

Samish Neighborhood Association

FALL 2017

www.samishneighborhood.org

NEIGHBORHOOD PICNIC

NOON TO 2:30 P.M. SEPT. 17 AT

THE LAKE PADDEN PARK PLAYGROUND PAVILLION

Join Your Neighbors for Food and Fun

Yes, we'll have grilled Coho salmon at our picnic again this year. For those not favoring fish, we'll provide hamburgers, brats, and veggie burgers for our vegan friends, buns, chips and fixin's. We'll also provide drinks: water and soda (no alcohol in city parks). If your last name begins with A through N, please bring a side dish or a salad. Last names starting with O thru Z please bring a dessert item. We've had some unique dishes at past picnics and hope to continue in that tradition. Dust off the old family recipes and bring something amazing!

We look forward to seeing you on the 17th. Enter the park through the east entrance and follow the road to the pavilion next to the playground. There is no extra charge for members of the Association. Guest fee is \$5 per person. Or, if you are not a current member, consider joining. Details are on the back of this newsletter, or you can join at the picnic. Bring your folding chairs and maybe a blanket to sit on and we'll see you there, rain or shine.

President's Comments

The overall mission of the Samish Neighborhood Association is to maintain the neighborhood character and quality of life in Samish Neighborhood. We're fortunate to have Lake Padden Park included in our neighborhood, and I hope all residents recognize and appreciate how this park enriches our lives, not just for Samish but for everyone in the city. Nearly all of the rest of Samish comprises single-family residences. The board sees maintaining this status as paramount to preserving neighborhood character. Neighborhood character is often a strong consideration in home purchase decisions. Many Samish residents bought a home here because they liked the neighborhood character. Experiencing unanticipated changes after moving in can be upsetting.

A proposal surfaced last fall to thin timber standing on privately owned land east of 40th Street within city limits. Members of the Samish Board met several times with the project planner to recognize and minimize the impact of loaded log trucks on neighbors living along the routes to and from the site. We appreciated the planner's attention to our concerns, especially the traffic bottleneck at 40th and Elwood. Working together resulted in adjustment of the routes to be used by log trucks that will improve traffic flow and safety for Samish residents and truck drivers. Tom Dohman's article provides details of the project and route plan.

One of the city's objectives in the revised Comprehensive Plan is to increase availability of affordable housing, which is easier said than done – and full of potential conflicts. Real estate prices in our city are going up again. The rental market is extremely tight which means rents are rising also. Some want growth and higher density housing to solve these problems. Some residents want Bellingham to retain the charming character that led them to buy homes here. They see growth and high density housing as the enemies of such character. Dick Conoboy's article about STRs and ADUs lays out the elements of some of the controversies.

I encourage all Samish residents to come to our annual picnic on Sunday, Sept. 17. It's an opportunity to chat casually with board members, express your concerns, meet more neighbors, and share good food. I also encourage residents to join the Samish Neighborhood Association if you are not already members. Membership information is in this newsletter, and you can join at the picnic.

- Steve Abell

Board of Directors

Steve Abell (president), Dick Conoboy (vice president and MNAC alternate rep), Joe Carpenter (secretary), Tom Read (treasurer), Kevin Probasco (MNAC rep), Tom Dohman, Don Hale, Joy Hale, Nikki Long

Board meetings are held 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month at the Community Baptist Church, 810 Samish Way, and is open to all. There is a public comment period at the beginning of each meeting so that anyone attending can be heard. These public comments are limited to three minutes, but issues needing more time can be put on the meeting agenda by

contacting the President of the Association.

Email info@samishneighborhood.org.

Samish Heights Timber Thin Project

The property owners of 109 acres of forested land in Samish Heights are working with several parties to execute a timber thinning project. The acreage is adjacent to and above Whitewater Drive and Wildwood Drive and ultimately involves extensions of these streets (logging roads) to facilitate the movement of logging equipment and log trucks. The selective logging is being permitted to remove 32 acres of trees, which translates into 29% of the entire plot of land. Unfortunately, any forest trails on this acreage will not be accessible for safety reasons until this project is fully completed and all equipment is removed.

