

## March 2011 Meeting Highlights

By Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, March 7, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council (GMVUAC) held its regular monthly meeting. Several major topics were discussed: Tahoma School Bond Measure, Black Diamond Master Planned Developments; King County Countywide Planning Policies; and Local Community Involvement. 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.

### Open Area Council Position

Joe Cruikshank is seeking an open Area Council position in the Ravensdale Community Area. Mr. Cruikshank is a recent resident to the area and wants to get involved in the local community. The Area Council accepted Mr. Cruikshank's application to join and swore him in as a full member.

### School Bond and Levy

Tahoma School District Superintendent, Mike Marianski, discussed the upcoming 20-year School Construction and Remodeling Bond issue and requested the Area Council to support it. Mr. Marianski described the space limitations and the construction and remodeling needs of the District. He showed information on the District's high ratings: one of the top ten school districts in the state and has an excellent Return on Investment.

Mr. Marianski stated that the school district is using its existing infrastructure to the maximum and uses portables on many of its school sites. Up to 1,700 more students are projected by 2020. This assumes full build-out of the Summit Place. There are four major projects proposed in the \$125 million bond issue: renovations of Lake Wilderness Elementary School, the Junior High School, and the High School, as well as a new Elementary School.

The last successful School District measure, a \$45 million Levy, was passed 14 years ago in 1997 and took four votes to pass. The vote will be all mail-in on Tuesday, April 26, and requires 60% approval to pass. The Area Council did not take a vote on support at the meeting.

### Black Diamond Master Planned Developments (MPDs)

The Area Council continues to follow the Yarrow Bay-proposed major MPDs (6,050 homes and 1.15 million sq ft of commercial/business space) in the City of Black Diamond. An update was given on the recent decision by the Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB). A citizen's-led group called Towards Responsible Development (TRD) petitioned the GMHB to review the process used by the City of Black Diamond last year to approve the MPD applications.

The GMHB found in TRD's favor ruling the City should not have used a "quasi-judicial" process whereby citizens cannot converse with City Council members leading up to and during hearings, rather an open "legislative" process should have been used. The GMHB gave the City 75 days to develop a new process whereby open dialogue is the rule and Public Hearings are held by the City's Planning Commission, followed by Public Hearings before the City Council. As was the case during last year's MPD Application Hearings, the Area Council will provide testimony related to the impacts--Traffic, Schools, and Stormwater Detention Facilities--on the Rural Area throughout southeast King County.

In the meantime, the City of Black Diamond has decided to press on with Development Agreement Hearings using a "quasi-judicial" process. Development Agreements developed by Yarrow Bay and approved by the City Staff provide the long-term plan (~15 - 20 years) for MPD design, development, and build-out. It is expected that the City's Hearing Examiner will conduct Public Hearings on the adequacy and completeness of the Development Agreements starting in late March or early April. The Area Council again will testify at these Hearings. Members of the Public can orally testify at the upcoming Hearings or submit written comments to the Hearing Examiner.

Information on the upcoming hearings will be posted later this month on the City of Black Diamond MPD page at:

HYPERLINK "[http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/mpd\\_page.html](http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/mpd_page.html)"

[http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/mpd\\_page.html](http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/mpd_page.html) The Yarrow Bay DRAFT Development Agreements currently are posted, along with many other MPD documents.

### King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)

The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC), a formal body consisting of elected officials from King County, cities and towns in King County, and special purpose districts, collaboratively works to plan for economic and population growth in King County. The GMPC has developed and adopted a set of Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) which provide a vision and

serve as a framework for each jurisdiction to develop its own comprehensive plan. The GMPC is now in the process of updating the CPPs to: (1) ensure consistency with current state law, state agency guidance and recent hearings board decisions; (2) align the CPPs with the VISION 2040 regional growth strategy; and (3) modernize the CPP to reflect implementation of the Growth Management Act. [The CPPs can be viewed here.](#)

On February 23, the Area Council provided Public Comments to the GMPC on the Transportation CPPs related to Growth, Demand Management, Level of Service, Land-Use, and Concurrency. The Area Council's biggest concern in these areas, as expressed earlier in King County Comprehensive Plan updates is Transportation Concurrency whereby financial plans must be in place to improve transportation infrastructure before large developments can be approved.

However, the 6-year "lag" time built into Transportation Concurrency often serves as a "loophole." The Area Council wants both the State and King County to eliminate or alter that language. Quite often a project is listed on a long-range plan, but never actually sees funding or simply keeps getting moved out to the right, even though the development was approved based on that project being funded and built on time. This simply becomes a game of playing catch-up in which, all too often, citizens are severely impacted, because the transportation infrastructure never does catch up.

Several citizens from the Rural Area south of Black Diamond, who are trying to form their own Unincorporated Area Council, also provided Public Comment. In their comments concerns were raised that CPPs must ensure the Rural Area is not "exploited" by adjacent Urban development by placing facilities in the Rural Area strictly to serve nearby Urban needs. The Area Council is on record strongly opposing such exploitation of the Rural Area.

### **New Business**

Susan Harvey of Ravensdale discussed concerns about impacts on the Issaquah-Hobart-Ravensdale-Black Diamond Road that will be caused by the Master Planned Developments (MPDs) in Black Diamond. Ms. Harvey has developed a Letter of Petition to recommend this important "bypass" be included in any Traffic Modeling conducted to assess the impacts of the MPDs. The Area Council voted to strongly endorse the petition and authorized Area Council Chair Steve Hiester to sign it.

### **Local Community Involvement**

*Les Dawson:* The Hobart Community Church is now serving a Community Dinner on Monday evenings from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the Church. This free meal is available to everyone. Please join us.

*Warren Iverson:* The Fire District remodel is scheduled to be complete on March 17 and there will be a re-opening ceremony.

*Gordon Moorman:* The Erickson Logging application for a Grading Permit has not been granted by King County DDES, but is imminent. DDES has issued a Determination of Non-Significance, therefore an EIS is not required.

*Gordon Moorman:* Ravensdale Park will soon receive its permit to commence Park renovation.

### **Next Regular Monthly Meeting:**

Date/Time -- April 4, 2011, at 7:00 - 9:30 PM.

Location -- Sheriff's Precinct #3 Headquarters, 231st St & SR-169 (across from Fire Station).