

HAPPY VALLEY NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

“We do what we can”

www.happyvalleyna.com

SPRING 2018

Hello Happy Valley Neighbors, Last quarter, the Happy Valley (HV) Board gave me the duty and honor of becoming editor of the Happy Valley Quarterly newspaper, taking over the position that Aaron Walters has held and served so well. Thank you, Aaron, for your past quarterlies and for teaching me some necessary tricks.

Getting Submissions

Aaron warned me it would not be easy to get submissions. Indeed, it has been quite an effort to get the neighborhood to voluntarily present their ideas in short essay form. So, I started an email chain -- a recent debate of the latest neighborhood concerns -- all neighborhoods in Bellingham as well as all over our debating country: **To Yimby or To Nimby** (Yes in My Back Yard or No in My Back Yard -- does the neighborhood want detached dwelling units Yes or No?). There is nothing like starting an argument to get people to write. HVNA had been working on Yimby grants for the past two years. Then, the online news outlet, *Northwest Citizen*, printed an article opposing DDU (Detached Dwelling Units) authored by Richard Conoboy, “...” We HV

board members quickly became aware of people opposed to the idea voted on by the majority of members attending a meeting supported. In addition, Conoboy has critiqued Wendy Sherrer’s Yimby efforts. Yes, Wendy Scherrer who placed so much of her efforts in making Padden Creek healthy for our NW salmon again as well as less dangerous to flooding. Ms. Scherrer actively supports Yimby. Other citizens in Bellingham Neighborhoods do not. The same is true throughout the country. This issue gives perspectives of the two points of views.

My Job,

My job of HV newspaper editor is to present some of the many opinions of all HV residents. Hopefully my own opinions will present fair perspectives of everyone.

Editor’s Opinion

As an editor I am allowed to present my opinion and would like to say that preserving trees and vegetation is my greatest concern. Unfortunately, neither Yimby nor Nymby has a strict enough protection for trees and/or bushes that need to be maintained. So the question for me is which policy will most protect the area from more global warming?

Southside Community Meals

Building community, one meal at a time

The Happy Valley Neighborhood Association and Our Saviour's Lutheran Church to provide a monthly “homemade” meal to meet neighbors, listen to music, and share food. **1720 Harris Avenue**

DATES: Sundays—Feb, Mar 18, Apr 15, May 20 **TIME: 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm**

FOOD DONATED BY: Haggens

Fairhaven, Great Harvest, Avenue Bread

The Southside Food Bank

LOCATION: Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church, is located at Hillcrest Chapel (1400 Larrabee Ave.), and serves those in need of food help on the first and third Thursdays of the month. Their hours are 10 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. Call [\(360\) 733-8400](tel:3607338400) for more information.

Upcoming Events February

March 19 – Southside Community Meal. Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church (1720 Harris Ave.). 5pm – 6:30pm

April 16 – Southside Community Meal. Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church (1720 Harris Ave.). 5pm – 6:30pm **28** –

YIMBY/HVNA evening of neighborly films. Firehouse PAC (1314 Harris Ave.).

The film: “A Man Called Ove.” FREE! 6:30pm **29** – YIMBY/HVNA

workshop on housing/infill in Happy Valley.

Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church (1720 Harris Ave.). 9am – 4pm

From the Neighborhood HV Rep—

Ray Dellecker

Hi HVNA board members,

I attended the monthly MNAC meeting last night. Here’s what happened:

1. Presentation by Terra Sundin, COB Community Development, on the waterfront project. Discussions are underway concerning possible realignment of the park that will go through the Harcourt part of the site. The Waypoint Park next to the Granary is under **construction** now. There will be a total of 33 acres of park in the entire project. Lot of attention is being paid to easy access and integration with downtown. After the Granary Building, Harcourt plans to construct 3 buildings along the waterway with first floor retail and upper-story residential. Terra said City will require 10% affordable housing.
2. Rick Sepler, Planning Dept Manager spoke on short-term rentals like airbnb in the city. City estimates 307 such units currently operating. Proposed regulations being studied now including no ADUs to be used for STRs.
3. Neighborhood roundtable. I stated that HV is proceeding with the city on the DADU pilot project and that we have started work on YIMBY2. I also

asked if city funds can be made available to help pay for street trees; mayor's office will investigate and reply. As we went around the table, 6 of the neighborhood reps expressed concern or opposition to the D-ADU ordinance (South Hill, South, Samish, York, Birchwood, and Edgemoor). The general theme of opponents was that this is a massive re-zone. Anne Mackie handed out a letter addressed to the Planning Commission and signed by 300 people expressing their opposition. (I noticed that Councilman Borneman is one of the signers.). After the meeting, Mayor Linville expressed appreciation to HV for our work in this area despite the animosity.

