

FAIRGROUNDS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Executive Board
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PO Box 61731
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Greetings –

JANUARY MEETING

It is understandable if you feel like the Fairgrounds area is ground zero for growth in Clark County. It is!

The recession has slowed things down considerably. But it only means that it will take longer for planned developments to proceed. (FYI: The project to build 115 apartments on NE 179th Street at 17th Avenue has recently been approved.)

In fact, all of Clark County will experience increased growth over the next 20 years. Like me, are you wondering how we'll get around in a more densely developed community? At our January monthly meeting officials from C-Tran and the Regional Transportation Council will present their 20 year transportation plans.

THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION. Please join us Thursday at 7 pm in the meeting room at the Community of Christ at 400 NE 179th Street.

FEBRUARY MEETING

The Three Creeks planning area was created by the Board of County Commissioners. The area includes Hazel Dell, Felida, Salmon Creek, and Fairgrounds. There are 8 sub-areas where zoning will be studied and recommendations made to the BoCC to adopt.

The Discovery / Fairgrounds sub area is centered around the 179th Street interchange. The Discovery corridor is an economic development area along I-5 in north Clark county. A group of stakeholders has been looking at a variety of factors on which to base zoning changes. This meeting will be a public hearing on the proposal.

FGNA EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association is unique. We do not have elected officers. Instead, we elect members to serve on an Executive Board (EB).

When possible, the Executive Board gets your input on issues that affect us. Our first choice is via the annual member surveys we send out. Otherwise the EB gets your viewpoint from feedback at our monthly meetings. As a last resort, when it's time to speak on your behalf, the Executive Board reaches a consensus. In many cases, we rely on areas of expertise that many EB members have developed.

Our by-laws create an Executive Board with 9 members. This year 4 positions are open. Are you interested? Give one of our board members a call for more information or to be nominated.

FYI: With very rare exceptions, the Executive Board only meets monthly to prepare our newsletter for mailing. Otherwise most of our work is done via e-mail.

Sincerely,
Bridget Schwarz
for the Executive Board

FAIRGROUNDS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FAIRGROUNDS SUB-AREA PLAN

Do you use the 179th Street interchange? Do you own property in the vicinity? If so, this is important!

Jeff Niten is the county planner leading this planning process. It's time for public comment on the draft recommendation. (Contact Bridget if you want a copy of the draft e-mailed to you.) Here's the web-site: <http://www.clark.wa.gov/discovery/index.html> It includes maps with current and proposed zoning.

Our February monthly meeting is one of 2 public meetings to gather public comments. The draft proposal will then be revised as necessary before recommendations are presented to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption. Here's what Jeff wants you to know:

In September 2009 an advisory group was convened to discuss the sub-area and provide a cohesive direction for the future. The group consisted of Clark County staff, members of the community, representatives from Vancouver, Ridgefield, Battle Ground, WSDOT, development interests, the Amphitheater, and the Fairgrounds.

The Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area is located in a rural area of unincorporated Clark County between Vancouver and Ridgefield. The planning area includes approximately 2,071 acres and extends from NE 164th Street on the south to NE 209th Street in the north. The eastern boundary is NE 29th Avenue to NW 11th Avenue.

The advisory group focused initially on the abundance of residentially zoned land within the sub-area and the idea that the Discovery Corridor should be an economic development engine for Clark County.

At the intersection of NE 179th Street, NE 10th Avenue, and Interstate 5 exists substantial vacant acreage zoned for General Commercial uses. It is appropriate to retain that zoning classification in those areas. The General Commercial zone allows for restaurant development and is also the zoning classification most appropriate for a regional retail center.

Adjacent to the General Commercial area additional acreage has been proposed for Mixed Use development which adds both a commercial component as well as a residential component to encourage close proximity among working/living/shopping opportunities.

The northern half of the sub-area is currently dominated by light industrial zoning classifications. While these are potential jobs producing lands, the Advisory Group believes that due to existing environmental constraints, especially along NE 10th Avenue, would preclude many types of industrial development from taking place there.

Whipple Creek and its associated buffer would better support Office Campus and/or Business Park type development while retaining land use classifications that support and encourage the development of family wage jobs.

FAIRGROUNDS MASTER PLAN

Justin Kobluk is the Executive Director of the Clark County Event Center (www.clarkcoeventcenter.com). It's time to update the Fairgrounds Master Plan. Here's what Justin (justin.kobluk@clark.wa.gov) wants you to know.

We are in the process of finalizing an update to the existing fairgrounds Master Plan which was implemented in 2003. The Exhibition Hall, which opened in 2005, was the first phase of that plan which included six (6) other phases. The phases are designed to update the existing facilities which would make the Event Center much more attractive and viable for businesses and for hosting community events for years to come.

There are two main reasons for the Master Plan update: timing and cost. The original 2003 Master plan only had a maximum life of 5 years, which expires this year. Each developed phase could buy another 2-year option to the life of the Master Plan, but each remaining phase of the plan costs an average of \$10 Million, which in today's economic climate effectively killed all chances of moving forward. The original master Plan was due to expire before any funding could be secured to proceed with the next phase of development.

