

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 104

CITY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2011

Sheriff's precinct in City Hall?

LEASE DISCUSSIONS FOR UPSTAIRS SPACE

When the King County Sheriff's Office decided to consolidate its command staff for the north and south-east precincts (in Kenmore and Maple Valley, respectively), its eyes fell upon some vacant space on the second floor of Sammamish City Hall.

The space, on the west side of the building, was intended to give the city some growing room over the upcoming decades, but the Sheriff's need for new quarters may put some of that square footage to use in the near future.

"We're having some detailed discussions with the county but there's no commitment from either side yet," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "Our City Council will have to review and approve any arrangement, obviously, and so will the King County Council and county executive."

If the discussions lead to approval, approximately 25 sheriff's personnel, primarily command and administrative staff, would likely work out of

See PRECINCT, pg. 3



A pre-incorporation barricade blocks traffic on completed roadway at Southeast 32nd St.

Barricade removal recommended

CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERING STAFF ADVICE

Following months of public input, traffic modeling, and safety analysis, the city staff recommended to the City Council on Jan. 11 that the barricade on Southeast 32nd Street be removed.

Buttressed by a comprehensive plan that encourages "connectivity," and finding no evidence that removal would violate any city road standards, the staff recommended that removal

take place after several safety measures are put in place. These include stop signs, curb extensions, traffic circles, additional road striping, and the trimming back of vegetation. A public request for additional sidewalk segments is also being evaluated.

A resolution to remove the barricade is currently scheduled to come be-

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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NEW DEPUTY MAYOR

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TOP CITY EMPLOYEES

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Neighborhood of the Century

The Seattle Times has been featuring a different neighborhood each week as it focuses on the Puget Sound living environment. On Jan. 21 their eye was on Sammamish, and it began



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

with “Sammamish Plateau can feel like two worlds in one – a modern suburb in a rural setting that has garnered national attention, and a place where home values have held up over the past year.”

The national attention refers to the CNN/Money Magazine surveys in recent years ranking Sammamish among the top dozen best places to live in the nation among smaller cities (under population 50,000). Regarding home values, prices seem to be stabilizing, and the real estate sales volume was up in 2010 over 2009. Also, the number of new homes built in 2010 was an increase over 2009, and 2011 is seeing the signs of a further thawing in the local real estate residential marketplace.

From our demographics, with nearly one third of our population under age 18, and a large number of families relocating here from all over the world, it is clear that Sammamish is a desirable place to live and raise a family. Along with awesome vistas, beautiful parks and trails, good roads and a great new library, Sammamish has a plethora of great schools in the Issaquah and Lake Washington School Districts, as well as private schools like the awesome East-side Catholic campus.

Our residents, both old and new, are also benefiting from the “coming together” of the community. I

was privileged to experience one of those “coming together” moments last month when I was asked to speak at the annual World Religion Day here in Sammamish. Speakers representing a half dozen faiths described some of their customs and beliefs, and I was struck by how they all had as a central tenet a variation of the “Golden Rule”.

Realizing that most of the people at the World Religion Day gathering were recent immigrants to our city, I decided to provide a brief history of Sammamish as a backdrop for their subsequent faith-based discussions. Here’s a summary of what I said:

Some 10,000 or so years ago when the last ice age ended and the glaciers receded from this area, lakes, hills, large piles of gravel (which are great for water infiltration) and a layer of till (compacted soil which does not allow storm water to rapidly infiltrate) were left behind in many parts of Sammamish. Couple all that with plate tectonics and volcanism and you have the Cascades and the Olympics serving as a beautiful backdrop for Sammamish.

In more recent history, Native Americans fished and hunted along the shores of Lake Sammamish. And then, with the great western migration, they were joined by white settlers. About a century or so ago this area lost its old growth forest to the construction needs of Seattle and the rest of central Puget Sound. The tall Douglas firs and cedars that you see now are merely a hundred or so years old. In the early- to mid-20th century, Sammamish became more than a place for a wilderness cabin, seeing the growth of farming and some ranching. The area within and around the Sammamish

Commons was during those times one of the largest chicken ranches in Washington, processing half a million fryers a year by the 1950s.

