

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 118

CITY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2012

Parks & Rec Commission submits a vision for the future

SIX-YEAR PLAN REQUIRED TO OBTAIN STATE GRANTS

In the late 90s, when residents pushed for incorporation, improving the parks picture was a top priority.

Mission accomplished.

Sammamish now has ten times more park land than it did in 1999. It hasn't all been developed yet, but the city's parks and open space are often highlighted when national magazines rank Sammamish as one of the nation's "best places to live."

To properly grow and care for these assets, the city follows a Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, a document that needs to be updated every six years if the city wants to qualify for state grants.

More commonly referred to as the PRO Plan, it was presented, in draft form, to the City Council on March 19 by Parks Commissioners Pauline Cantor and Hank Klein. The plan looks

See PARKS, pg. 3



The ECA regulations focus on wetlands (above); streams; fish and wildlife habitat; steep slopes; and frequently flooded, critical aquifer recharge, landslide, seismic, and erosion hazard areas.

ECA review picks up speed

ENVIRONMENTALLY CRITICAL AREAS PROCESS RELIES ON "BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE" AND PUBLIC INPUT

Two vital meetings are slated this month as the Planning Commission moves ahead with its Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) update process.

An April 5 meeting (6 p.m. at City Hall) will take in public comment on seismic hazards, frequently flooded and critical aquifer recharge areas. The

commission will also use the meeting to formulate some initial direction on these topics in anticipation of handing off recommendations to the City Council this summer or early fall.

At a second meeting on April 19 (6 p.m. at City Hall), the consultant hired

See ECA, pg. 3

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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FIRE STUDY

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SAMMI AWARDS

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Three issues of importance to Sammamish residents

In late January your City Council met for a day and a half at its annual retreat to review and discuss major issues facing Sammamish this year as well as for the next several years. Many issues were covered, but I would like to



*Tom Odell
Mayor*

review our progress on three of these that are important to all Sammamish residents.

City finances:

We have all probably heard discussion of the financial “crossover point” for the city. This is simply the point in time where city revenues are overtaken by expenses. Even with the recession, it now appears that the crossover has now moved a year or two to the right to 2017-18 due to budget reductions put in place over the past two years. However, a sensitivity analysis conducted by city staff indicated a number of factors could either delay or accelerate our day of financial reckoning by a year or two.

On the negative side we could see a resumption of inflation. There is also pressure to provide services to more and more people as our population grows. None of us have much appetite for increasing property taxes, or adding new taxes. Unlike neighboring cities, we do not have utility or B&O taxes.

Compounding the challenge is the state's budget situation. Monies previously shared with or promised to Washington's cities have either been swept from the state's general fund or have simply disappeared, as is the case with the liquor funds. Liquor alone will cost Sammamish about \$500,000 annually, a sum

that will have to be replaced somehow.

In late spring and early summer the city will begin work on its 2013-2014 biennial budget. Fortunately our local building activity has shown signs of recovery and the city's receipts (fees) from this area of economic activity are increasing.

Nevertheless, we will continue to look carefully at our expenditures and curb growth in this area as much as possible.

Town Center:

It has been several years since the initial development of the Town Center concept. The Council reviewed the plan relative to the current economic reality. There will likely need to be some adjustments to the plan as well as to city regulations to help this project get off of the ground.

The Council recently received the consultant report assessing our city's relative strengths and weaknesses (the EDSAT Report). The Council's Economic Development Committee will be using it to help us focus on our best opportunities for bringing this concept to reality. Given the current economy it will likely be a longer than originally anticipated process. We will do all we can to make it happen as quickly as we can, and in a manner that protects the character of our city while providing the services our residents need right here in the city.

Parks & Community Center:

These two issues were major topics of discussion at the retreat. They are also interconnected, especially financially.

Since our incorporation Sammamish has gone from a mere 40 acres

of parks to over 400 in various stages of development today. In addition, we have recently received possession of Section 36 in Soaring Eagle Park.

There continues to be considerable discussion between Council and staff on the overall issue of how many and what kinds of parks are needed. Do we need to continue or slow down a bit? What will be their purpose – active (sports fields) or passive (more natural) use? Also, how much will any new parks cost to both build and maintain? A central question is to what stage do we ultimately take the development of our parks and what will they look like?

We all believe that good parks are positive for the community and for resale values. However, future budget pressures may limit the number of additional parks we build – and the manner in which they are developed.

