

# COUNCIL RETREAT RECAP

*February 3-5, 2011 • Suncadia, Cle Elum, WA*

## **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3**

### **General Discussion**

Council discussion was informal, focusing on relationships and roles between Council members and City staff.

## **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

### **Community and Aquatic Center**

Parks and Recreation Director Jessi Richardson presented information on the community and aquatic center project including the pending feasibility study, a recap of recent facility tours, and a summarized project timeline. Past community surveys indicate that Sammamish citizens do want a community center. The next step in the process is to define program and service needs.

The project timeline was reviewed. It is anticipated that the feasibility study will be completed sometime in June or July of this year. If a decision is made to proceed with the project, design and permitting is estimated to take another 12 months, followed by construction. Overall, the City is looking at a three to four year process to complete the community and aquatic center project.

The first step—a feasibility study—will include an analysis of stakeholder needs and wants, staff and agency needs, site resources, local history and knowledge, national and regional trends, project budgets, and costs. This work will also include an in-depth market analysis to assist the Council in identifying the appropriate balance of amenities and programs.

The public process and public outreach strategy is a key component of the feasibility study. Some questions considered during the process will include:

- What is the unsatisfied need in the community that the City is looking to fill?
- What is the community vision for programs and services?
- What type of facilities do we need to support this vision?

Answers to these questions will be defined during the public process using a variety of tools including community surveys, public meetings, focus groups, and discussion groups. During the

discussion Council also expressed its desire to reach beyond the “usual public meetings” to gather input from citizens that the City doesn’t normally hear from.

Some ideas were suggested including email updates, attending PTA meetings, inserting information in school newsletters, working with both the Lake Washington and Issaquah School District Foundations, soliciting information at the Farmers Market and the 4<sup>th</sup> on the Plateau events, webinars, meetings held during the day, etc. Other groups that should be contacted include churches, youth groups, service clubs, and homeowner associations.

Ms. Richardson provided an introduction to a construction process being considered for this project: General Contractor/Construction Manager (GC/CM). The GC/CM process allows for a collaborative approach between the owner, the architect, and the general contractor. In summary, the general contractor is hired during the design phase and works alongside the other two parties. This relationship helps minimize costly change orders, identify early opportunities for value-engineering, and establish a relationship whereby construction risks are shared. There is a fee associated with the GC/CM approach; however, more often than not, these fees are offset by the savings realized during construction.

To utilize the CG/GM process, the City must seek approval from the State of Washington General Administration Department. This requires submittal of an application, staff training on the GC/CM process, coordination with a GC/CM consultant, and secure funding. Ms. Richardson noted that she was introducing the GC/CM concept now so that the Council is aware of the various deadlines and, in particular, the requirement for funding to be secure.

Ms. Richardson concluded the first part of her presentation by reminding Council of a few critical milestones. The contract for the Feasibility Study will be presented to Council for consideration and approval on March 1. A project kick-off with the Parks Commission is scheduled for March 9. Finally, Council was reminded that it needs to reduce the list of potential project sites to three by April 1 if the Feasibility Study is to remain on schedule.

Finance Director Lyman Howard presented a brief overview of the available funding sources for a Community and Aquatic Center including tradition funds and alternative funds. Traditional funding sources include taxes, user fees, levy lid lift, etc. Examples of alternative funding sources include grants, donation, and partnerships—either single party or multi-agency. Potential partnerships could be established with private businesses, schools, and/or nonprofits.

Mayor Gerend presented a financing option that could potentially fund the construction of the facility with minimal impact to the City’s budget. The City currently collects 0.5% REET (real estate excise tax) on the sale of real estate in the Sammamish. This is done by almost every other city in the state. The City can also collect up to an additional 0.5% REET under certain conditions. This would provide an additional source of money to fund capital construction costs. If the City executed the option to collect the “second half of REET,” it must cut its portion

of the general sales tax from 0.85% to 0.425%. If the City cuts its sales tax rate in half, the County will collect this money instead. Mayor Gerend's funding model calls for the County to agree to return the sales tax money to the City. The argument to be made here is that the new facility would be regional in nature, serving many King County members. Mayor Gerend proposed that the approximately \$20 million of the capital construction debt could be retired over time using the second half of REET and the funding model described above.