As Seattle expanded, and even suburbs like Bellevue and Redmond started pushing outward, Sammamish, although not a city yet, became a bedroom community for the larger commercial centers of Puget Sound. Many workers at Boeing, or in downtown Seattle and Bellevue businesses, looked to raising their families in the tranquility of the Cascade foothills, and moved to the eastside of Lake Sammamish.

When I moved here with my family in 1979, there was a single country store called Sadlier’s where the Pine Lake Shopping Center now exists, and this was still quite rural countryside. For a more detailed history of Sammamish, I refer you to the Sammamish Heritage Society website: www.sammamishheritage.org.

Sammamish was designated urban in the 1990s by the state and county. Since our incorporation in 1999 we have worked hard to accept that new status while sustaining the natural setting, and preserving our well-deserved reputation as a “kid-safe, family-friendly” environment. Those, after all, are the very things that make our city such a desirable place to live, and the qualities we must sustain.

Although it was certainly nice to be highlighted as the neighborhood of the week by the Seattle Times, maybe we should set our sights even higher and begin thinking about Sammamish as the “neighborhood of the century!”

If we make sustainability a central theme in the future history of Sammamish, I have no doubt we’ll deserve that honor!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Gerend". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Council taps Tom Odell as new Deputy Mayor

Although the mayor's term in Sammamish lasts two years, the deputy mayor position turns over on an annual basis. This year's new deputy mayor is Councilmember Tom Odell.

Odell, on the City Council since January 2010, was voted in as deputy mayor at the council's first regular meeting of 2011. The Jan. 4 vote was unanimous.

Odell takes the place of departing Deputy Mayor Nancy Whitten, who continues in her role as a councilmember after her one year as deputy mayor. In the city's "council/city manager" form of government, councilmembers choose among themselves to select the mayor and deputy mayor. The current mayor, Don Gerend, is midway through his two-year term.



New Deputy Mayor Tom Odell

PRECINCT, cont. from pg. 1

City Hall.

"The north and southeast precincts have been combined into a larger east precinct," Yazici said. "It covers the area east of I-405 from Woodinville to Enumclaw to Snoqualmie Pass, so Sammamish is a good spot for their command center."

Based on current discussions, the sheriff's office has its eye on about 4,800 square feet. That would still leave the city with 2,800 square feet on the second floor for future expansion.

The rough outlines of a lease deal would probably require the city to pay for the shell of the facility – specific duct, electrical and other work adapted to the needs of a command center, while the sheriff's office would pay for furnishings, offices, cubicles and other "inside the room" necessities.

The city would also likely pay for an expanded and se-

cured parking lot behind City Hall. Preliminary projections call for 36 parking spots.

The lease payment to the city will be negotiated as discussions continue, but it's expected to roughly match the going rate for commercial space in Sammamish.

The precinct operation will be separate from the Sammamish Police Department, which is based on the first floor of City Hall. Although city police are sheriff's officers, they work here un-

der a city contract, wear city uniforms, and are directed by Sammamish Police Chief Nate Elledge.

Yazici says the new precinct officers would likely have a positive effect on police presence in the community, however. As they come and go to work in Sammamish, and have lunch out in the community, people would probably bump into a lot more police officers.

"We're told that Maple Valley decided to hire some more officers when they realized that precinct was closing," Yazici said. "Police presence makes a difference."

The remodeling of the upstairs space at City Hall and the expansion of the parking lot could be accomplished in short order. Should the city and county decide to proceed with the deal, it's expected the east precinct command center could be operating out of Sammamish by sometime this summer.



The east precinct would occupy a portion of the top floor

Laura Philpot heads up Public Works Dept.

Following the recent retirement of John Cunningham, the city has appointed Laura Philpot as the new director of public works. Prior to taking over the department at the beginning of this year, Philpot served for two-and-a-half years as city engineer.

“Laura was promoted from within after doing a terrific job as city engineer,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “She’s done stellar work with the staff, our projects, and a number of grant applications. We’re really happy to have her in this role.”

Before joining Sammamish in 2008, Philpot worked in Auburn as that city’s transportation manager. She has a degree in civil engineering from the University of Washington.

Taking her place as city engineer is Jeff Brauns, pre-



Public Works Director Laura Philpot and City Engineer Jeff Brauns.

viously the city’s senior transportation program engineer. Brauns, who has been with the city since 2004, has a degree in civil engineering from Washington State University.