In our last Council meeting, the Parks Commission handed off their Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PRO Plan). This plan calls for a continued significant expansion of our park system. The Council will discuss this further in coming weeks.

Concurrent with the parks discussion, Council and city administration are continuing efforts to devise a plan for a Sammamish Community Center that will address the expressed needs of our residents and also be affordable. After much public input, we are now in the quiet discussion stage. We are very hopeful that we'll be able to come up with a plan for further public discussion in coming months.

Thank you for your interest!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Odell".

ECA, cont. from pg. 1

by the city for this update (AMEC) will present the “best available science” on several topics, including streams, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. This meeting will also feature a question and answer period and an open house for the public.

“These public meetings with the Planning Commission will continue through July,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “Then after the City Council receives the commission’s recommendations later in the year, there will be more opportunities for public input.”

According to Yazici, participation by all the stakeholders is vital if the city is going to produce a

balanced ECA update.

“We expect and welcome feedback from property owners, builders, environmentalists, and any other stakeholders who want to weigh in on the ECA,” Yazici said. “That’s absolutely necessary if we’re going to protect the environment and strive for appropriate use of personal property at the same time.”



The ECA review process, which began in February, is scheduled to culminate before the end of the year when the City Council adopts the new update. To stay on schedule, the City Council has asked the Planning Commission to stay focused on a limited number of key topics.

The meeting schedule is subject to change, so interested residents are advised to follow the process on the city website at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us. To reach the ECA webpage, just click on the “Environmentally Critical Areas” tab on the left side of the home page.

Residents can also sign up for ECA email alerts by clicking on the “email alert” icon in the upper, right-hand corner of the city website homepage.

PARKS, cont. from pg. 1

out six years, outlining capital investments, maintenance expenses, and other key issues.

Now that the Parks Commission has made its draft recommendations, the Council will review the plan, make any desired changes, and then adopt it later this year.

The draft PRO Plan made several points, including the importance of maintenance.

- In 2007, maintenance costs per acre of park land amounted to \$6,062. In 2012 that figure dropped to \$3,759. Current funding levels may not be sufficient to “maintain cur-

rent levels of service.”

- Well maintained parks raise real estate values, as does a home’s proximity to a park.
- Parks and open spaces improve public health, reduce stress and diseases, and make people



happy.

- Parks promote and sustain a strong sense of community.
- Parks serve as great equalizers where people of all ages, ethnicities and income levels can meet, socialize and interact.

- There is still room to grow, but it has to be done at a slower pace and in a very strategic manner.

The complete draft of the 2012 PRO Plan is available for viewing on the city website at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us. Just click through [departments](#); [parks and recreation](#); [parks, recreation & open space plan](#); and [documents](#).

City hires outside firm to evaluate fire services

Although the city has always praised the job done by firefighters in Sammamish, the cost of that service, as delivered by Eastside Fire & Rescue (EF&R), is the biggest local expense borne by city taxpayers. The annual cost of fire services constitutes 24 percent of the city's annual operating budget.

"That's the reason we've always been very diligent in our examination of those expenses," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "Even a small change can have a significant impact on our taxpayers."

And change seems to be in the air. EF&R's agreement with its partners, including Sammamish, is scheduled for an extension in 2014.

"As that date approaches, EF&R is looking at ways to alter and improve the organization," Yazici said. "Sammamish has two members on EF&R's board, so we're participating in that review."

But Sammamish knows that changes in a partnership's operation can have varying effects on different partners. EF&R is made up of Issaquah, Sammamish, North Bend, Fire Dis-

trict 10 and Fire District 38. It's not easy to equitably divide the costs and benefits among partners whose circumstances are quite different.

Out of an abundance of caution, the city has hired a consulting firm (FCS Group) to review EF&R's current finances, funding model, and operations. The study will also compare Sammamish's circumstances with similarly situated western Washington cities, and examine alternatives for fire and emergency medical services.

The FCS Group's proposal was one of six considered by the city. They were selected with the help of a technical advisory group made up of three former City Councilmembers – Kathy Huckabay, Lee Felling-

and Ron Haworth.

"With EF&R considering changes to the way it does business, we need to be ready to adapt if that becomes necessary," Yazici said. "For the sake of our taxpayers, we're obligated to do our due diligence."

The FCS Group's report is scheduled for presentation to the City Council in June.



