We are happy to report that the Hunts Point Road concrete portion of the road is complete. We are now installing walking paths, gravel parking pockets, and cinder shoulders made of a cinder top soil mix, which will be planted with grass. The irrigation and new landscaping at the stop sign will be installed in October and November, thus completing the project.

Special thanks to Jack McKenzie for an excellent job in administering the LID Financing and Construction Project. We appreciate everyone’s patience through the construction, and there were amazingly few complaints. The Town Administrator, The Town Engineer, and Landscape Architect Susan Black, worked diligently to obtain our goal of 100% satisfaction for each and every resident.

There were some change orders from the original LID estimate. The council elected to extend the new road to the tip of the point, rather than stopping at the asphalt portion at 4200. We also encountered soft clay material that needed to be removed, and we added a cinder/top soil based shoulder material that will be planted in grass, as a safety measure to provide a path off the road for pedestrians, strollers, and children’s bicycles. This recommendation was sent in by Eagle Scout candidate, Hal Wright.

We have had an unexpectedly strong year of home sales on Hunts Point Road this year, and those extra excise tax revenues will be used to pay for the LID change orders. The residents of the LID will be billed for the original budget LID amounts, early next year. The residents can pay it off in a lump sum amount, or finance the LID over 10 years at municipal bond interest rates. The tax-free Municipal Bonds which are sponsored by Bank of America, and are guaranteed by The Town, will be first offered for sale to the LID residents. Once again, thank you for your patience. The barriers will soon be down, and the landscaping will take hold.

Thanks to Jeff Wright, Jeri Boetcher, Jim Nordstrom, the entire Hunts Point Road Committee, and the Town Council for orchestrating such a successful public project.
Burglaries in Hunts Point

We live in a beautiful community, but our neighborhood has unfortunately become the target of several burglaries. Without causing undue concern, we warn you to be cautious in locking your house, your mailbox, and in setting your alarm systems. It can happen to anyone; it just happened to Molly and I.

After a quiet summer, September was not a good month for burglaries in Hunts Point. There were three burglaries in Fairweather Basin, and one mid way down Hunts Point Road. A home for sale on the market, was vacant, but professionally staged with furniture, a Plasma TV, and a wine collection. All contents of the home were stolen.

Another family had a new Mercedes locked in their garage with the key in the ignition. The car was stolen. Within an hour, the owners notified Mercedes Benz, who remotely turned off the car with an On-Star type system. The burglars fled and the car was quickly recovered by the onboard G.P.S. system. The car was not damaged.

The third burglary was our new home on Fairweather Place. We had gone to dinner at a neighbor’s house, and unfortunately did not set our alarm, as we were unfamiliar with our new system. The burglars took the standard items, a flat screen TV, computers, electronics, all jewelry, credit cards, sporting goods, and 39 other items that we know of. These burglars are brash, quick, and professional. Nine homes in the Fairweather Basin neighborhood have been hit in the past 18 months. Prior to that, there hadn’t been a burglary in 17 years.

As of this writing, these burglars have not been caught, however, we have photo images of a suspicious car from the new traffic circle cameras, and the police have a surveillance photo and birth date of a woman using my wife’s credit card at a Lowe’s and Rite Aid store. These burglaries all appear to be the same and we hope to catch someone soon. I wish I had taken my own advice, but I recommend everyone take precautions, including:

1. Understand and use your alarm system all day and all night, especially in the early evening, and set it when you are in the home during the day.
2. Alarm windows, and put a dowel in the track of windows and sliding glass doors.
3. Lock your cars in your garage. Take all valuables and credit cards out of your cars.
4. Immediately report any suspicious activity by calling 911. We often hear about good leads hours or days after a robbery.

Based on these events, the Town Council authorized expansion and upgrading of the Town’s Video Surveillance System at the Traffic Circle. The Town and Police will do what we can, but it is each resident’s individual responsibility to secure themselves. It doesn’t take much of a slip up to get hit, and as many know, it is a frightening and violating experience. We hope to report the apprehension of this crime ring in the next few weeks.

