

**November 2013**

## King County Health Care

by Peter Rimbo, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, November 4, the Area Council held its monthly meeting. Topics discussed were: 1) King County health care; 2) Covington Master Planned Development; and 3) Landsburg Mine cleanup.

### Health Care

Anna Markee of Public Health--Seattle/King County spoke about the countywide effort to enroll 180,000 newly eligible King County residents in Medicaid and the Health Benefit Exchange: <http://www.wahbexchange.org/>. Open enrollment started on October 1. Coverage begins January 1, 2014. The statewide call center is: 1-855-WAFINDER (1-855-923-4633).

There are parts of King County where up to 30% of the people have no medical insurance--many not by choice. In the greater Maple Valley area approximately 10% have no medical insurance. Ms. Markee stated there will be new affordable options. Medicaid is being expanded to cover a family of three with an income below \$26,952. Sliding scale tax credits will be available to help with premiums for a family of three with an income up to \$78,120. An online calculator is available at the site above to determine eligibility for Medicaid or tax credits.

Ms. Markee stated people currently covered through their employment, Medicare, or Medicaid don't need to do anything. However, many insurance plans are being changed to comply with the Affordable Care Act's more comprehensive coverage, thus the reason many people have received "policy cancellation" letters, or more aptly, "policy change" letters from their insurance companies. King County is hosting events where people can learn more, ask questions, and sign up for health coverage. Events will be held at the Maple Valley Library on Saturday, November 16, from Noon to 5:00 PM and on Monday, December 2, from 2:00 to 7:00 PM.

### Covington Hawk Property Subarea

In August the Area Council submitted a detailed set of comments on the City of Covington's Northern Gateway Study Hawk Property Subarea Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Hawk Property Subarea encompasses approximately 212 acres located in the northern portion of the City of Covington abutting SR-18 on its northwest boundary. It contains both land within the city limits and land in unincorporated King County, the latter of which directly abuts the Area Council's southwest boundary just west of Cedar Creek Park. The developer, YarrowBay, proposes to build up to a 1,500-home Master Planned Development.

On November 1 Covington released two documents: (1) Draft Preferred Subarea Plan to guide future development of the subarea and ensure consistency (or revision/enhancement) of the Comprehensive Plan and (2) Draft Planned Action Ordinance to allow for streamlined environmental review at the development permit stage by evaluating a range of development alternatives in the EIS and then reviewing subsequent development proposals for consistency with the range of alternatives studied. A "planned action" allows future development proposals deemed consistent will not have to undergo a new environmental review.

The Area Council's Growth Management (GM) Committee reviewed these documents and prepared Oral Testimony that addresses two major concerns: (1) misuse of the "planned action" process due to inconsistencies with adopted Comprehensive Plans of both the City and the County and (2) poor foundation for the traffic analyses which relies on an incomplete assessment of Transportation impacts, inadequate proposed mitigation, and unfunded plans. The full Area Council approved Oral Testimony be given by GM Committee members on November 7 before the Covington Planning Commission.

For information on the subarea and links to all documents, [please click here](#).

### Landsburg Mine Cleanup

Members of the Area Council's Natural Resources/Parks (NR/P) Committee attended the WA Department of Ecology's (DOE's) Open House on October 24 to ascertain current status of the Landsburg Mine Cleanup Plan. Many citizens expressed concerns with impacts to their private wells, as well as what plans are in place to fix problems once contaminants are detected in monitor wells.

Public Comments will be taken between October 11 and December 12 (extended from the original November 11). Comments can be sent directly to Mr. Jerome Cruz at: [jerome.cruz@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jerome.cruz@ecy.wa.gov) or 3190 160th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA 98008.

The NR/P Committee is reviewing the Draft Cleanup Action Plan: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=60> and will draft a set of comments for full Area Council review at our next monthly meeting on December 2. The Area Council intends to submit its comments to DOE by the December 12 deadline.

## Next Area Council Meeting

Meetings are held the first 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. Next monthly meeting: Monday, November 4, from 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Fire Station at 231st St & SR-169.

\*\*\* 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](#).