The final element of the presentation included a recap of the recent facility tours provided by Director Richardson. 20 facilities were visited both in and out of state during the months of November and December. Amenities were discussed—both pros and cons—and included:

- Aquatics: leisure pools, competition pools, combined pools, spas, family changing rooms, pool party rooms, adjacent outdoor spaces
- Gymnasiums: multi-purpose, storage needed, indoor turf fields, adequate lighting
- Aerobics/Dance Studios: multi-purpose space, storage needed, built in sound system, adjustable lighting
- Fitness Room: free weights, weight machines and cardio, specialty areas, semi-private workout area, walking/jogging track,
- Climbing/Bouldering Wall: available at all new facilities
- Child Care Room: while parent is on site (not a “drop off” facility)
- Banquet Facility: commercial kitchen/teaching kitchen for classes, room partitions for flexibility in size, multi-purpose, outdoor patio adjacent to area
- Meeting Rooms: multiple multi-purpose spaces, arts & craft spaces, senior adult room, pottery studio, teen room, game lobby, office space

### **Celebrating Successes**

Deputy City Manager Pete Butkus facilitated a brief exercise and discussion focused on major accomplishments in 2010. These included:

#### **Intergovernmental**

- Successfully integrated three new councilmembers into council retreat process at the 2010 retreat
- After opportunity for public input, the City Council voted to support various tax levies for the Issaquah School District and the Lake Washington School District
- Approved a new Interlocal Governmental Agreement for continuation of A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH)
- Held joint meetings with the Redmond and Issaquah City Councils

#### **Town Center**

- Adopted zoning for the Town Center
- Adopted development regulations
- Adopted storm water standards
- Adopted street standards

### **Community Growth/Events**

- Annexed the Aldarra-Montaine neighborhood adding 841 people to the City
- Accepted a phased donation of 51 acres of land for community use from Mary Pigott
- Supported the 2010 USGA Open at Sahalee Country Club with minimal impacts to the community
- Directed the City Manager to “surplus” property at 2004 228 Avenue SE in 2011
- In support of school spirit, re-named three streets that direct traffic to each of the high schools in the city
- Continued and expanded financial support for various social service purposes through the ECityGov mechanism
- Initiated and sustained a year-long community effort towards a Sustainability Plan, with adoption planned for early 2011

### **Capital Facility Planning, Construction & Rehabilitation:**

- Completed the East Lake Sammamish Parkway NE project
- Completed a street overlay/reconstruction program
- Completed the SE 20th Street non-motorized improvement project
- Completed the NE 20th Street traffic calming project
- Adopted a Master Plan for Beaver Lake Park
- Signed an agreement with the Boys and Girls Club to operate a youth-oriented Community Center at 825 228 Avenue NE

### **Budget**

- Completed the ultimate municipal policy document—the 2011/2012 Budget—with six months of extensive staff work, public input and Council direction.

### **City of Sammamish Work Plan**

The Work Plan is based on Council policies and the budget adopted by the Council. If Council members have questions on specific work items, they can contact the city manager or any department director for a more thorough discussion.

### **Administrative Services**

Administrative Services Director Mike Sauerwein provided an overview on potential plans for the City Hall’s second floor. The King County Sheriff’s Office is looking to locate an east precinct office in this vicinity. We are currently in discussions with them on the possibility of renting part of the second floor to accommodate their needs. A secured parking lot would also need to be provided for various vehicles. Council indicated its desire to provide access to lower commons by constructing a trail around this lot. The next step in the process is to bring a draft lease agreement to Council for its consideration.

Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Griffin outlined one potential issue—labor negotiation—that might impact the City’s fire services budget. The process has started with more formal discussions starting in May of this year.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Director Richardson indicated that a draft of the Parks PRO Plan—a component of the City’s Comprehensive Plan—will be forwarded to Council for its consideration later this year.