BARRICADE, cont. from pg. 1

fore the City Council on March 1. That resolution, if approved, would require that all safety modifications and other changes to the roadway be in place before removal.

The barricade at Southeast 32nd Street is one of many in the city left over from the pre-incorporation era. Some were put in place at the end of stub streets that have since been completed and connected to the city grid.

Opponents to the removal of the Southeast 32nd Street barricade say it will change the character of their neighborhood and create safety issues. Those in favor argue that removal will improve emergency vehicle access, shorten car trips and improve “connectivity.”

The city employed a newly developed set of “decision criteria” to evaluate the Southeast 32nd Street barricade. The criteria, designed to be flexible enough to apply to a variety of circumstances, will also be used to make decisions on other barriers in the city.

For more information, go to the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us), click on the “projects” tab on the left side of the home page, and then select “connectivity.” Residents may also contact Public Works Director Laura Philpot at lphilpot@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

New software will track permits and action requests

Like most cities, Sammamish processes permit applications, citizen action requests and a daunting number of other tasks on a daily basis. To help keep track of it all, and allow residents to better follow the steps along the way, the city will begin implementing new tracking software – EnerGov Solutions – in 2011.

Among other things, the system will allow people to apply for a broader range of permits online, track their permits more easily, and access much more land use history. It will also let residents follow the status of their citizen action requests, whether it’s for a pothole fix or a sidewalk repair.

“This should really help our workflow,” said Assistant City Manager Lyman Howard. “This system does a good job of tracking both external and internal work items.”

The city will purchase the system in conjunction with Kirkland, Redmond, Bothell, and Renton, all of which will add a small surcharge to their permit fees to help pay for the software. In the case of Sammamish, fees will rise 3 percent beginning this month.

Council on air at 11am, 7pm, 3am

Sammamish 21 TV, the city's cable channel, is now airing regular City Council meetings at 11 a.m., 7 p.m. and 3 a.m. Previously, the meetings were aired four times per day.

The change was triggered by the city's decision to also record and air Planning Commission meetings and the City Council study sessions.

"So, the order is now regular council meetings at 11 a.m., 7 p.m. and 3 a.m., followed by the Planning Commission meetings, and then the council study sessions," Communications Manager Tim Larson said. "We don't have precise times for the Planning Commission meetings and study sessions because those times will depend on how long the regular council meetings last."

Comcast customers can view the council meetings on channel 21. Broadstripe customers can view the same programming on channel 61.

City employee receives award from state parks association

The way City Manager Ben Yazici tells the story, he knows Joanna Puthoff is a good employee because when he calls to schedule a field for the soccer team he plays on, she has a very nice way of saying "Nope."

"We have a lot of demand for our fields, so I have to get in line like everyone else," Yazici said. "Even when I don't get the answer I'm hoping for, Joanna is so professional and nice I hang up the phone with a smile."

Thanks to her great work as the city's facilities coordinator, the Washington Recreation and Parks Association (WRPA) recently gave Puthoff



Joanna Puthoff (second from left) accepts "Outstanding Professional Award" from Mayor Don Gerend (left), City Manager Ben Yazici and Parks Director Jessi Richardson.

their "Outstanding Professional Award" in that category.

She received the award at WRPA's mid-year conference late last year, and was presented the plaque by Mayor Don Gerend at a City Council meeting last month.

Please don't touch that ditch: It's valuable!

It may not be high-tech, but that water conveyance and control system in front of your house, otherwise known as a "ditch," is awfully important to the health and wellbeing of city waterways.

That's why the city rarely grants requests from residents who want to fill them in to create more parking or beautify their property.

Among other things, a ditch:

- Keeps pollutants, sediment and debris out of catch basins, streams and lakes.
- Provides extra conveyance capacity for storm water.
- Can slow and control runoff through the installa-

tion of check dams.

- Allows water to permeate the soil in a way pipes cannot.

Requests to have a ditch piped and filled in are reviewed by the city staff on a case-by-case basis. Among other things, the following questions are considered:

- Is the ditch a potential hazard to pedestrians?
- Will an alteration affect water quality?
- Are there erosion problems that cannot be controlled by other means?

