

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 114

CITY NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2011

Familiar faces leave council

PETITTI, CROSS DIDN'T RUN FOR REELECTION

When the city clerk calls roll at next year's first City Council meeting, two very familiar names – Michele Petitti and Mark Cross – will be missing.

The two veteran councilmembers – Petitti joined the council in 2002, Cross in 2004 – decided not to run for re-election this year.

Instead, the clerk will call out the names of Ramiro Valderrama and Tom Vance, both winning election to the council for the first time in November.

"Michele and Mark made a massive investment of time and energy to serve their community over the past several years," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "We're very fortunate that our city produces smart, generous people to serve on the council. We will miss them both."

Both Petitti and Cross served as mayor during their council tenure.

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The games begin at the grand opening of the Boys and Girls Club on Nov. 3.

Boys & Girls Club is open!

When the doors flew open on Nov. 3 at the city's brand-new Boys & Girls Club, it didn't take long for the building to fill up – with kids, adults, donors, staff, and a ton of energy.

"It was packed," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "The kids were exploring and playing, and I think most of the adults felt the same way I did – that this is a great new community asset in Sammamish."

The club, officially known as the

Sammamish EX3 Teen & Recreation Center, is housed in the old library building at the intersection of 228th Avenue Northeast and Inglewood Hill Road.

As part of a partnership, the city supplied the city-owned building and the Boys & Girls Club provided the renovation. The club will serve people of all ages, with kids getting most of the attention after school, and adults,

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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CHARGING STATIONS

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Job well done, Michele and Mark!

YOUR SERVICE HAS MADE SAMMAMISH A BETTER PLACE

Sammamish is twelve years old, and Councilmembers Michele Petitti and Mark Cross have been here from the beginning.

No, they weren't on the original council in 1999 (Michele joined the council in 2002 and Mark in 2004),



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

but they were both active in this fledgling new city from the very beginning.

Michele, with husband Bob and daughters Rochelle and Renee, has lived on the plateau since 1987. She helped start the Sammamish Rotary Club, was a past Girl Scout Troop leader and a Golden Acorn Awardee from the Issaquah School District.

Her day job is with the YMCA, but I came to know her early in the history of our city because of her equestrian interests. When the first council was trying to sort out the ramifications of being a new city just inside the urban growth boundary, Michele came to council meetings and passionately reminded the council of the need to accommodate a wide variety of outdoor interests as we worked on improving our infrastructure.

Michele remains an avid horse lover, serving as captain of High Valley Riders, a state competitive equestrian drill team.

She has also taken on various environmental causes, been a strong supporter of the Sammamish Heritage Society, and been a key participant in making the Nightmare at Beaver Lake such a successful Rotary fund raiser for scholarships.

Mark Cross, with his wife Pam Mauk, has also lived in our community since 1987.

Living in the more northerly Tamarack neighborhood means their children Kathleen and Will were in the Lake Washington School District.

Mark is an urban planner by profession, now working for the city of Bellevue, after many years working for Snohomish County.

Mark was also involved in the workings of the city before he was

help the city get off on the right foot (or road).

During our monthly meetings, we often had one or two dozen residents in attendance, many of them professional planners and engineers. Mark was one of those early contributors, helping our community overcome infrastructure deficits with his sage and very welcome advice.

Michele and Mark have both served terms as deputy mayor and then mayor. And over the years they've donated huge chunks of their lives to make Sammamish a better place to live and raise a family. It's clear they both love Sammamish.

It was evident when they listened, learned and accommodated the views of others for the sake of consensus. And it was evident when they took a stand and spoke frankly when that was required. None of that is easy to do, especially when the political cross-currents kick up.

We will miss their strong voices on the council, but know that they will continue to be a strong presence in our community. However they decide to channel their energies, we know one thing for sure: the city of Sammamish and all its residents will be better for it.

Thank you Michele and Mark!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Don Gerend". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".

"We will miss their strong voices on the Council, but know that they will continue to be a strong presence in our community."

elected to the council. During the first year of incorporation, I was picked by my fellow councilmembers to be the chair of the newly formed Transportation Committee. Not being an urban planner or a transportation expert, I decided we should call on residents who might be able to

Thanks!

COUNCIL, cont. from pg. 1

The mayor is selected by a vote of the council.

For their part, Valderrama and Vance will take up their council duties at next year's first regular meeting on Jan. 3.