April is heating up with "art opportunities"

April is a time of new beginnings, so why not try a new art experience? Thanks to the Sammamish Arts Commission, you have several options. Please mark your calendar for the following opportunities:

- "Haiku in the Woods" with poet Michael Dylan Welch. It includes a course in Japanese poetry plus a walk in Beaver Lake Park. Saturday, April 14, 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at Beaver Lake Lodge.
- "Come Sit a While." A free tour

and presentation of Hannah Viano's papercut art in City Hall. Tuesday, April 17, 6 p.m.

- "The Pitmen Painters." An ACT Theatre reading with a hilarious take on art, class and politics. Thursday, April 19, 7-9 p.m., at the Sammamish Library. (This event relies on community participation. If you would like to be a volunteer reader – no experience needed – please contact the ACT Theatre at kristina.sutherland@acttheatre.org.

CALL TO ARTISTS:

**Sammamish Arts Fair
October 13, 14**

**Sponsored by the
Sammamish Arts
Commission**

**Submission Deadline:
May 15**

For more information, go to
www.sammamishartsfair.wordpress.com

The Spirit of Sammamish!!!

CELEBRATING AND PROMOTING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AT THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL SAMMI AWARDS

Every year for more than a decade, SAMMI Awards have been bestowed on Sammamish residents who inspire their neighbors with acts of kindness, courage and community spirit.

On March 16, at the Eastridge Church, the 11th annual celebration honored another special collection of people in eleven different categories.

The evening was topped off when Kent Kiernan received the evening's signature honor: the "Spirit of Sammamish" Award.

Among other things, Kiernan is president of the Sammamish Citizen



"Spirit of Sammamish" award recipient Kent T. Kiernan with Cary Young and Laura Walker at the 2012 SAMMI Awards.

Corps Council, a volunteer group that helps the community train and prepare for emergencies. The other awardees:

Trevor Price Award:

Ryan Brown
Nathan Gelbrich
Allie Murphy

Unsung Hero:

Jeff Mitchell

Youth Advocate:

Connor Creswell

Founder's Award:

Carol Stamper

This year's event was dedicated to Ofc. Stan Chapin, the School Resource Officer at Eastlake High School and Inglewood Junior High School who passed away in January. Chapin won the Youth Advocate Award in 2003.



Pauline Cantor, Environmental Award

Arts:

R. Joseph Scott

Business:

Rhonda Newton, DDS

Courage:

Court Houston

Learning Promotion:

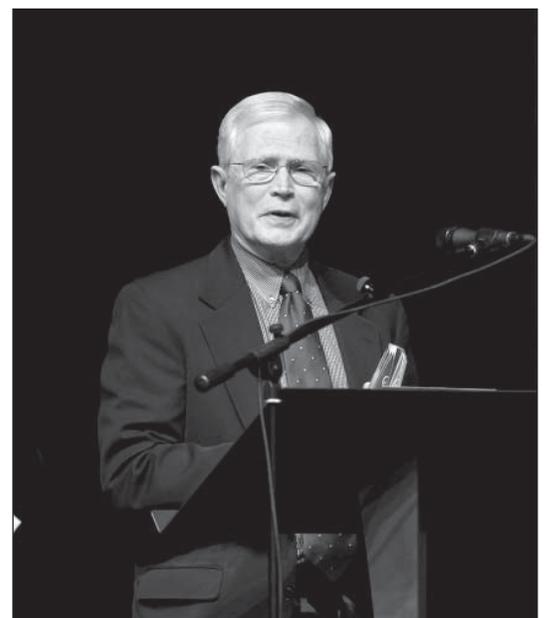
Ronda Patrick

Teen Spirit:

Jordan Lim

Environmental Award:

Pauline Cantor



R. Joseph Scott, Arts Award

See design alternatives for S.E. Eighth Street Park

Design alternatives for the S.E. Eighth Street Park will be presented to residents during a public meeting at City Hall on Wednesday, April 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

They'll be asked to weigh in on these design alternatives, which were developed from comments gathered at the first public meeting. That first meeting asked the question: "What are your hopes, dreams and fears?"

Pending the choice of a permanent name, the property is being called S.E. Eighth Street Park. It's part of a larger 51-acre parcel being donated in phases by a local resident.

The park, best entered at the intersection of S.E. Eighth Street and 218th Avenue S.E., is already open to the public. For more information on the project, go to the city website at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us and click through *departments*, *parksandrec*, *projects* and *SE8thStPark*.