Other announcements:

- **Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center has a WCF grant to provide services to neighborhoods. Contact Addie Candib, outreach@whatcomdrc.org, 360-676-0122, x115.**
- **City is hiring a retail strategist to work on improving downtown vitality.**

Ray D.

2018 Happy Valley Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

Officers	Name	Email and Address
President		
Vice President	Hue Beattie	beattiehue@gmail.com
Treasurer	Bobbi Vollendorf	bobbi2@q.com
Secretary	Monica Aebly	flamingboaryear@yahoo.com
At Large Mayors Neighborhood Advisory Comm. Rep	Ray Dellecker	rdellecker@gmail.com
At Large Campus Community Coalition Rep	Richard Sullivan	rlquade@juno.com
At Large	Jim Spaich	jspaich@yahoo.com
At Large	Aaron Walters	runaaronrun@gmail.com
At Large	Kate Nichols	katennichols@yahoo.com
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At Large	Barbara Perry	annieceis@gmail.com
At Large	Alex McLean	felixian@comcast.net
At Large	Jake Charlton	JakeCharlton@gmail.com
At Large	Sam Lockwood	Lockwoos@premier1.net
At Large	Shovia Muchirawehondo	2shovia@gmail.com

2018 HVNA Committees

- **NEWSLETTER**--Barbara Perry, Editor
- **MEMBERSHIP**--Sam Lockwood
- **HVNA WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA**--Jake Charlton
- **TREES & TRAILS**--John Hymas, Jake Charlton, Asko Hamalainen
- **SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY MEAL**--Wendy Scherrer, Susy Hymas, Kate Nichols, Asko Hamalainen, Kevin Sullivan
- **HOUSING/YIMBY 2 Build Small Live Large**--Wendy Scherrer, Kathy Hasenjaeger, Monica Aebly, Rose Lathrop, Mark Schramer, Shannon Maris
- **PADDEN CREEK ALLIANCE**--John Hymas, Hue Beattie, Richard "Sully" Sullivan, Kim Clarkin, Wendy Scherrer, Dale McKinnon

Shortened Synopsis of of Feb 8 HV Quarterly Meeting:

Bellingham Police Chief David Doll

Crime rates have generally been getting lower overall. An example given was in 2016 there were 0 homicides; however, in 2017 homicides were up to 4. Narcotics arrests have declined.

Chief Doll praised his department for requiring De-escalate Training so officers can reduce Mental Health problems. He proudly stated that Bellingham has better training to de-escalate situations than the Seattle Police Department.

Referring to the homeless, the department no longer does "sweeps." The officers sometimes must evacuate homeless people but do **now** allow the homeless to collect their belongings, receive mental health, and be given advice about finding a home.

A homeless man down the rail road tracks from Post Point has been living in a remote area for years.

Public Works Update by Craig Mueller:

In February, a 14 inch water main installed in 1926 will be replaced with a 16" pipe. There are likely to be Donovan St. road closures. The project will begin in February and take probably a couple months. Citizens may check on-line for improvements to their drinking water at:

https://www.cob.org/Documents/pw/lw/CCR_2017_web.pdf

Shannon Marris is a HVNA member and has presented two one-hour sessions at YIMBY Happy Valley conference last March 29 on our Pilot Project.

In reference to the 70% lot coverage maximum that is presently code for single family residential lots and referenced in my review of the HVNA D-ADU Planning staff & PC recommendations.... here are the references and details

[360-676-185](tel:360-676-185)

*Land Use Code for Single Family Development

<http://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Bellingham/?Bellingham20/Bellingham20.html>

*20.30.040 Standard development regulations.

D. Open Space. A minimum of 30 percent of the site area shall be reserved as private open space.

*20.08.020 Specific definitions.

"Open space" means land which is free of buildings or impervious surfacing.

