ENTERPRISE/PARADISE POINT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Newsletter, March 2010

From Chairman of the Board Susan Gilbert:
We did not have an annual meeting this year since, at that time, there was not much new and we thought, in light of the economy, we should save the association some money. As it happened, the past couple of months have brought some new proposed developments going in within our association's parameters. One of these projects will adversely affect many of you so let's get to that one first:

KWRL Bus Transportation Center
The consortium of schools which comprises Kalama, Woodland, Ridgefield, and La Center has applied to the county to have a central school bus location on 20 acres on the east side of the I-5 freeway off of 31st Avenue near Paradise Park Road. If they can get the proper permits, they will purchase the land. They plan to house 100 or so buses on this property and have facilities for fueling and washing the buses as well as some administrative/maintenance offices. We have testified both to the County Commissioners and to the Ridgefield School Board that their choice of property will prove troublesome from many aspects.

First, the property is now zoned AG 20 which puts it in the rural designation. There are no services to this property – sewer and water – nor can there be any delivered.

Second, the property is considerably sloped toward the East Fork and drainage from the property goes into a stream that feeds into a fish-bearing stream flowing into the East Fork. Their buses will be housed outdoors and no amount of oil and water separators or bio-swales will prevent contamination of the stream and ultimately the East Fork.

Third, the La Center overpass is not upgraded and has no traffic lights. KWRL will be sending out and back between 60 and 100 buses per day (four trips) on to the La Center overpass. The bus drivers will also be driving to and from the site four times a day. This adds up to about 480 to 600 trips per day. For those of you who utilize that overpass, you know that traffic can be challenging during rush hours when the buses will be using La Center Road. There is no room to put a left turn lane into Paradise Park Road from the west so buses will stack up on the off-ramps from both the north and the south. During the morning rush hour, they will not be able to access La Center Road because of the stream of traffic coming up from La Center.

We have suggested to the school board that it would behoove them to look at property within the urban growth boundary of Ridgefield where they would have access to city water and sewer as well as the overpass at 269th Street that is right now being improved. Because the consortium is considering the rural land instead, they will be required to dig a well that will have to have enough fire suppression to deliver 1,000 gal/minute, which many of us who live in the area believe is doubtful! They will have to secure a perc to put in a septic tank that will serve at least 100 employees/day. Considering the hydric soils and the difficulty homeowners have had getting a perc for a single dwelling, this also seems doubtful. They only want 10 acres for their project but, because the zoning is AG 20, they must buy 20 acres. We mentioned to the school board that the taxpayers may not look kindly on the school buying more land than it needs considering the dire economic straits all our schools are in at this moment. We suggested they pencil out the cost of bringing in their own services (water, sewer) vs. locating in an area where services already exist.

Last, the 20 acres they are considering has been designated as part of the Corridor of Discovery by Clark County. Land on either side of I-5 from 179th St. to 319th Street has always been considered prime industrial land that will boost the economy of Ridgefield and La Center. Since schools do not pay taxes, this property takes away future tax money from which the Ridgefield School District would profit without having to add more students.

This project will have a public hearing down the road after they have completed all the county requirements. If this will affect you, please plan to come to the hearing and testify. Hearings examiners hear only FACTS, so we need to be sure that we present to the examiner just the facts. We have the support of the Clark/Skamania Fly Fishers group and we have contacted Friends of the East Fork as well. It is time we stopped polluting the East Fork any further. Please e-mail me your e-mail address and we will keep you posted on the hearing particulars. My e-mail address is sag2600@yahoo.com. There will not be enough time to send out flyers about the meeting. Also, please check our website at paradiseneighbors.org and we will keep you updated there.

CPU Paradise Filtration Substation

Clark Public Utilities will be constructing a water filtration substation in the same area as the bus transportation project. It will be on 5 acres on 31st Avenue just across the street from the proposed school property. They will be digging a new public well near the Woodland bottoms and pumping the water up to the filtration station. Timing for the project is not yet known.

CPU Enterprise Substation

Clark Public Utilities will also be constructing an electrical substation in the same area as the other two proposed projects at the corner of 26th Ave. and 324th Street. They have purchased five acres for the project. Timing for the project is not yet known.

Cell Tower at 5613 NW 289th Street

Cascadia/Verizon has re-applied to the county to build their 160-ft. tower on 289th Street. There will be a public hearing and we will contact you when that date has been established..

Other News

We await the appeal brought by Futurewise of Seattle and the Clark County Natural Resources Council that challenges some of the land that some of the cities want to bring into their urban growth areas.

We are grateful for some small favors – the transmission lines that Bonneville Power wants to string from Castle Rock south into Portland will not affect us in our association.

We are also being kept advised of a problem some neighbors on 289th Street are having with WSDOT allegedly utilizing a private road for ingress and egress into WSDOT's wetlands mitigation property without the owner's permission.

As you can see, our area is gearing up for growth since CPU is making its presence known in our neighborhood. We hope you will let us know of any problems you have in your immediate neighborhood. If you have any boundary disputes with neighbors, we can direct you to county mediation before your problem involves attorneys and becomes expensive.