S.E. Eighth Street Park

Volunteers take center stage in April

They're busy year around, but April will be especially eventful for volunteers this month:

- In honor of "National Volunteer Week," the city will hold an open house at City Hall on Wednesday, April 18, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. The event will be highlighted by a special recognition ceremony honoring volunteers who have contributed 100 hours or more of hard work to the community. The ceremony will take place promptly at noon. Residents and volunteers alike are invited to attend this free event. Cake and light refreshments will be served.
- On April 21, residents are urged to participate in a special Earth Day Volunteer Event. It's a park cleanup effort at Beaver Lake that will run from 9 a.m. to noon. Please arrive at Beaver Lake Lodge with gloves, appropriate attire for the weather, and an appetite for hard work!
- On April 28, the focus will be on removing invasive plants from the Illahee Trail near Inglewood Junior High School. Again, bring your gloves and appropriate attire.

To register for these events, go to the city website at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us and click on the pertinent date in the events calendar. You may also contact Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Sanders at dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us or 425-295-0556.

Stormwater permit update

The NPDES Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit, issued by the Department of Ecology, requires all affected municipalities, including Sammamish, to annually update their Stormwater Management Program document (SWMP) and complete an annual report outlining the status of the city's compliance with the permit requirements.

The Stormwater Management team has completed the 2011 update to the SWMP. It describes the city's existing stormwater programs, as well as the plan to update and modify these programs as necessary to meet future requirements of the permit. The Stormwater team has also submitted the 2011 Annual Report to the Department of Ecology, which is due annually on March 31.

Both of these documents are available for public review and comment on the city's Stormwater webpage at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/departments/publicworks/StormWaterManagement.aspx.

CITY CALENDAR

APRIL

Monday, April 2

-Donate Blood at City Hall
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tuesday, April 3

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 4

-City Council Council Office Hour
5:30-6:30 p.m.
-Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 5

-Planning Commission Meeting
6 p.m.

Monday, April 9

-“Seniors Making Art”
10 a.m.- noon
EX3 Teen and Rec Center

Tuesday, April 10

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

Thursday, April 12

-Community Garden Steering
Committee Meeting
CANCELLED

Saturday, April 14

-Free Computer Recycling Drive
City Hall
10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
-“Haiku in the Woods”
Sammamish Walks
10:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.
Beaver Lake Lodge

Monday, April 16

-Finance Committee Meeting
5:30-6:15 p.m.

-City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.

-Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 17

-“Come Sit a While” gallery tour
6-7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 18

-Sammamish Youth Board Meeting
6-7 p.m.

Thursday, April 19

-Planning Commission Mtg, 6 p.m.
-ACT Theatre
The Pitmen Painters, ACT Theatre
7-9 p.m.
Sammamish Library

Saturday, April 21

-Earth Day Celebration
Volunteer Event, 9 a.m. - noon
Beaver Lake Lodge

Wednesday, April 25

-SE 8th Street Park Master Plan
Public Meeting #2
Design Alternatives
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 28

-Volunteer Event at Illahee Trail
9 a.m.- noon
Illahee Trail
NE 8th and SE 35th PL NE

MAY

Tuesday, May 1

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 2

-City Council Council Office Hour
5:30-6:30 p.m.

-Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 3

-Planning Commission Meeting
6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 8

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

Thursday, May 10

-Community Garden Steering
Committee Meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.

Monday, May 14

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 16

-Sammamish Youth Board Meeting
6-7 p.m.

Thursday, May 17

-Planning Commission Meeting
6 p.m.

Saturday, May 19

-Sammamish Walks, 10 a.m.- noon
Pine Lake Park

Monday, May 21

-Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, May 28

-Memorial Day
City offices closed

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.



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*John Curley
Councilmember*



*Don Gerend
Councilmember*



*Ramiro Valderrama
Councilmember*



*Tom Vance
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*

Support the Boys & Girls Clubs and Sammamish Teen Center!

Sunday, April 22, 7:30 a.m.
New 5K/10K run

Begins and ends at the
Sammamish EX3 Teen and Recreation Center
(To register, go to: www.SammamishRun.com)

Tuesday, May 8, 6 p.m.
Sahalee Country Club
Annual Fundraising Dinner
Keynote Speaker: Lorenzo Romar

For more information on both events, contact:
Jeremy Peck (425-250-4786, jpeck@positiveplace.org)

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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Laura Philpot	Public Works Director
Jessi Richardson	Parks & Rec Director
Mike Sauerwein	Admin Services Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Nathan Elledge	Police Chief
Wes Collins	Fire Chief
Bruce Disend	City Attorney

Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
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