50th Anniversary DVD and Book

With this year being the 50th Anniversary of the Town of Hunts Point, we are producing a DVD and a book on The History of Hunts Point. One of our residents, Fanni Li, a professional filmmaker, is producing the DVD, and Sarah Decker, a Seattle Pacific University graduate, is producing the book. The DVD and book will be released at the OSL Fall Feast, and then they will be sent to all residents of The Town. We are asking for a $20 voluntary donation to help cover the production costs.
Planning Commission Projects

We are extremely proud of the accomplishments of the Planning Commission, under the leadership of Chairman Larry Williams. They have made substantial progress on several projects this past year. Bruce Swenson and Alan Blueschell have recently completed the Town’s Emergency Preparedness Plan. This plan has real meaning after seeing the recent hurricane disasters.

The Planning Commission is also evaluating the R20A zoning code changes, now that a few new homes have been built. We want to insure that the code is producing the intended results, and we may tweak the code based on input from residents, builders, and architects. Larry Williams and Rob Trickett are leading the R20A effort. Overall, we are very pleased with the revitalization trends on Hunts Point Circle.

The R20A Committee is also evaluating the feasibility of an LID for a privately funded sound wall along SR520. The costs would be allocated according to benefit of residents within 2500 feet of the freeway.

Building Department

The Town sublets all of its building department functions. The McAndrews Group had served The Town extremely well for the past seven years. This firm was recently sold, and The Town has selected a new Building Department firm, Huit-Zollars, which has wide experience and an excellent reputation.

The change will be seamless to residents, as our long term Town Planner, Monica Green, and Town Engineer Joe Willis, will continue as direct contract consultants to The Town. Also Assistant Deputy Clerk, Linda Longmiere, has rejoined our staff to open the office on Fridays for your improved building department services. She has been delivering service with a smile for over 20 years at Town Hall.

SR520 Update

The official release of the SR520 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been deferred until early next year, although the result has been widely known for the past three years. The Seattle side would not sign off on the 6-lane alternative, without congestion relief to the Montlake neighborhood. The extended EIS will include an elevated fly over ramp to bring cars and busses directly from SR520 to the proposed Sound Transit light rail station near the UW Hospital.

And so now the plan is set, but the funding is at risk.

Soon after she was elected, Governor Christine Gregoire declared SR520 and the Alaskan Way Viaduct to be emergency transportation projects. The House and Senate narrowly passed a 9.5¢ gas tax increase to fix these and other priority projects.

In November 2005 a “Yes” vote on Initiative 912 would repeal this gas tax increase, leaving these projects unfunded. If I-912 passes, these projects will be deferred, with no back-up plan in sight. I-912 was widely supported early on as gasoline prices doubled, but it’s support is now waning. Recent polls predicted the gas tax staying in place by 51%. The recent hurricanes have shown that natural disasters can and do happen, increasing voters’ awareness of the possibility of a catastrophic earthquake in the Northwest. The Alaskan Way Viaduct and the SR520 Bridge are accidents waiting to happen. It is most unfortunate that this has become a partisan issue in Olympia to punish Governor Gregoire for “stealing” the election. Prior Tim Eyman Initiatives have stripped the transportation budget, and the “no new taxes” program pretty much means “no more roads or mass transit”. Hopefully new leadership will emerge to power through these issues, but none is apparent for this November’s election.
Kelly Estate

We are happy to report that the 2-Acre Kelly Estate at the tip of Hunts Point is under contract for sale to a lovely couple with four small children, from a farming community near Bakersfield, California. I have met with this family and their architect at the site. We are most fortunate that they already understand the “Spirit of Hunts Point”. If they close on this property in December, it will not be subdivided, the large trees will remain, Stan Sayer’s Slo-Mo Boat House will remain, and they will build a one-story family home in approximately the same location and footprint as the waterfront classic rambler that Sayers built in 1950. We welcomed them to the neighborhood, and also informed them that the building permit approval is conditioned upon them hosting the Clean Up Day Cocktail Party in 2008. At least their architect agreed.