Questions or comments? Contact Senior Stormwater Engineer Eric LaFrance at 425-295-0562 or elafrance@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

City honors top 2010 employees

Every year the city's "Employee Appreciation Luncheon" is highlighted by the recognition of top employees. The awards for 2010 are:

Employee of the Year

Kurt Aldworth
Building Official

City Manager Special Recognition Award

Anjali Myer
Parks Project Manager

Firefighter of the Year

Lt. Rick Reynolds

Police Officer of the Year

Det. Bill Albright

Team of the Year
C.R.E.W.

(Committed to Reinforcing Employee Wellness)



Employee of the Year Kurt Aldworth (holding plaque) with Director of Community Development Kamuron Guroi.



Anjali Myer (right), recipient of the City Manager Special Recognition Award, with Parks Director Jessi Richardson.



Firefighter of the Year Rick Reynolds (holding plaque) with City Manger Ben Yazici (left), Eastside Fire and Rescue Chief Lee Soptich and Deputy Chief Jeff Griffin.



Police Officer of the Year Bill Albright (right) with Police Chief Nate Elledge.



Team of the Year: Mona Davis, Marlene Dunham, Joanna Puthoff, Dawn Flores, Anjali Myer, Lisa Werre, Mayor Don Gerend, Deputy Mayor Tom Odell and Councilmember Nancy Whitten.

CITY CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

Wednesday, Feb. 2

Parks and Rec Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 3

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 3, 4, 5

City Council Retreat
Cle Elum (Suncadia)

Saturday, Feb. 5

Sammamish Celebrate Chinese Art &
Culture, 1-6 p.m.
City Hall

Tuesday, Feb. 8

City Council Special Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 14

City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 15

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 16

Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 17

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 21

Presidents' Day
City offices closed

Monday, Feb. 28

Arts Commission Meeting
6:30 p.m.

MARCH

Tuesday, Mar. 1

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Mar. 2

Parks and Rec Comm. Mtg
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Mar. 3

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Mar. 7

Council Office Hours, 5-6 p.m.

Tuesday, Mar. 8

City Council Special Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Mar. 14

Joint Study Session w/ Parks Comm.
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Mar. 15

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Mar. 16

Sammamish Youth Board Meeting
6 p.m.

Thursday, Mar. 17

Planning Commission Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Monday, Mar. 21

Arts Commission Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Mar. 26

Volunteer Event, 9 a.m.-Noon
Lower Commons Park

PLEASE NOTE:

All meetings and events at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.

Volunteer needed to manage “adopt-a-road” program

Beginning March 1, the city will be overseeing King County’s “adopt-a-road” program inside Sammamish city limits. With that task in mind, the city is looking for a volunteer to help manage this effort.

Duties will include: coordinating road cleanups, communicating with volunteer organizations, and working with city staff on sign placement, supply pickup, and work verification. Those working



Youth Board members on cleanup duty.

on the roads are expected to complete their tasks twice per year.

If you are interested in volunteering to manage the program, contact Sammamish Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Sanders at 425-295-0556 or dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

The volunteer manager’s time commitment is expected to be in the vicinity of five hours per month for six months.



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Mayor*



*Tom Odell
Deputy Mayor*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*



*John Curley
Councilmember*



*John James
Councilmember*



*Mark Cross
Councilmember*



*Michele Petitti
Councilmember*

★ **Sammamish has talent!** ★

Do you need an emcee or performer for an upcoming event? A motivational speaker to liven up your office meetings? Music for a wedding or house party?

If the answer is yes, please take a look at the "Sammamish Has Talent" roster assembled by the Sammamish Arts Commission!



You can see it by going to the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us), clicking through Advisory Boards and Arts Commission, and then scrolling down to "Sammamish Has Talent."

Although the city does not guarantee the quality of the performers, they are selected on the basis of annual auditions held by the Sammamish Arts Commission.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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- Ben Yazici
- Pete Butkus
- Kamuron Gurol
- Lyman Howard
- Laura Philpot
- Jessi Richardson
- Mike Sauerwein
- Melonie Anderson
- Nathan Elledge
- Lee Soptich
- Bruce Disend
- Tim Larson
- City Manager
- Deputy City Manager
- ComDevDir/AsstCityMgr
- FinanceDir/AsstCityMgr
- Public Works Director
- Parks & Rec Director
- AdminServices Director
- City Clerk
- Police Chief
- Fire Chief
- City Attorney
- Communications Mgr