

Yes. I would work to secure agreements to mitigate traffic impacts before build out is completed. Each of these mitigation efforts raises serious issues. For instance, a 24th Street connector would threaten off-site wetlands, and could prevent us from acquiring land for public trail corridor connecting the Interurban system with Fairhaven Park. The bottleneck created by the 12th Street Bridge, and adjacent intersections, is an even more acute problem, which I feel must be dealt with before any project is approved.

Christopher Morrison

Yes. After the EIS is released the city will have a better standard with which to judge how to proceed with the potential development. The developer should be held responsible for the increased impact on the roads connecting Chuckanut Ridge with the city.

3-Do you support the Infill Toolkit and do you feel there are enough protections in place to preserve the character of single-family neighborhoods?

Catherine Chambers

I support the revised 20.28.020 applicability language presented to city council on Monday, July 13th. I believe this language is much clearer and would only allow the once a year review/amendment. According to the testimony at the city council meeting on the infill toolkit; many neighborhoods expressed concerns about the type VI not giving neighborhoods enough time to respond to proposed changes because they could happen at any time of the year making it more difficult to monitor. There were also concerns about how these proposed housing types might affect the character of their neighborhoods and property values. Although, the language of both applicability state that "the housing types in this chapter are not permitted in Residential Single Zones..." clearly there is concern according to the city of Bellingham Staff Report, page four, 4-

16-09 Planning commission Public Hearing that the purpose of the type VI process is to clarify that any one of the nine infill housing forms could be used in appropriate parts of single-family areas. I think it is interesting to note that those on the council opposed to the new applicability language felt that it would make it more difficult to use these housing types; which is exactly the concerns expressed by the neighborhoods. At this time I support the infill of the downtown core to maintain a vibrant urban center and the three urban villages currently being planned.

Michael Lilliquist

Citizens of Bellingham overwhelmingly support limiting sprawl, because we love the character of our city and county. I support infill because it's one way that we can create attractive and affordable places to live, work, shop and play within our established neighborhoods and within our city limits, without the need for spreading to the lovely rural areas around us. Successful infill, however, must proceed hand-in-hand with preservation of the character our single family neighborhoods. I believe we can achieve this balance, by avoiding a "one size fits all" approach and by limiting which housing types may be approved in single family areas. We need a planning process that recognizes the difference.

I believe each of the proposed Toolkit housing types is a good idea, if done in the right place. Indeed, most of these types already exist in Bellingham, so we already have some "test cases" to learn from. We need to bring citizens inside the planning process because local residents know best when and where and what kind of infill will work in their own neighborhoods. We need to respect the character of our existing single family neighborhoods, in part by complementing them with nearby multifamily and transitional areas where the Toolkit may be most suitable. For example, the co-housing on Donovan and Matthei Place are excellent examples of infill that enhance the character of the neighborhood.

It is good to keep in mind that opportunities for genuine infill, in the original sense of building on vacant or under-utilized lots, are limited. In my view, multi-story, mixed-use development in urban villages, downtown, and in the new Waterfront District have the potential to create far more new residences, and to do so in a way that is both "dense" and attractive. As I see it, the Infill Toolkit is part of the solution, not the entire answer.

Christopher Morrison

As council revisits this issue, we should make sure there is protection of our single-family neighborhoods. I believe that the emphasis of infill efforts in Bellingham should concentrate on downtown, our waterfront, our multi-family zoned areas and urban villages. To do this, we need to make downtown more attractive to developers and also work with the Port of Bellingham to encourage residential uses of the waterfront. The infill toolkit should not be applied to single-family neighborhoods, however, unless the neighborhood association requests a test project that fits the toolkit. It is essential that the neighborhoods' ideas are being included in the planning process.

4-What do you think the city council's role should be in protecting Bellingham's water supply?

Catherine Chambers

The city council's role in protecting Bellingham's drinking water is making sure that city departments are taking necessary steps engaging the public through education and monitoring of rules and regulations. Some of the most difficult tasks at this time are land acquisition, conservations easements, transferable development rights, purchase of development rights and lot consolidation. Continued collaboration between the city, county and Lake Whatcom water and sewer district is essential. However, it is time for us a community to take responsibility for contributing to the health of the lake by improving our practices in our homes and neighborhoods. In order for the health of the lake to truly improve we must lower the phosphorus, maintain on-site sewage systems, discourage the geese population, increase the dissolved oxygen levels through limiting exposed surfaces, fecal coli form and organic wastes. I am still researching possible ideas for land acquisition, conservations easements, TDRs, purchase of development rights and lot consolidation.

Michael Lilliquist

The City should do everything it can to protect our drinking water supply, as well as restore Lake Whatcom to a healthy condition. The long-tem economic viability of Bellingham depends upon securing our source of water and upon conserving our increasingly threatened natural resources, our unique local asset. I believe the City Council has a crucial role to play.

The primary problem is run-off from development – our roads and houses and yards – which bring phosphorus and other contaminants into the lake, setting up a destructive cycle of algae blooms and death. The solution includes better stormwater control by keeping run-off on-site so ground absorption can naturally treat it.