*Michele Petitti
City Council: 2002-11*



*Mark Cross
City Council: 2004-11*

“The meetings can get deep into the details and deep into the night sometimes, so they’ll need all the energy they can muster.”

Ben Yazici
City Manager

“We know our two new councilmembers will bring the same enthusiasm and commitment we’ve seen from others since we incorporated in 1999 and elected our first council,” Yazici said. “The meetings can get deep into the details and deep into the night sometimes, so they’ll need all the energy they can muster.”

They’ll be joined by Nancy Whitten, who was elected to her third term on the council.

Welcome!



*Ramiro Valderrama
New councilmember*



*Tom Vance
New councilmember*

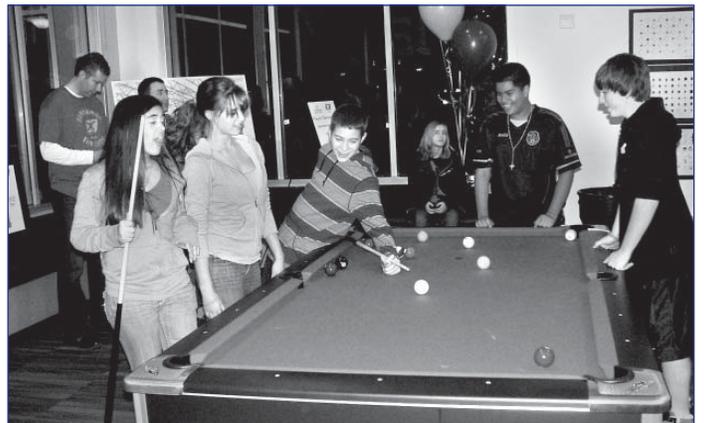
BOYS, cont. from pg. 1

seniors, and pre-schoolers benefitting when students are in class.

Among other things, the club features a music stage, technology lab, teaching kitchen, video production facility, meeting areas and loads of games. Annual memberships cost \$120, which amounts to just \$10 per month. For full details go to <https://rs.positiveplace.org/teencenter.html>.

Funds are also being raised for a 7,000-square-foot gymnasium that will be added to the current building. The construction schedule for the gym will depend on the pace of fundraising.

“The Boys & Girls Club deserves so much credit,” Yazici said. “They do great work, and we’re delighted to be their partner.”



Trick shots on opening night.

Time to update critical areas regulations

CITY PLANS TO COMPLETE CHANGES BY THE END OF 2012

Using the “best available science” and input from a broad spectrum of stakeholders, cities are required by state law to periodically update the regulations governing their environmentally sensitive critical areas.

As Sammamish begins its update, scheduled for completion by the end of 2012, one important change has already taken place: The CAO (Critical Areas Ordinance) is now the ECA (Environmentally Critical Areas ordinance).

Although the name is different, the goal remains the same: adopt regulations to fairly and effectively protect wetlands, streams, buffers, steep slopes and other sensitive areas, while meeting city goals to accommodate growth. The ECA is of great interest to property owners, many of whom are concerned about further limitations on their rights of development, and environmentalists, many of whom believe the regulations don't go far enough.

“Of course, there are many shadings of perspective in the middle,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “Property owners care about the environment and environmentalists agree with responsible development.

“The challenge, as always, is to come up with a balanced approach that hits the sweet spot. With the help of the community, we hope to do just that.”

The last city update to the CAO

(now the ECA), was completed in 2005. Normally, cities are required to update the regulations only once every ten years, but the city added a sunset clause to the update in 2005 that kicks in at the end of 2012.

“We've had six years of experience with our current regulations,” Kamuron Gurol, the city's community development director, said. “As a result,

philosophical argument that has occurred in other cities.”

In the months ahead, the Planning Commission and City Council will be taking in public comment, listening to experts, and working hard to inform and engage residents.

“There's no other way to do it,” Yazici said. “All elements of our community need to be heard.

“If you don't have appropriate regulations, the environment suffers. If you don't listen to property owners in this process, you may hear from them in court, instead.

“Our taxpayers don't like either of those alternatives, so we're going to work in a very focused, inclusive and responsible manner on the ECA.”

Over the course of the next year, the city will

inform residents through newsletters, email alerts, postcard mailings, press releases and website postings. Residents will have multiple opportunities to weigh in at both Planning Commission and City Council meetings. A number of roundtable discussions and public forums will also be scheduled to produce more detailed input from stakeholders and interested residents.

