

Kate Blystone - The Population Prediction Crap-shoot

From: <chairkathy@birchbayinfo.org>
To: "Whatcom County Council" <council@co.whatcom.wa.us>, "Plan.Commish. WhatcomCnty." <rboxx@co.whatcom.wa.us>, "Pete Kremen" <pkremen@co.whatcom.wa.us>
Date: 10/2/2009 9:56 AM
Subject: The Population Prediction Crap-shoot
CC: "David Stalheim" <DStalhei@co.whatcom.wa.us>, "Doralee Booth" <doralee@earthlink.net>, "Lisa Guthrie" <Lisag@homesteadnw.com>

October 2, 2009

To: Whatcom County Council
 Whatcom County Planning Commission
 Whatcom County Executive

From: Kathy Berg, Birch Bay

RE: The Birch Bay UGA

We in Birch Bay know that as much as 50% of our area is wetland; the Year 2000 census told us that 51% of our housing stock is seasonally occupied; and nobody, officially or anecdotally, knew until the Year 2000 census came out that Birch Bay had grown by 87% in permanent population since the 1990 census. On Oct. 1st, 2009, the Planning Commission asked PDS staff to draw the Birch Bay 20-year population prediction UGA boundary lines as if growth predictions were an exact science. It is not and it certainly is not in the case of Birch Bay.

It is imperative that Birch Bay plan well its inevitable growth for the health and welfare of the people and the environment.

Birch Bay needs two things from it's government, Whatcom County, at this time.

#1. To be allowed to develop a new and better way to do land use planning:

- on a watershed scale,
- informed by the land itself and the best available science,
- recognizing that one-size-does-**not**-fit-all when dealing with wetlands,
- within the existing UGA boundaries of 2004 unencumbered by "provisional" or "reserve" zoning,
- over the next 4 years,
- with \$443,736 provided by the US EPA,
- with Whatcom County providing \$89,130 in staff time (AB2008-360),
- based upon the Birch Bay Watershed Characterization and Watershed Planning Pilot Study dated October 2007, and
- with the contributions of an alphabet soup of State and Federal environmental agencies
- to develop the best management practices

to protect shellfish in all its ramifications, the ultimate goal of the Birch Bay community.

#2. Enough flexibility for a potential city to develop a viable, diversified and sustainable economic base within the constraints of a fragile environment.

Please, we don't need to reinvent the wheel in Birch Bay. We need to continue the sound vision and direction provided in the Birch Bay Community Plan of 2004, make only those changes that will improve that Plan and we must continue and sustain the implementation process.