<http://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Bellingham/?Bellingham20/Bellingham20.html>

Here are the planning codes for multi-family:

*Land Use Code for Multi-Family Development

<http://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Bellingham/?Bellingham20/Bellingham20.html>

Project Neighborly - YIMBY Happy Valley YIMBY Happy Valley (YIMBY = Yes In My Backyard) is an idea that some of our Happy Valley Neighborhood Association (HVNA) Board has been working on, with the goal to promote smaller, more affordable housing infill within our neighborhood. HVNA was one of thirty local organizations that received a grant from the Whatcom Community Foundation. The grant was targeted for projects to increase connections, build trust among area residents, and develop a sense of community and promote neighborliness.

YIMBY Happy Valley, contact Wendy Scherrer bluegreen.northwest@gmail.com or 715-2993

Images of HV Residents

Richard Sullivan who lives adjacent to Padden Creek:

"I saw a Great Blue Heron with orange legs and a bald eagle in nearby trees that I had never seen before."

Johnny Hymas,

"A Barn Owl landed in a tree right beside my window and stared at us through our window for a long time. I hope no one uses any rat poison. That stuff kills any poison that kills the rats. If we want to keep those owls, we better find alternative ways of killing rats."

Barbara Perry, The Barn Owl landed on the telephone wire and sat there long enough for the entire family with grandkids coming out of the house as well as others walking by to see it on the wire.

Barbara Perry,

"First Wild Spring Flower"

On the day before Ground Hog's day, February 1, 2018, the rain drenched the slippery walkways, the wind blew too fast for hats to stay on heads, most Southside Happy Valley residents sanely dressed in their best gear. Myself, physically challenged, decided to stay indoors, near heat and a typewriter-- hoping for inspiration. Then, on this too typical Northwest Day, in the afternoon, the sun came out and stayed out for more than a few minutes.

I grabbed my coat and sun hat and hopped on my scooter to feel the oxygenated air and breathe deeply. Maybe I would discover a gift from nature. While on my way up the last hill around the block, came running a young HV school boy, Dean Perry. He stopped and then bent down to find and pick the first wild flower of spring that I had ever seen. Dean pulled a few tiny lavender/pink flowers, said he would take them home, place them in water, and eventually plant them.

This flower of spring is a better fortune than a Ground Hog, I thought. My Lenora Ct., botanist friend, Muriel Keil, didn't identify the flower, but noted what a wonderful sign that spring is on its way.

Street Trees

by John Hymas

On January 26, 2016, Happy Valley Neighborhood Association volunteers continued our commitment to enhancing our urban forest by planting six street trees at 510 & 511 Larrabee Ave. It went quickly and efficiently on a weekday. Since 1999 we have planted trees on a Saturday, but due to frozen ground we were forced to put these trees in at a weather break. Planting veterans showed up and all went well. Five Norwegian Sunset Maples (*Acer platanoides* X *Truncatum* 'Keithsform' and one Snakebark maple (*Acer tegmentosum*) were planted, staked and mulched.

If cared for, these trees will out-live us all. They will enhance our local environment in many ways: beauty; biodiversity; habitat; climate moderation; storm water retention; and traffic moderation. The benefits of trees in the urban environment are being discovered daily and every new revelation suggests the more the better. Big thanks to Jeni, Kerry, Asko, Kevin, Bobbi and Prentiss for an organized and efficient job. We had fun too.

As our mature urban canopy is removed as the trees age out, or more commonly are removed due to development, it is important to replace these trees for future generations. All too often mature trees are removed for shallow reasons – “Messy, clog my gutters, view issues, they might get into my water or sewer lines, or they make too much shade”. These issues can be resolved oftentimes, and trees retained. Ideally, trees considered for removal would be inspected and evaluated for health and hazard potential by a certified expert before condemnation.

We really need a street tree pruning work party this winter during the dormant season. The trees the Neighborhood Association has planted over the years are our responsibility to maintain. We've done well so far, but the trees are growing and sidewalk and street clearance issues need to be addressed. A gang of volunteers twice a year keeps the mail, garbage and delivery truck drivers happy. I will send out a date and time soon. We have fun too.

If you are interested in joining any of our work parties or would like to plan on street trees for next fall, give me a call (714-9460). If renewing your HVNA annual dues or starting new, consider adding a few bucks toward our street tree fund.