For more information, contact Debbie Beadle at 425-295-0525 or dbeadle@ci.sammamish.wa.us. A special webpage for the ECA will also soon be available on the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us).



Deputy Mayor Tom Odell, Planning Commission Chair Joe Lipsky, Mayor Don Gerend and Planning Commission Vice Chair Kathy Richardson discuss the ECA at a joint meeting on Nov. 14.

we have a fairly narrow list of known topics that need to be addressed.”

That topic list, presented to the City Council and Planning Commission on Nov. 14, was generated, in part, by feedback from permit applicants, and comments from residents, stakeholders and city staff.

“Most of the changes to be considered relate to predictable issues like erosion, landslides, wetlands and development options for property owners,” Gurol said. “Our goal is to keep the focus of this update on topics that have come up over the past few years. We're hoping to avoid the kind of contentious, open-ended

Q & A on Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA)

WITH KAMURON GUROL, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Q: A lot of strong feelings seem to surface when cities update their ECA regulations. Tell us about that.

A: I think it's pretty understandable. When they buy property, people often have a vision or dream they want to achieve, so restrictions or requirements can feel frustrating. On the other side, many of our residents are passionate about protecting the environment. It can lead to emotional discussions.

Q: Can't emotions be set to the side so science and well-established rules can dictate the result?

A: That would be nice, and we hope that all participants will listen to alternative points of view and avoid escalating the rhetoric. Scientific information and analysis is a required element of our process and important to a well-informed decision. But the key questions come down to policy choices. What is the proper balance between environmental protection and property rights? How can we protect important environmental functions and values while providing options for property development? The answers to those questions don't emerge from a calculator or a rulebook. They come from a thorough, community-wide conversation.

Q: There has been considerable discussion about better coordination between the Planning Commission and the City Council. Can you fill us in?

A: In the recent Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update process, there was a feeling that communication between the Planning Commission and the City Council could have been better. The commissioners, who wrestled with the SMP first, felt that their recommendations perhaps weren't heard or valued.

And some members of the public felt like the SMP process didn't fairly take their input and concerns into account. The council was placed in an awkward position and needed to add many more opportunities for public input.

Q: Will it be better this time?

A: The city has taken a number of steps to improve communication and improve our process, and we intend



*Kamuron Gurol
Director of Community Development*

to keep those lines working as we conduct the ECA update. For example, we're going to publicize the Planning Commission's work as emphatically as possible so they receive plenty of public input. Then we're going to keep the council informed along the way, early on so they can stay up to speed on the commission's progress. And then, when the commission passes along its recommendations to the council, we'll be asking them to fold in more documentation of their thought process.

Q: So the council will better understand why the recommendations were made?

A: Right. We need as much connective tissue as possible between the commission and the council so we can build on

the commission's work rather than duplicate it. These are complex issues. Unless we're mindful, we could lose some of the analysis and value the commission will be handing off to the council.

Q: Can you give us some examples of the kind of adjustments the new ECA might contain?

A: The council has provided some direction in a list of "Known Topics," which includes considering amendments to the regulations for erosion hazard overlay areas, mitigation requirements for human-altered features and several other similar topics. We are hoping to keep the list targeted and specific, and avoid a wholesale re-write of the ECA, which would likely be expensive and push us past our deadline.

Q: Does the state Department of Ecology have to approve the changes?

A: No. Unlike the SMP, which did require approval from Ecology, the ECA is the city's call. Ecology and other agencies are available to consult with us, but the final decision rests with the City Council.

Q: What is the difference between the SMP and the ECA?

A: The SMP dealt with shoreline jurisdictional areas only, usually just the area within 200 feet of our three major lakes. The ECA covers the whole city and deals with things like wetlands and streams, landslide and other geological hazard areas, groundwater management areas and many others. Mother Nature has given us some real challenges!

Q: Do you think you'll meet your deadline and get the ECA done by the end of 2012?

A: In this job, I think only optimists survive, so I'll say yes, we'll get it done.

Turkish “Grand Bazaar” pays a visit to City Hall

Thanks to the Sammamish Arts Commission, King County’s 4Culture program, and the hard work of Turkish Americans, visitors to City Hall on Nov. 5 must have felt like they had landed in Istanbul without having to pay the airfare.

Filled with rugs, dancers, delicious foods and the costumes of Turkey, City Hall was transformed, per the event’s design, into a “Grand Bazaar” reminiscent of Istanbul’s legendary covered market.

