

December 2010 Meeting

Ravensdale Ridge

By Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, December 6, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council held its regular monthly meeting. There were several topics discussed: Ravensdale Ridge, King County Code, and Unincorporated Area Council Funding. Your Area Council serves as an all-volunteer, locally elected advisory body to the King County Council representing all rural unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District.

Ravensdale Ridge

In September the Area Council formally voiced several objections to King County's Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) with regards to the Reserve Silica Sand Pit Mine Trench Filling Application. These included: 24-hr operation, monitoring of on-site fill, correction of current storm water problems, and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) shortfalls in the areas of Traffic, Noise, and Future Timber Growth.

Frank Melfi, President, Bill Melfi, Vice President, and Pete Cawfield, Site Manager, all of Reserve Industries Corp., were present to answer some of our concerns. Bill described their basic operations and potential noise impacts. They will be accepting new fill materials from several Public projects (e.g., Seattle downtown Tunnel) in their existing pit. The Area Council questioned the number of trucks, the noise they will make, and the times they will arrive and leave the site. Bill mentioned that approximately 100 trucks each night could be typical, but that King County DDES Noise Studies to date have not addressed such truck traffic.

King County DDES is contemplating a Limited-Scope EIS. The Area Council will work with DDES to ensure that proper Noise Studies are conducted to address the Ravensdale community's concerns over truck traffic impacts. The Area Council also will try to set up a Ravensdale Community Meeting to bring all the parties together, including King County DDES, to discuss the issues.

King County Code Recommendations

In the Fall the Area Council completed a comprehensive review of applicable King County Code chapters and submitted it to the King County Code Review Committee. That committee distributed our recommendations to various King County Departments. King County Department of Transportation recently responded favorably by letter to the Area Council's recommendations on Transportation Concurrency and Mitigation Payment System Policies. The Chair of the King County Code Review Committee, Harry Reinert of DDES will be invited to our January monthly meeting to discuss specific actions on our recommendations.

Unincorporated Area Council Funding

The King County Council recently passed a budget for 2011 that proposes modifying how UACs are constituted by eliminating the local UACs in favor of one Countywide "Commission." The Area Council believes local citizens need a voice to enumerate local issues of importance to them and, therefore, voiced its opposition to this proposed "Commission" in a letter to the King County Council dated November 30. The Area Council received a letter in response supporting the current system of local UACs from King County Executive Constantine dated December 3. The Area Council considers the Executive's support hopeful and will continue to monitor the situation.

The Area Council was a local council before gaining any formal recognition from the County. It formed at the behest of, and continues to serve, the local citizens as a means of communication with their local government--King County. As is true for all the UACs. This vision of local citizenry communicating directly with their local government, not only is deeply embedded in the fabric of American democracy, but is a vision the Area Council has lived by for over 20 years. The Area Council does not believe a Countywide "Commission"--possibly not even locally elected--can properly serve, or even be recognized by, the local citizens in the various and diverse unincorporated areas.

On another 2011 budget note, the Area Council considers police protection a top priority of King County government. Consequently, the Area Council voted to send a letter to the King County Council requesting restoration of the King County Sheriff's Office Deputy positions eliminated in the 2011 budget.

Next Regular Monthly Meeting:

Date/Time -- Monday, January 3, 2011, at 7:00 - 9:30 PM.

Location -- [NOTE CHANGE] Fire Station #81, 22225 SE 231st St & SR-169 (across from the former Police Precinct #3)

Speakers -- Paul Reitenbach and Harry Reinert both of King County DDES will speak on the the King County 2012 Comprehensive Plan Major Update in 2011 and King County Code Changes, respectively.