



Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission City of Bellingham

February 16, 2022

Remote Meeting [video timestamps noted in brackets]

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Mayor Seth Fleetwood

Attendance

Present: Kathryn Rismondo (Lettered Streets), Jake Charlton (Happy Valley Alternate), Christopher Grannis (South), Louise Bjornson (Birchwood), Gordon Durham (Cornwall), Bill Liddicoet (Fairhaven), Bobbi Vollendorff (Happy Valley), Robin Thomas (Sehome), Tom Scott (York Neighborhood), Chris Roselli (WWU), Sachin Pai (Columbia), William Beer (Edgemoor), Molly Foote (Samish), John LaSpina (Cordata), Nick Kelley (Cornwall Alternative), Sheryl Russell (City Center), Michael Chrzastowski (South Hill Alternate), Annie Sorich (Sunnyland)

City Representatives: Mayor Seth Fleetwood; Janice Keller, Communications Director; Seth Vidaña, Climate and Energy Manager

MINUTES

Presentation on the Climate Action Fund [00:03:00]

Mayor Fleetwood and Seth Vidaña, Climate and Energy Manager

- Mayor Fleetwood introduced the proposal to create a Climate Action Fund, which would go to the voters in November. It is currently in the exploratory phase.
- Seth Vidaña presented on the importance of this proposed fund. The Climate Action Task Force recommended many ways for the City to take action for the climate, which this fund would help achieve.
- The City's focus is to invest in four main areas: procuring renewable energy, electrification of buildings, using electric vehicles, and preparing for inclement weather.
- The fund should be a tool for equity, especially for vulnerable populations that are affected more greatly by climate change.
- This could be done through a tax on natural gas or a property tax.
- If passed, revenue collection would begin in January 2023
- MNAC representatives had questions and comments about the following topics: cost of property taxes, shade from street trees, adding solar to public buildings, assessed housing values, consequences of increasing electricity use on the grid, Biomass, cost of converting from natural gas to electric, what percent of the money will be used for trees or for other parts of the project, stopping tree loss, how this will affect rental properties vs. owned properties, backup for when the power goes out, battery backup power, connecting this discussion with the housing discussion, enforcing current ordinances, solar sharing, and how to get more solar in Bellingham.

Neighborhood Round Table [01:24:00]

- **York**

Question about if the small and simple grant program will continue through the year. Treasurer of York neighborhood received a phishing email. Annual membership meeting coming up this month. Earth Day celebration will be held on 23rd of April. Tree map is being updated.
- **South**

Chuckanut Community Forest master plan is underway. Two bridges needed to be fixed on Chuckanut Creek. One was fixed quickly; neighborhood is wondering when the next one will be fixed.
- **WWU**

WWU has a food pantry for students. It also has professional clothing for students to borrow if anyone has any to donate. Mask mandate will continue through winter quarter. Housing fair on March 3rd. There will be many events related to Black History Month.
- **Columbia**

Interested in getting bike and pedestrian safety prioritized.
- **Happy Valley**

Elections were held at the last meeting, exponential increase of attendance at Zoom board meetings. Neighborhood is engaged with the 27th street right-of-way.
- **Edgemoor**

Partnered with SSC for developing a streamlined waste management system.
- **Fairhaven**

Elections will be held next month. Million Trees Project presented to the neighborhood last month. A new development on Donovan Avenue has created concerns about the sidewalk. Plant and tree sale will be held on March 26th from 10-3.

 - Mayor Fleetwood and Janice Keller provided information about a public engagement process in the upcoming months for an update to the 2012 pedestrian master plan.
- **Samish**

Not much going on, but watching City View closely.
- **Sehome**

Annual membership meeting next week. Setting up to do an Easter Egg Hunt, yard sale, and Halloween dog parade. Interested in the pedestrian master plan update.
- **Cordata**

Combined annual and community meeting in January. The neighborhood has a goal to get a library in North Bellingham.
- **Birchwood**

Interested in the Park Ambassador program. Neighborhood meeting will be held in March. International Festival will be held in summer.
- **Cornwall**

Installation has begun on two benches in Broadway Park.
- **City Center**

Safety Ambassador program is in the works for downtown, residents are excited about it. The Wine Walk will be returning in May. Downtown Sounds will also be starting again this year July 6th – August 3rd. People are concerned about the situation on State Street.

- **South Hill**
Nothing to report but will spread the information about the Climate Action Fund at the next neighborhood meeting.
 - **Sunnyland**
Appreciative of the flexibility on small and simple grant funds. Thinking of doing an Earth Day planting event. Lt. Claudia Murphy will be presenting at their next meeting.
 - **Lettered Streets**
Had to push back annual meeting and elections. Had a meeting with a group of students about the Picket House and the community's experience with it. Interested in the Parberry development.
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Future Topics for Discussion [02:07:00]

The following topics were brought up for future discussion:

- Chris Comeau to talk about the Bike and Pedestrian master plan
 - Trees in Bellingham and the Urban Forestry Master Plan
 - Library updates
 - Parks Ambassadors
 - Parberry development updates
 - A bill in Olympia that would eliminate single-family zoning
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Meeting Adjourned by Mayor Seth Fleetwood at 8:45 p.m.