The strategy of the new updated Master Plan is to keep the same facilities and functions of the original proposed facilities, but to split up the 6 remaining phases into 24 more manageable pieces. The phases would be listed in no particular order, meaning we could develop small phases or group many together as funding allows. The new timeline would be a 10 year building plan with five 2-year options if the phases are still moving forward.

Here are answers to some common questions regarding the new Master Plan:

- 1) Are there significant changes to the planned facilities or their uses? No. Community Development has reviewed all the updated plans and finds no significant changes to the proposed uses of the facilities. The same traffic and parking would apply. A Type I Post Decision Review Applies. The new plans are just a more flexible and realistic way to get to the end result.
- 2) What are the remaining phases and facilities to be built? New livestock facilities to replace the old barns; a new food court; a small exhibition/ballroom complex to replace the old commercial buildings; new horse stall barn; and a new maintenance shop and yard. The new development would also create a new large green space / park area in the center of the grounds.
- 3) Has any of the remaining proposed phases been designed yet? No. The Master Plan is only a big-picture function to accommodate the overall square footages of development, approximate locations, and proposed business uses. The actual design of each phase will be completed when funding becomes available for each.
- 4) With more time added to the Master Plan, is the Event Center grandfathered where they can use old building codes and requirements, such as storm water, which may have changed or strengthened over time? No. Each phase still needs to qualify for the requisite permits at the time they are designed and submitted for permit and approval. All current and future building codes would apply.
- 5) Why not just let the Master Plan lapse and start over when funding becomes available? If starting over from scratch, it would take hundreds of thousands of dollars to be spent on required studies, such as concurrency and water management, which have already been studied, submitted and approved for our business plan. Since we are not proposing to change our business plan, this would be a huge waste of time and money.

I hope this helps clarify the details surrounding the update of the Event Center Master Plan. It is our goal that we continue to develop into a very versatile complex to host a wide array of professional shows and community events. We have been a great community asset for over 50 years in this location and we look forward to a plan that will get us to the next 50.

Please let me know if you have any questions or any ideas regarding the development of our Master Plan. We welcome any and all ideas.

FAIRGROUNDS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

WSU-V PARKING RESTRICTIONS

The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) have approved parking restrictions around the WSU-V campus. The homeowners involved overwhelmingly signed a petition requesting a No Parking area in front of their homes. Signs will be posted for no parking from 7 am to 7 pm Monday through Thursday and 7 am to 3 pm on Friday, except holidays. The BoCC instructed staff to look into permit parking for the homeowners.

These parking restrictions will likely create a Whack-a-mole situation. The students will just park a little farther from the campus to avoid the parking fee (which is as low as \$11 a month). In that case those impacted homeowners can consider expanding the restricted parking to their streets.

To be a good neighbor, why doesn't WSU-V just allow free parking on their campus? They can't - unless they revise or delete a state law (WAC 504-19).

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FGNA January 14 meeting Public Transportation

7 pm @ Community of Christ meeting room, 400 NE 179th ST

What will the traffic picture look like our neighborhood in 20 years? Staff from C-Tran and the Regional Transportation Council will meet with us this month to talk about it. We'll discuss C-Tran service levels, bus rapid transit, high capacity corridors, light rail, Park & Rides etc. Future plans for service to the Legacy Salmon Creek Hospital and the WSU-V campus are also important to consider.

FGNA February 11 meeting Discovery / Fairgrounds sub-area plan

7 pm @ Community of Christ meeting room, 400 NE 179th ST

How will the area around the 179th Street freeway interchange develop? We'll hear details about the proposed sub-area plan. Regardless of which land uses are adopted, the development of the area will impact all of us. More than our regular monthly meeting, this is a public hearing. Your feedback is vital!

FGNA March, April, May meetings Board of County Commissioner

7 pm @ Community of Christ meeting room, 400 NE 179th ST

On March 11 our guest will be board chair Steve Stuart, April 8 we'll have commissioner Marc Boldt, and on May 13 our District 1 representative Tom Mielke will attend.

FGNA monthly meetings Second Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM Community of Christ meeting room, 400 NE 179th ST

Do you have a topic to discuss or a speaker you want us to invite? Lots of folks want to come talk to us – who do you want to invite? Contact Vicki Fitzsimmons via e-mail at vicki.fitzsimmons@edwardjones.com or call her at 360.573.6604 with your suggestions.

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2009 FGNA EXECUTIVE BOARD

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GENERAL MEETINGS:

WE MEET at 7 PM ON SECOND THURSDAYS AT THE COMMUNITY of CHRIST MEETING ROOM
400 NE 179TH STREET, 1/2 MILE WEST OF I-5

OUR BOUNDARIES :

NORTH: 219th Street WEST: Lake River EAST: NE 72ND Avenue
SOUTH: *West of I-5*, NW 151st Street to NW 41st Avenue to 164TH Street; *East of I-5*, NE Kline Rd to NE 119TH Street
to Salmon Creek to NE 50TH Avenue to NE 149TH Street to NE 72ND Avenue.

The fine print:

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