The first parcel of the Pigott property has been transferred to the City. There will be a “soft opening” in April or May for limited use until additional planning and improvements are complete. A limited master plan will be developed this summer. A park improvement project is expected to commence sometime in 2012. A park name will be selected this fall. Ms. Pigott identified the procedures for the name process in her transfer document. She has also expressed a desire to include the community’s children in the process.

The Boys & Girls Club permit process is moving along and is ahead of schedule. Staff anticipates the facility will open this summer as planned. The gymnasium is included in the current design and will be constructed at a later date (contingent on fundraising). Concern was expressed regarding the ingress and egress of the facility, especially since many of those accessing it will be young drivers. Public Works and Parks staffs are working on a second entrance to the facility. Council expressed its desire to communicate the progress of the Boys & Girls Club to the community in the city newsletter.

The Soaring Eagle Park 30-acre transfer from King County to the City of Sammamish is proceeding. A new ordinance will go before the County Council for its consideration. This should be complete within the next three to four months.

Sammamish Landing (waterfront park) is proceeding with the design being done in-house.

Potential property acquisition—to take place during an executive session--might be a topic of discussion at the next Council meeting.

Overall the Parks & Recreation Department is extremely busy and may need some additional resources such as hiring a consultant on a project-by-project basis.

### **Public Works**

Public Works Director Laura Philpot briefed Council on current projects including the new Maintenance and Operations facility. Completion is scheduled for March 15 with crews moving in and setting up during March and April.

At the January 11, 2011 Council meeting, staff recommended that the SE 32<sup>nd</sup> Street barricade be removed to provide connectivity. The mitigation plan and cost estimates are currently being revised. A resolution will be ready for Council's consideration at the March 1 meeting.

The 244<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE non-motorized improvements—sidewalk and bike lanes—project has a \$2 million budget. The consultant contract is scheduled to be awarded on March 1 with construction anticipated in summer 2011.

The 2011 pavement overlay contract covers approximately 170 centerline miles, 75% of which are local/residential with 25% being classified (major) streets. \$3 million is budgeted in 2011 and in 2011. Staff is proposing allocating 60% of available funding to classified streets and 40% to local streets. A map showing the preliminary project list was shared with Council. A more detailed discussion of project selections will take place in March, contract documents will be advertised in April, and the contract awarded in May.

The 2011 citywide traffic count program is currently underway. Annual data collecting is taking place in February-March and will be reviewed and compared in April with transportation model predictions. Staff will share results with Council in May.

A corridor analysis of 228<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Sahalee Way is also being undertaken. Consultant contract will be awarded in April and the results of the analysis shared with Council in June. Items that will be reviewed include left turn storage, signal timing, signal warrants and U-turn safety.

A discussion followed regarding the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). Director Philpot provided some background and described the Department of Ecology's role. A citizen advisory group has been formed to provide input, consultant selection will take place in February-March, and field investigations will be performed in the fall as water falls to the lowest level.

### **Finance & Information Technology**

Finance Director Lyman Howard commented on the past and current economic environment and its impact on the City of Sammamish. The recession caused an "economic reset" but the City is weathering it fairly well. Staffing and benefits are being reduced and crossover (the point at which expenditures exceed revenues) has moved out. There is still too much uncertainty to calculate that date; it's part of the 2011 work plan. Public safety costs remain an issue as do medical insurance costs.

The City has a new web developer who is on a steep learning curve. She is continuing the website code clean-up, segregating the appearance from the underlying functionality and working with an internal Web Committee, which will result in some new functions and a "facelift" for the site.

Live streaming of Council Meetings will soon be available as well. The web developer is also looking to bring in part-time video production help. Camera recording issues have been largely solved. The recording of Council Meetings now has redundancy with contingencies. Remote participation for traveling council members is coming soon. The hardware is installed; programming and troubleshooting is next.

