

December 2013

Area Council to Launch Newsletter by Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, December 2, the Area Council held its regular monthly meeting. Topics discussed were: (1) Area Council Newsletter, (2) Covington Master Planned Development, (3) Rural Stormwater Detention Facility, and (4) Landsburg Mine Cleanup Plan.

Newsletter

The Area Council's Outreach/Survey/Election Committee presented its final plan for our upcoming Newsletter. The Newsletter will be mailed to unincorporated area residents in the Tahoma School District early in the new year.

Our new Newsletter will provide information on the Area Council and its activities. Feedback and comments on the new Newsletter are welcome.

Covington Master Planned Development

The City of Covington released its Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the proposed Master-Planned Development (MPD) to be located between SR-18, SR-516, and Cedar Creek Park.

The Area Council's Growth Management Committee is reviewing the FEIS for resolution of concerns originally voiced in August in its detailed comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Although several Area Council concerns have been addressed in the FEIS, some, such as, traffic impacts still require additional consideration. The Committee currently is documenting those concerns. At its January 6 monthly meeting the Area Council will review a final set of comments from the Committee.

In late January the Covington City Council will be holding a Public Hearing on a Planned Action Ordinance that would approve the proposed MPD based on mitigation outlined in the FEIS. The Area Council plans to offer Oral Testimony at that Public Hearing.

Rural Stormwater Detention Facility

The King County Executive has drafted a Development Agreement (DA) with YarrowBay to permit a 77-unit clustered housing development on 394 acres in the Rural Area immediately west of the City of Black Diamond.

As part of the draft DA a "Regional" Stormwater facility would be built to primarily serve (~90% of the runoff) the urban Master-Planned Developments (MPDs) in Black Diamond. The facility also would be used to alleviate occasional flooding of nearby Horseshoe Lake, outside the city.

The Area Council previously has testified (during the Black Diamond MPD Public Hearings) about the problems with siting such a facility in the Rural Area to primarily serve an urban area. Fundamentally, urban-serving and urban-driven facilities should be located inside the Urban Growth Area (UGA). The Area Council also is concerned with the precedent such a facility located in the Rural Area could present.

The Area Council agreed to present Oral Testimony before the King County Council at its December Public Hearing on the draft DA. That testimony will request the King County Council reject the draft DA, while continuing to improve its current process to alleviate occasional flooding of Horseshoe Lake.

Landsburg Mine Cleanup Plan

The Area Council's Natural Resources/Parks Committee completed its review of the [Landsburg Mine Draft Cleanup Action Plan](#) and presented a set of comments for full Area Council review. The State Department of Ecology (DOE) and the group of companies (PLPs) responsible for the cleanup will enter into a Consent Decree which is a legal agreement filed in court. In the agreement, cleanup will occur in accordance with the draft Cleanup Action Plan, an exhibit in the Consent Decree.

While the plan has merit in the short term, the Committee listed several long-term concerns. These include long-term liability by the responsible parties and lack of specific plans should monitoring show major leakage of contaminants. In addition, the Committee remains concerned the Consent Decree specifies "indefinite" funding, which courts in the past have interpreted as "temporary." Because the in-ground contamination is potentially a very long-term problem, such language does not guarantee that sufficient cleanup and remedial funding will be there when needed.

The Area Council authorized preparation and submittal of final comments to the State Department of Ecology by its December 12 deadline.

Next Area Council Meeting

The Area Council's next monthly meeting will be held Monday, January 6, 2014, from 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Fire Station at SE corner of 231st St & SR-169. Meetings are held the first non-holiday Monday of each month. A Public Comment period at the beginning of each meeting provides citizens an opportunity to voice issues of concern to Area Council members and government officials in attendance. *** NOTE: If you live in the Tahoma School District outside the City of Maple Valley, you are eligible to apply to become a member of the Area Council. Interested Rural Area citizens can send a brief letter of interest to GMVUAC, P.O. Box 101, Maple Valley, WA 98038 [or an e-mail](#).