This logging is being conducted to improve the tree stand health, which includes the removal of dead and diseased trees. Removal of such trees encourages the growth of the remaining healthy trees by temporarily opening the forest canopy. Studies have been conducted (Habitat Impact and Critical Areas Report) to aid in minimizing impact on the forest environment. Marketable trees will be sold for lumber processing. Future use intentions are undefined at this time. Currently, no home-site lots have been platted in this area, as significant infrastructure improvements would be required in advance to make homebuilding feasible.

Logging is expected to commence in late August or early September 2017 and take 4-6 weeks to complete. Logging activity will occur Monday through Friday between the hours of 7 am and 5 pm. The amount of downed trees is expected to fill 120-130 log trucks; at 5-6 truckloads per day, this would take 4-6 weeks to complete. The routing of log trucks will use sections of Whitewater and Wildwood. The log-truck routing from the intersection of Wildwood & 40th Street will be in two directions. A small number of log trucks will be directed north on 40th and then west on Elwood Avenue to deliver to the Port of Bellingham. The majority of log trucks destined for mills to the south will be routed south on 40th to Samish Way and then south on Samish to the southbound I-5 ramp at mile marker 246.

The property owner is Samish Heights, Inc. (Jack Seguin, New Westminster, B.C., Canada). The logging company contracted for this project is Janicki Logging & Construction (Sedro-Wooley, WA). The RJ Group, a Bellingham residential real estate development company, and the City of Bellingham that issues appropriate and necessary permits also are involved.

Any questions should be directed to Kiersten Sahlberg, project manager at The RJ Group (360-738-9033; kiersten@therjgroup.com).

-Tom Dohman

Ridgemont Park set for Renovation

Ridgemont Park, located at 800 38th Street in the Ridgemont subdivision, is due for an update to its playground equipment in 2018. The park, owned and managed by the city, was first opened and dedicated in June 1991 with the current playground structure coming a year later in 1992. The total park is 1.5 acres in size with a basketball hoop, a playing field, swings and a playground structure. Now that the park and its equipment are reaching 25 years in age, the city has budgeted for a redesign and installation of new playground structures and equipment.

The current plan has the remodel of the park being completed near the end of 2018. Jonathan Schilk, Landscape Architect with the City of Bellingham's Parks and Recreation Department, is managing the effort. Mr. Schilk came to our May board meeting to present on the process and get feedback on the potential designs. His enthusiasm for creating a fun and functional play area for kids was obvious and given his previous park designs, Boulevard and Squalicum among others, our neighborhood park is in good hands. Mr. Schilk will be in attendance at our upcoming picnic to talk with residents on the park's plan and progress. If you have suggestions for the new park, you can contact Mr. Schilk at parks@cob.org.

- Kevin Probasco

Samish Neighborhood News

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Editor: Greg McCracken. Meetings held at 7 p.m., second Thursday of the month in the basement of the Community Baptist Church, 810 Samish Way, except in March (general meeting) and September (picnic).
To receive this newsletter by email, send a request to info@samishneighborhood.org

What Are STRs and ADUs?

Short-Term Rentals (STRs) and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are two city-wide issues that will be discussed by the Planning Commission and the City Council over the next several months. Examples of STRs are those offered by AirBnB, VRBO (Vacation Rental By Owner), Craigslist, etc., for rental periods under 30 days. At present, such rentals are not legal in Bellingham. However, more than 300 can be found listed on various Internet sites. The city will try to address this unstable and awkward situation by creating new code regulations or revising existing code. Concerns about these rentals involve issues such as unpaid business taxes, health & safety, parking, noise and litter, not to mention the impact on local hotels and motels dealing with unlicensed, untaxed competition.

