

Whatcom Falls Neighborhood Association
Minutes of the Meeting of April 12, 2016

INCLUDED IN THESE MINUTES:

REPORT FROM NIELSON BROTHERS RE RAYMOND STREET AREA LOGGING; REPORTS ABOUT "BELLINGHAM AT HOME", LYDIA PLACE, AND BELLINGHAM LAKEWAY STREET BICYCLE TRAFFIC PLANNING.

The meeting was called to order by Pres. Rick Sawyer at 7 o'clock. Reading of the minutes and treasurer's report were waived due to the extensive number of presentations that were expected.

PRESENTATION #1: BELLINGHAM AT HOME

The first presentation was made by Alan Johnson, a volunteer working with Bellingham at Home, a program being implemented with the assistance of the Whatcom Council on Aging. He provided brochures and presented a slide presentation that discussed many of the features of the program.

Bellingham at Home is a "virtual city", which is initially being defined as to include the entire Bellingham Urban Growth Area which extends north somewhat beyond the city limits. Its purpose is to provide assistance to seniors in the community whose abilities no longer make them able to do some ordinary but difficult household chores, and also to make it possible for those same seniors to continue living in their own homes as long as possible. Those chores might include changing a high lightbulb; correcting a dripping faucet; providing a ride to the doctor; clearing steps and walks of ice and snow; helping with errands; changing furnace filters; moving furniture; and other such chores that may require physical or knowledge skills unavailable to older seniors except at relatively considerable expense.

Members of the organization will be made up of seniors, who pay an annual membership fee, and volunteers who assist them by volunteering services.

The organization will "vet" volunteers to be sure that they are folks who will work responsibly with the elderly. The membership fees will pay for these background checks, and will also provide insurance coverage for the people involved as a volunteers in the program. As the program grows, professional staff may be added to assist with issues as they arise.

At present, Bellingham at Home has a Board of Directors made up of volunteers actively working with issues regarding aging and nurturing senior members of the community. The "charter" annual membership fee – available until the actual launching of the activities – is \$350, less than \$1/day. This rate will be locked in for early "charter" members for three years; after the launching date to be set (likely to be June 1) the fee may be higher; thereafter fees may be adjusted annually to reflect actual program services cost.

The program also intends to develop a list of vendors who are reputable and who will provide services to seniors, hopefully at discounted rates.

Bellingham at Home is working with a number of local agencies including the opportunity Council. Presently the program is located at the Bellingham Senior Activity Center at 315 Halleck Street, Bellingham, WA 98225. Phone 360-746-3462. Email can be sent to info@bellinghamathome.org and

further information including a form to volunteer or learn more is available at bellinghamathome.org.

PRESENTATION 2: LYDIA PLACE

The second presentation was made by Shultzie Fay Willows, development and outreach director of Lydia Place, which has been providing housing and supportive services to homeless households in our community for over 26 years, serving over 250 families a year. They are most famous for their transitional housing for homeless women with children (typically under three years of age) whose stays with the agency are typically up to six months. While housed, these families are assisted with case management, life skills classes, and more.

Ms. Willows told us that the reason for her visit was for our information as they prepare to expand their facilities in the Puget Neighborhood so that they can help more families. The organization recognizes that this work couldn't be done without the support of their neighbors, including the Whatcom Falls Neighborhood.

She pointed out that within Bellingham itself there are 650 known homeless people, and 1/5 of these are children under 10 as a yardstick, that works out to approximately one per classroom of children this age! At their present facility there are 19 families on the waiting list.

An important goal of the agency is fulfilled when, by assisting a mom and her children, the cycle is broken, and the children themselves will not grow up to be homeless and unskilled at making a proper home for their own families.

The addition to their property at 1701 Gladstone will be to add 8 to 10 more living units to their present supply of eight. The agency will be applying for permits from the city, and presently the organization is in the preliminary stages of planning in order to get the necessary approvals before architectural work and fundraising commences. The organization gets assistance for Lydia Place clients from other agencies when necessary, while assisting other agencies with the specialized services that Lydia place can offer. Further information is available at www.lydiaplace.org.

PRESENTATION 3: BELLINGHAM CITY BICYCLE PLANNING

Our third presentation was made by Chris Comeau, a transportation planner with the city of Bellingham, and was about the study of Lakeway Drive in regard to bicycling safety and changes that may be made to improve this.

Bellingham is striving to prioritize and improve safety for the most vulnerable users of the citywide transportation network with the goal of "moving people, not just cars". They are involving the public extensively in the process, with representatives on the committee, holding focus groups, holding open houses in 2013 and 2014, doing a survey, preparing a map, and meeting with the City Council. This is a planning process only, and no funding for any actual infrastructure has been budgeted or granted.