To bring about this change, we will need to move on several fronts. I recently served on the Lake Whatcom Technical Review Taskforce, where we developed a list of thirty-three specific and practical “management actions” which the City can evaluate for implementation. These actions address four main areas, including forest conservation, stream repair and protection, stricter development practices on developed property, and re-configuring and retrofitting our streets and roadsides to change them from sources of runoff problems into stormwater control and infiltration assets. The City Council's role, I believe, is to direct City resources and efforts to each of these areas of action, and then hold the administration accountable for effective implementation.

Christopher Morrison

The city should be the lead government agency in crafting legislation and work closely with the county and the state to devise a framework of collaboration. My priority is to make sure there is an open dialogue with all stakeholders, especially the county council. I will make sure the city works to prevent road water runoff from entering the lake, and I will also work with residents to help them prevent runoff through measures such as residential drainfields. The city should put together a coalition of residents, businesses and state and local government to provide support and resources to accomplish these goals, including linking residents with local businesses to help come up with creative solutions to helping our watershed.

Part of the solution is finding funding for city staff to perform restoration, enforcement and education. Currently, Lake Whatcom is included in state funds earmarked to clean up Puget Sound. In crafting a framework of collaboration, all agencies – state, county and city – will need to contribute and designate funding mechanisms. A component of community outreach should be a dialogue of how the users of the watershed want to fund clean-up and prevention efforts.

5-Are you in favor of Landlord Licensing or do you have another solution to enforce existing housing regulations?

Catherine Chambers

At this time I do not favor Landlord Licensing as a solution to enforcing existing housing regulations. I don't believe that it would give us the necessary results we are seeking. The real issue is about affordable housing for everyone in the community. There are all of these large houses and not many large families anymore. So what happens to these houses? Do we tear them down because we don't have single families to fill them up or do we rent out the houses and provide housing for groups of people? As I have stated previously I believe part of the issue is that the University has abdicated its responsibility to the community regarding the issue of student housing. The university went over 20 years without building any student housing and yet the enrollment of the university has increased much over that time. Only recently has there been a committee formed to work with the students and neighborhood residents in order to work on solutions to issues within the neighborhoods. Rather than the city citing landlords or checking houses for the number of residents; I would advocate for programs which encourage neighborhoods to find solutions to the issues it faces. Is the number of residents in the house a problem or is it parking, noise, litter; etc. Why not give the neighborhoods extra funds to work on these issues rather than hire someone to enforce rules which will discourage cooperation between renters and owners.

Michael Lilliquist

We should be very careful whenever we consider expanding the reach of government's role in the private sector; however, in this case I believe there is enough justification for a targeted and narrowly-defined licensing program. For some time I have advocated for a licensing fee for the express purpose of funding more effective enforcement of zoning and safety regulations and "nuisance" rules for noise, litter, and parking.

In Bellingham the residential rental business is largely unregulated and it is troubled by abuse and neglect by a minority of landlords and tenants. The result is harm to neighborhoods, to responsible landlords, and to the tenants themselves. I would work for a landlord licensing ordinance that would be fair to both small and large landlords, and would set fees no higher than necessary to provide dedicated funding for appropriate code enforcement.

Christopher Morrison

Yes, I'm in favor of landlord licensing. This would require a public process to determine what that entails. The licensing fees could then be applied to an enforcement official staff position to enforce city regulations in regards to housing. A city representative should also be established to work with the university as to WWU's responsibility in regulating the housing of its students. Just as the university has regulations for on-campus housing, these standards should also extend off campus.

6-How will you improve public access between Fairhaven Village Green and the shoreline?

Catherine Chambers

I would like to see the use of trolley cars or small buses to provide looped public transportation to go between downtown Fairhaven and several areas of the waterfront. Stops could include the Village Inn, Taylor Dock, Boulevard Park, Chrysalis Inn, Amtrak Station and Marine Park. Possibilities could include bicycle taxis, horse drawn carriages, small electric cars (such as golf carts) and bike rentals. It will be important to improve parking on the outskirt areas of downtown Fairhaven which would allow cars to be parked for longer periods of time. All of these forms of alternative transportation could help transport increased visitors to both the shoreline and downtown Fairhaven. These forms of transportation would create new opportunities for entrepreneurial businesses to develop. These same forms of transportation could also serve the downtown area and waterfront with linkages between downtown and Fairhaven.

Michael Lilliquist

As the visionary Waterfront Futures Group called for, I support greater public access to the entire shoreline of the Bay. I also support an adequate land supply for commercial

and light industrial jobs that are so crucial to our local economy. These two purposes do not necessarily conflict, and both are necessary for a thriving and livable city. In this particular case, a direct access route from the Village Green to the shoreline would pass through the middle of a Port-owned commercial area. I would look for other routes to improve public access, and to do so in ways that help to protect and conserve our shorelines. For example, the eastern shoreline of the Padden lagoon has been hardened with boulders and rip rap, preventing the healthy tideland function. Rather than a direct route from the Green, I would like to explore the possibility of removing the industrial buildings next to the lagoon, providing opportunities both for shoreline restoration of estuarine habitat and for improved pedestrian access.

Christopher Morrison

As a Southside neighbor, I enjoy walking through the neighborhood to get to Taylor Dock. The trail system that connects Fairhaven Green with downtown provides essential pedestrian and bicycle paths, and the city should work to continue to maintain and improve this wonderful city asset.