Stay tuned for announcements on periodic street tree puning work crews. Any questions? Call me at 360-714-9460 or e-mail at: jhymas1331@gmail.com

Acts of creation are ordinarily reserved for gods and poets. To plant a pine, one only own a shovel” -- Aldo Leopold

NYMBY

Another Opinion

My name is Bobbi Vollendorff. I live in Happy Valley and have lived here for over thirty five years. I've been a member of the Happy Valley Neighborhood Association for almost that same amount of time, and am the current treasurer of our neighborhood association. I'm writing to protest what I've witnessed these last three years in Happy Valley and in the city of Bellingham.

I've seen one of Bellingham's strongest and most vibrant neighborhoods co-opted by a splinter group of politicians and developers with plans to open our neighborhoods to increased, even unlimited, density, and therefore decreased livability.

How did it happen? Happy Valley is Bellingham's largest neighborhood with just over seven thousand people. Only ten out of the neighborhood's 7,000 residents attended a board meeting that discussed opening Happy Valley to detached accessory dwelling units. One of our board members had a friend with a client that wanted to build a detached ADU in the Valley, and she asked us to "get on board" – with the now completely-disproven idea that detached ADUs mean more housing and more housing would – inevitably – mean cheaper housing. Solve the housing crisis! Wonderful!

Some of my fellow board members are well-meaning people, community-minded people. But it was clear to me then – as it is even more clear to me now – that the main reason for the popularity of allowing Detached Accessory Dwelling Units was that people were seeing dollars signs – their eyes lighting up, not about housing the less fortunate, but fantasizing about income streams that would flow from the AirBNB dollars of short-term rentals. Even good well-meaning people love the gig economy, right? And what can't people do in an attached ADU (which are approved for all zoning areas) as easily as they can in a Detached ADU-----well rent it out as a short term cash cow because we know there will be no enforcement from the City.

In my neighborhood – Happy Valley – 10 people voted to allow detached accessory dwelling units in Happy Valley with no baseline data. Yes, a tiny group of 10 people made a decision that affects a neighborhood of over 7,000. There was almost no attempt even made to actually inform others in the neighborhood of said effort. The meeting minutes go out to approximately 120 people. And now, with close to nothing in the way of neighborhood input or oversight, 5 of the 7 people on our city's planning commission want to take away the rights of all single families in all single family neighborhoods to maintain the livability and quality of life in their own neighborhoods. Maybe you think this is ok, I do not.

And Happy Valley is no longer just *one neighborhood* serving as a test case, or a trial period to evaluate a plan which will benefit only a few.

No. It is something else. That something else is a gateway, an open door to developers, real estate flippers, and profiteers of every persuasion. Welcome to our neighborhoods. Grab that Urban Infill Toolkit to seize the opportunity. Bring your backhoes and tear out the trees, run them loud. Loud enough to drown out the voices of the neighborhoods, the voices of those other 6,990 people who actually live in Happy Valley, in Sehome, in York, and Birchwood, the people who have a stake in what happens there. These people want and deserve a say in how their neighborhood communities are dealt with.

But who is listening? Contact members of the Bellingham City Council to weigh in on this matter as the final decision rests with them. Bobbi Vollendorf

Join the Happy Valley Neighborhood Association!

- Receive copies of “Happy Valley Neighborhood News”, a newsletter for and by your neighbors
- Be part of a phone and e-mail tree to be informed when projects are proposed
- Meet your neighbors and make new friends at Neighborhood meetings
- Protect and improve the neighborhood environment by working on projects and issues

Name: _____ Phone: _____ email _____

Address: _____

- Put me on an email list to be notified about development proposals in the neighborhood
- I'd like to help out on neighborhood work parties
- I'd be willing to serve on the Happy Valley Neighborhood Association Board or a committee
- Other ideas or concerns _____

- Please include \$10.00 for annual membership. Make checks out to HVNA
- Feel free to donate more to help with printing and other costs!

The Happy Valley Neighborhood Association publishes this newsletter quarterly for the residents of Happy Valley in Bellingham, Washington. We are a non-partisan, non-profit organization committed to promoting the quality of life in our neighborhood. To pay membership dues or purchase advertisement space, mail payments to HVNA, 1050 Larrabee Ave, Suite 104, PMB 402, Bellingham WA 98225, or contact Ray Dellecker at rdellecker@gmail.com

**The neighborhood Association would like to hear from you! Send your stories, poems, art, etc. to Aaron Walters, Editor:
2696 Donovan Ave
Bellingham, WA 98225
runaarunrun@gmail.com
The deadline for the next newsletter is April 1st.**