The vision of the plan is for bicyclists of all ages and abilities to have access to a safe, well connected network linking all areas of the city. With completion of the highest priority project (the new "Bicycle Boulevard" as part of the Alabama Street improvement), Lakeway Drive became the next highest priority for work. The study includes the area from Ellis/Holly beneath I-5 to Woburn/Yew streets. A wide set of groups are working on this, including Bellingham Public Works, WSDOT, WTA, consultants, neighborhood associations, property owners, businesses, and other

public agencies such as the School District and Bellingham Parks Department.

The Planning Department is collecting data about traffic, transit ridership, making videos to study pedestrian and bike behavior, and reviewing existing and planned development. The next step will be to develop recommendations. The Lakeway Drive proposals are expected to be ready by late 2016 when funding will be requested for the improvements.

Questions and comments are invited by contacting Chris Comeau AICP CTP, Transportation Planner, at (360) 778-7946 or ccomeau@cob.org.

PRESENTATION 4: NIELSON BROTHERS LOGGING

Representing Nielsen Brothers Logging was Aubrey Stargell. As he began his update for us, Aubrey told us that the work included the so-called pipeline property, and also that one of the big problems was that, (restricted by the City permit), his firm's trucks were not allowed to use Alvarado for access even though Alvarado has wider, better streets than Raymond.

There 56 acres to harvest and the area includes three streams, and all need to be protected. Their equipment is crossing one creek, and the permit requires them to protect 100 feet on each side of these water bodies.

As availability of equipment and personnel permits, as well as the City permitting of each stage, the actual timber harvest is expected to be this year with replanting next year. The harvest could take as little as one month when it occurs, and that was Aubrey's expectation. Planting then will occur in the following February to June. The harvest date depends upon personnel and equipment availability, as well as City permit considerations.

Audience questions were answered as follows:

- If the property is logged, it's required that it be replanted.
- Saying that, "we try to get along with everybody and make the disruption as short-lived as possible," he later repeated, "we want to be the least disruptive we can be!"
- In answer to questions about sale of the property, Mr. Stargell was quite clear that if the company received an actual offer of great enough size, the company would indeed sell the property but the requirements of the logging permit would carry over to the buyers so neighboring property owners would be protected from illegal or improper activity.

President Rick thanked Mr. Stargell for coming to the meeting and clarifying these matters for all of us.

Residents who are concerned with any of the operations should contact Kurt Nebbefeld, Development Services Manager, Planning and Community Development Department, City of Bellingham. He can be reached at (360) 778-8351, knabbefeld@cob.org. If the issue involves vehicle operation, residents can contact Bellingham police at 911, or Washington State patrol vehicle enforcement at (425) 359-8919.

FINAL BUSINESS:

Our Neighborhood Police Officer, Eric Osterkamp answered individual questions from neighbors. He can be reached at (360) 778-8785, or at eosterkamp@cob.org.

The next meetings of the Whatcom Falls Neighborhood Association will be June 14, September 13, and November 15, all of them at 7 PM at the Kulshan Middle School library.

The Whatcom Falls Neighborhood Association communications are distributed by "Next Door". This is reached at www.nextdoor.com. With 262 members now, Next Door provides meeting notices newsletters and updates. You can sign up by going to the website.

Finally, city of Bellingham references are found at www.COB.org. Our Whatcom Falls Neighborhood plan can be found at [HTTP://www.COB.org/documents/planning/neighborhoods/Whatcom-Falls.pdf](http://www.COB.org/documents/planning/neighborhoods/Whatcom-Falls.pdf). The meeting adjourned at about 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Joe Coons, Acting Secretary.

Shultzie Willows added a couple of clarifying notes to my Lydia Place minutes for the WFNA posted yesterday:

Lydia Place serves over 300 households every year (and growing!)

Our Gladstone Street Transitional House Program is reserved for homeless mothers and their children. Children served in this program range in age from birth to 18.

New addition would serve as permanent housing (typically 2 years) and be reserved for homeless young mothers 18-24 with children ranging from birth to 3.

Lydia Place does not maintain its own wait list, but rather participates in our community's waiting list maintained by The Whatcom Homeless Service Center housed at The Opportunity Council. This serves as a single point of entry for homeless individuals and families. When we have an opening in one of our 4 programs - we request/ they send us a referral. Of the total waitlist, which is in the hundreds, 19 households are mothers 18-24 with kiddos birth to 3.

Thanks, Shultzie for "keeping me honest!" Joe