Discussion followed with some suggestions such as making the site more vibrant, including events and more interactive elements like the tax calculator. The Council office hour will be included on the main calendar as well. Mr. Howard also assured Council that staff has a good backup system for both data and software.

New software for the City includes EnerGov Land Use/Permitting/Asset Management. The project is a huge undertaking that involved all departments with a fast timeline. The target date to go live is January 1, 2012. Director Lyman Howard briefed the Council on the status of Microsoft Enterprise Licensing, through which the City would obtain the most recent version and the same software to install on all computers. This provides efficiency in file sharing among staff. The City's Springbrook Financial software has also been upgraded—on time and within budget.

Other information technology issues include disaster recovery planning and data center set-up as well as other internet access. Staff is also evaluating additional broadcast redundancy and hardening. Staff is also looking at setting up an internal help desk function. Microsoft Sharepoint application will be set up and training provided to staff to better enable collaboration. Lastly, the City will be migrating to a new domain name: Sammamishwa.gov.

Director Howard made the point that a great deal of effort goes into meeting federal audit standards for grants. Major finance issues include completing a number of fiscal analyses:

- Proposed Community Center
- Future Annexations
- Water/Sewer District Merger
- Town Center
- Public Safety—Police & Fire Services
- Surface Water Rate

The department is also completing accounts receivable collection activities. The budget will be submitted to GFOA on February 11 and published thereafter.

### **Community Development**

Community Development Director Kamuron Gurol led the group through the department's 2011 work plan. He also informed Council that he is currently working on updating State SEPA legislation.

Staff is working with the Department of Ecology to obtain approval on the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The City's response to the public comments taken during Ecology's comment period was sent this week. Following its review, Ecology will either: approve the City's SMP, approve it with conditions, or disapprove it. Based on Ecology's conditions, the City will take action to amend the SMP. The Shoreline Master Program becomes effective once approved by the Department of Ecology. Key issues Ecology will be looking at are: setbacks, vegetation management areas; dock standards; Critical Area Ordinance sunset clause; non-conforming uses and public access.

Staff is currently drafting documents for Council's consideration in 2011 that address:

- Wireless Communication Facility amendments
- Transfer of Development Rights code - this will be presented to Council at its next meeting
- Sustainability Strategy
- Code Blocks #3, Electric Vehicle charging stations
- Title 23 - Code Compliance
- Accessory Dwelling Units and Cottage Housing
- Fundraising signs

Code amendment items to be started in 2011 with a 2012 completion include:

- Title 24 - Comprehensive Plan process
- Critical Areas ordinance update
- Homeless encampments

Housing strategies, adopted by Council in 2006, were also discussed with Cottage Housing being one of those mentioned. It was noted that duplexes located on corner lots with the entrances located on the different intersecting streets look like single family housing. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) were also discussed. One suggestion was to extend housing heights an additional five feet to more easily accommodate ADUs.

Other work items for the Community Development Department are:

- PRO Plan update - Parks will take the lead on this
- Transportation level of service update, impact fees if needed
- Annexations - as needed
- Wetland mitigation bank feasibility
- Permit system implementation
- FEMA documentation
- Town Center implementation
- Buildable Lands report - annual and 2012

Following the Community Development Department discussion, the City Manager emphasized the City has a very full work program and needs Council's cooperation in not adding any additional work items unless some existing items are removed.

### **Emergency Plan Update**

Deputy Director Pete Butkus stated that the Plan is in its third revision and that one of the goals is to simplify the language. He also mentioned that some provision for pets at shelters should be included. This was a lesson learned as a result of Hurricane Katrina; in some cases people could not be persuaded to go to shelters because they did not want to abandon their pets.

The lack of "real" shelters in Sammamish was discussed. Schools—the most logical place with restroom facilities and commercial kitchens—do not have backup generators, nor do area churches. In addition, schools do not allow animals on site. City Hall has a backup generator, but should be opened to the public during an emergency only as a "warming center."