The day-long immersion in all things Turkish was part of an ongoing Arts Commission emphasis on the celebration of all cultures, the idea being that shared experiences will encourage a sense of community among all city residents.



“Grand Bazaar” day at Sammamish City Hall.

Will you be able to “Take Winter by Storm?”

The “Take Winter by Storm” campaign encourages every family, business, and community to be prepared before devastating rains, flooding and winds threaten the Puget Sound region.

Some preparation tips include:

- Assemble an emergency kit with a battery-powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher, bottled water and three days of non-perishable food and drinking water. Store a kit at home, work and in your car.
- Stay out of the way of flood waters. Play it safe and stay out of low-lying areas during times of heavy rains. If your basement is prone to flooding, stay out of the basement until the risk of flooding has passed.
- Keep storm drains clear to prevent flooding. Don’t put grass clippings, leaves or other debris into drains, ditches, creeks, culverts, gutters or ravines. (It’s against the



law.) If you live at the base of a hill or on a cliff, ensure that drainage and retaining walls are in good shape. Preventative planting can also help reduce the chance of a mud slide or flooding.

- Maintain gutters and downspouts. Twice a year, clean your gutters and the drainage downspouts attached to your roof. Direct flows from downspouts away from your home, without discharging flows to adjacent properties.
- Get snow route information for driving and transit in advance of roads being closed.
- Do not use charcoal or a gas grill to cook indoors. Carbon monoxide can be deadly.

- Establish an out-of-area contact for family members to call should the local phone system be out of service

To be kept abreast of these tips and other storm-water information, sign up for email alerts by going to www.ci.sammamish.wa.us and clicking on the email alert icon in the upper right-hand corner of the homepage.

CITY CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Thursday, Dec. 1

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 5

Boards and Commissions Dinner,
6-8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 6

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 13

City Council Special Meeting and
Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 14

Youth Board Meeting, 6 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 19

Arts Commission Meeting, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 20

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

Wednesday, Dec. 21

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

Monday, Dec. 26

Christmas holiday
City offices closed

JANUARY

Monday, Jan. 2

New Year Holiday, City Hall closed

Tuesday, Jan. 3

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 4

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

Tuesday, Jan. 10

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

Monday, Jan. 16

Martin Luther King Holiday
City offices closed.

Tuesday, Jan. 17

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

Wednesday, Jan. 18

Youth Board Meeting., 6 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 19

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

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.

Coming soon to Sammamish City Hall: Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (EVCS)

The ribbon cutting ceremonies don't begin until Dec. 16 at 10 a.m., but a pair of electrical vehicle charging stations (EVCS) are already standing proudly in front of City Hall. Thanks to federal grants, the two EVCS and another two in City Hall's underground parking lot are just about ready for action.

"If you drive a Nissan Leaf, a Chevy Volt, or some other plug-in vehicle, this will be a great place to top off your battery," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "If you have business in City Hall, want to spend some time at the library or skate park, or plan to take a walk in the Commons, these two stations will be there for you."

The EVCS are part of both a growing market trend and a city-sponsored sustainability effort. Initially, the electricity at the charging stations will be free. At some point, however, the city will make a policy choice and set a price for service.

The two additional stations underground will be used to serve city-owned electrical vehicles.



Newly installed City Hall charging stations await the ribbon cutting.



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Mayor



Tom Odell
Deputy Mayor



Nancy Whitten
Councilmember



John Curley
Councilmember



John James
Councilmember



Mark Cross
Councilmember



Michele Petitti
Councilmember

The Sammamish Arts Commission
presents:

Tribute to Trees

Dec. 13
through
March 8
at
Sammamish
City Hall



Exhibit
available for
viewing
during normal
business hours

Featured artists:
Donna Leavitt
Cheryl A. Richey
Elizabeth Reed Smith
Jacqui Beck

For more
information,
go to
Treesinart.wordpress.com.

Jacqui Beck's "Mother Tree"

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Lyman Howard	Deputy City Manager
Kamuron Gurol	Com Dev Dir/Asst City Mgr
Joseph Guinasso	Finance Director
Laura Philpot	Public Works Director
Jessi Richardson	Parks & Rec Director
Mike Sauerwein	Admin Services Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Nathan Elledge	Police Chief
Lee Soptich	Fire Chief
Bruce Disend	City Attorney

Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
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