

## September 2010 Meeting

By Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

### County DDES Improvements

On Monday, September 13, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council held its monthly meeting. Three major topics discussed were:

- (1) King County Department of Development & Environmental Services (DDES) Improvements;
- (2) Black Diamond Master-Planned Development (MPD) Applications Approval, and
- (3) Ravensdale Ridge Project Comments

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.

### King County Department of Development & Environmental Services (DDES) Improvements

Department Director, John Starbard, described improvements made at DDES. Director Starbard described how DDES is changing the way they do business. Due to annexations and incorporations over many years DDES is now primarily a Rural Area agency for building permits and other services such as code enforcement. As such, DDES is looking at relocating from its current Renton location and also providing more online services.

Chief Financial Officer, Warren Cheney, detailed DDES's proposed fee reforms. DDES Cost Drivers include: actual cost of permitting, demand for service, and focus on customer service. These inform DDES's proposed 2011 cost reductions: 14% budget reduction, 23% staff reduction (~115 Full-Time Equivalents down from ~400 in 2005), and office space reductions. In addition, DDES is looking at changing their current mixed fee system for residential land use and site reviews to one that is based on fixed fees to provide certainty to its customers.

DDES online customer services can be found at: [www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits). Customers can find information about the permit process, characteristics of individual parcels within unincorporated King County, and many other topics associated with construction and land use. [General information on DDES services can be found here.](#)

### Black Diamond Master-Planned Development (MPD)

Applications Approval At the last deliberation session on August 24 of the Closed-Record Hearings the Black Diamond City Council (BDCC) approved the Yarrow Bay-proposed 6,000+ home, 1.1 million sq ft commercial MPD Applications with conditions. That decision was embodied in an Ordinance subject to a vote by the BDCC on September 20.

The BDCC rejected the Hearing Examiner's primary recommendation, released in April, concerning transportation conditions and mitigations: That a new traffic model be: (1) developed, (2) validated with existing data, (3) used to analyze all key routes and intersections, and (4) used to identify necessary mitigations before any homes are built.

Testimony from the Area Council, City of Maple Valley, King County Department of Transportation, and the public supported the Hearing Examiner's transportation recommendations. However, the BDCC decided to wait until Phase 1A is complete, a total of 850 new homes (nearly a 50% increase in the size of Black Diamond), before even looking at potential traffic impacts and needed mitigations using a new traffic model. The Area Council believes this will have both direct and long-lasting impacts to the greater Maple Valley area's transportation infrastructure, especially along SR-169 and SR-516.

Work will begin on a Development Agreement in which Yarrow Bay will prepare a more detailed plan to meet conditions placed on the MPD Applications by the City Council. This plan will be negotiated with City Staff. It is unclear what the public process will be in reviewing the Development Agreement, since the BDCC is considering eliminating the Hearing Examiner from their existing review process. This is a concern to the Area Council and many citizens in southeast King County, since the Hearing Examiner brings a tremendous amount of rigor to the process and can (as he did before) provide a technical and legal treatise on the pros and the cons of various parts of the Development Agreement. The timing on the Development Agreement is not yet available.

Members of the public can check the City of Black Diamond MPD web page for more information: [http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/mpd\\_page.html](http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/mpd_page.html).

### Ravensdale Ridge

Erickson Logging, owner of the ~1,200 acre property on Ravensdale Ridge, between Ravensdale Park and Black Diamond, has applied to DDES to truck in clean fill from highway construction projects around Puget Sound to fill in five old mine trenches. They anticipate handling approximately 390,000 cu yards of fill material. This project is anticipated to require between 20 and 100 truck/trailer trips per day (averaging 60 trips per day), but the application requests they be allowed to haul and fill 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This project is anticipated to require ~2 years to complete.

The primary access route for truck/trailer traffic will be on Kent-Kangley Rd to Ravensdale, then out the Black Diamond-Ravensdale Road (Ravensdale Way), past Gracie Hansen and Ravensdale Park, crossing the Burlington Northern tracks just west of old Ravensdale, then up onto Ravensdale Ridge on the new Erickson Logging access road just before the Reserve Silica Corp. ("sandworks") operation.

The Reserve Silica "sandworks," just west of Ravensdale, also has applied to DDES to extend their permitted hours of operation for hauling and filling on their property from the current Monday-Friday 7 AM to 7 PM / Saturday 9 AM to 6 PM to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If both the Erickson and the Reserve Silica projects are approved by DDES, Ravensdale Way could be handling truck/trailer traffic from both projects simultaneously, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Area Council is concerned about the adverse impacts to the Rural Neighborhoods of Ravensdale and the surrounding area. Specific concerns include traffic and its noise and environmental issues throughout the Ravensdale Area. The Area Council objects to a 24-hr operation in this quiet Rural neighborhood. This area has endured 7 years of truck traffic along the Kent-Kangley Rd during the exporting of gravel from the pit just east of the town for the Sea-Tac Airport project. The Area Council voted to submit a Letter of Comment to King County DDES that includes the following recommendations:

(1) The project must meet the Department of Ecology (DOE) Standards for Storm Water Protection. This includes hiring an accredited CESCL (certified erosion and sediment control lead) and implementing the DOE standards required for any construction site over 1 acre.

(2) A full Construction Storm Water Pollution Protection Plan (CSWPPP) must be developed as required by DOE on all clearing and grading and building permits.

(3) On-site monitoring must include the type of material being dumped, any sediment leaving the site, and any storm water leaving the site and infiltrating into the storm water system. Both Buck Lake and Ravensdale Lake are at risk here as well as several on site streams.

(4) The present storm water problems must be corrected before any work begins. It is a fact that major storm water run-off invades the Ravensdale Way during a major rain event each fall and winter. King County has the maintenance agreement with the present owners of the Reserve Silica San Pit to do this work.

(5) There are several State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) shortfalls: Traffic, Noise, and Timber Growth.

a. Traffic: The SEPA report is inconsistent about how many load trips per day are going to be implemented. Is it 25-30 or 100 trips per day? By a quick math check it is our estimation that it is closer to 100 trips per day over 3 years. Also, what is the route of travel? We strongly suggest a round trip through Black Diamond and not through the town of Ravensdale. The Ravensdale route will require a sharp turn onto Ravensdale Way or a turn-off through the Ravensdale Park both of which present major safety concerns.

b. Noise: Only Phase 1 is addressed in Erickson's analysis. This Phase is the least of total construction process. Also, there is no formal assessment of the use of compression braking that will take place on the steep slopes of the site or up-hill travel carrying truck and trailer loads. It is unacceptable for this kind of noise to occur at night. A 6 AM to 9 PM shift would be tolerable.

c. Timber Growth: More refined and scientific explanation of how this operation will support future timber growth is needed. This should be backed up with scientific research and data.

The Area Council voted to submit formal comments to King County DDES by the September 27 deadline. Next Regular Monthly Meeting Date/Time- Monday, October 4, at 7:00 - 9:30 PM. Location -- Sheriff's Precinct #3 Headquarters, 231<sup>st</sup> St & SR-169 (across from Fire Station)  
Topic --Recommended King County Code Changes