The reality is that everyone in Sammamish should be adequately prepared—food, water, shelter, first aid supplies—to be on their own for at least 72 hours. Butkus stated that the updated Emergency Plan should be finished in April.

### **Town Center**

Economic considerations for the planned Town Center were reviewed. The issue of a Sammamish post office was discussed at length. Deputy City Manager Butkus presented a memorandum and proposal on retaining a federal relations person. Two suggested areas for this person to cover were Town Center infrastructure and the acquisition of a post office for Sammamish. This is being considered because what the City has done to date has not worked. The City needs a full time advocate who knows the systems to work this issue as well as others. We are competing with others for money and our issues need to be brought to the forefront. A federal relations person could be a resource in helping the City tap into existing funders who want to provide money for projects similar to ours. After considerable discussion, it was determined there was not sufficient Council support to proceed with this idea.

Examining the infrastructure first will provide the City with a better idea of what is needed. It was suggested that developers might be a good way of providing needed infrastructure in the Town Center. We should invite them to review our Town Center Plan and solicit their advice and ascertain their level of interest in the project.

Our participation in Enterprise Seattle could prove very beneficial at this point. For a modest investment, it will provide an outline of who we should target for economic development in the Town Center. This might be a first step before we approach specific developers. National League of Cities also provides a similar service to member cities: identifying what the City wants, suggesting entities/people to pursue, and providing a plan.

After further discussion, Council reached consensus that an Economic Development Ad Hoc Committee should be formed consisting of Deputy Mayor Odell, Councilmember Curley, and Councilmember James. These members will identify individuals and provide information on the City's Town Center Project.

### **Reard/Freed House**

Deputy City Manager Butkus facilitated a discussion on this historic property. Council has committed funding to this project—moving the house to a new location—but will not release it to the Sammamish Historic Society until a business plan is provided and the Society raises a minimum of \$70,000. The suggested components of a business plan were reviewed with several additional suggestions being made. This will be presented to the Sammamish Historic Society to ensure that adequate information is provided to Council before any funds are released.

Potential sites for the Freed House were also discussed: lower Sammamish Commons, Evans Creek Preserve, or the newly acquired Pigott property. Council agreed that it did not want the building placed in lower Sammamish Commons.

### **Rules of Procedure**

City Clerk Melonie Anderson provided Council information regarding current rules of procedure that should be considered and adopted. Discussion followed regarding current meeting dates and times. The City Manager will draft a document outlining the suggested times and bring that back to Council for its consideration and approval. The suggestion is that Council meets the following days:

- First Tuesday of the month                      Regular Meeting                      6:30 p.m.
- Second Tuesday of the month                      Study Session                      6:30 p.m.
- Third Monday of the month                      Regular Meeting                      6:30 p.m.
- Third Tuesday of the month                      Council Office Hours                      5:30-6:30 p.m.

If necessary, additional study sessions/special meetings could be scheduled at 5:30 p.m. with dinner being provided for Council. After approval and adoption by Council, the new schedule would be effective March 1, 2011.

### **Communications**

Tim Larson provided general information about the City's communication strategy. An email alert system is now in place, with more than 1,700 residents signed up. The hardcopy newsletter still appears to be City's broadest and best communications tool. Just over a year ago, when Tim researched the usefulness of social media by other cities and state agencies, he heard from communications colleagues that twitter, facebook and blogging were of marginal value. He will research it again this year to see if results have improved.

Following discussion, the Council agreed that the newsletter space reserved for the mayor's message should be shared with other council people from time to time. Staff recommended that community surveys continue to be used to obtain statistically valid feedback from the broader community.

### **Kellman Mansion**

Use for this property was discussed. What is the highest and best use for this property? A number of options were mentioned: wine/coffee bar, nonprofit office space, potential site for community center, leasing the property, turning it into a venue to showcase the Town Center project. Council agreed that it would be best to wait until the 228<sup>th</sup> traffic analysis has been completed before further discussions take place. The analysis is scheduled to be finished in March 2011.