Somewhat related to STRs is the issue of accessory dwelling units (ADUs, aka mother-in-law apartments), either attached to, or detached from, the main house. Currently, attached ADUs are permitted in both single- and multi-family neighborhoods. Detached ADUs are not allowed in single-family zoned areas. Concerns about increasing the detached ADU housing types revolve around problems associated with increased density such as parking, litter, noise, structure height and neighborhood character.

The city is interested in creating housing policies that encourage more affordable types of housing for low- and middle-income families, especially first-time homebuyers. ADUs may help in this regard if an ADU can be rented (long term), adding to the income of the homeowner who might be struggling to pay each month's bills. This leads to consideration of the owner occupancy requirement currently in the code. Eliminating the requirement that either the main home or the ADU on a property must be owner occupied could lead to a rush by local or absentee landlords to turn affordable family housing into rental cash cows to the detriment of single family neighborhoods. This whole issue is complicated, and a lot depends on what we want Bellingham to become in the future. If this is important to you, make your opinions known. You can find out more information on these topics by searching the city's website at www.cob.org.

- Dick Conoboy

Keeping up with What's What



There are several ways to access neighborhood information if you have Internet access:

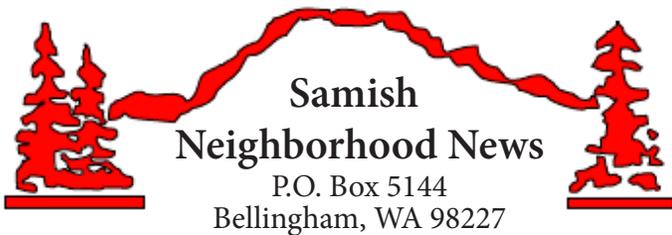
- www.samishneighborhood.org is our website. On it you can read minutes of past board meetings, see notes of future meetings and announcements, and find links to other useful and interesting information.
- www.facebook.com/samishneighborhoodassociation is our Facebook page. Anyone can access it but only Facebook members can post or make comments.
- <https://samishhill.nextdoor.com> - Sign up for this Nextdoor login page for Samish Hill (aka Samish Neighborhood). This is a free private network that Samish residents can listen in or contribute to ongoing on-line conversations (like having a friendly chat with your "Nextdoor" neighbor). If you're interested in law enforcement news, Bellingham's two NPO's (Neighborhood Police Officers) post messages to Nextdoor.

Please,
**DON'T FEED
THE ANIMALS**
Thanks.

No, this is not a caution about feeding zoo animals. It's a caution to not put food out for our local urban animals like squirrels, raccoons, and deer. The Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife and our local Bellingham Police strongly discourage this.

While putting food out may be well-intentioned, it may lead to undesirable and dangerous wildlife visitors and serious, destructive damage to your own property and neighbors' properties. Raccoons and coyotes, in particular, can

be dangerous to both small children and pets. Once animals find food in your yard they will be back regularly to look for more, and they may not stop with your yard alone. So please – don't start this by putting food out for wild animals.



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SNA Membership Benefits

Your dues help maintain our ability to host our March annual business meeting and the September picnic. Your dues also enable us to mail informative newsletters to all Samish residents twice a year, and cover expenses such as our post office and website.

We appreciate the support of all members. We will happily accept new members at any time of year – for example, at the September picnic. Annual dues are \$15 or (\$12 for seniors) and will extend membership to the following April 1. If you have questions about your membership status, call Steve Abell at 734-1098.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yes, I want to join my friends and neighbors as a member of the Samish Neighborhood Association, a 501 (c)(4) non-profit association. I want to be a member that supports and promotes the high quality of life in our neighborhood and in our city. I am enclosing annual payment of dues valid through March 31 of next year.

Please Print clearly, esp. your email address

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Check all that apply

\$15 household \$12 seniors Renewal New Member

Send check and form to SNA, P.O. Box 5144, Bellingham, WA 98227. Thank you for being a member.