

Town of *Serving Our Residents* Hunts Point



May 11, 2010



Town of Hunts Point Newsletter

CLEAN UP DAY

Clean Up Day began in 1920 on Hunts Point. It is always the third Sunday in May, and this year the forecast is for good weather. We start in the morning at Town Hall with a continental breakfast and coffee from Tully's. After a few announcements, the work parties begin. Most residents team up with other neighbors to clean up the common areas around their homes; the streams, street signs, the right of way, parks and paths. The kids ride around in the pop truck delivering water and pop to all the hard working adults. After two hours of work, we meet back for hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and pop. The lunch is \$5.00 for adults and \$2.50 for kids.

This year, the lunch and games will be at the Hunts Point Park, by the swing sets and tennis courts. We will have a fire truck parked on Hunts Point Lane for the kids. We have several games planned for the small kids, and a softball game for larger kids and adults.

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The evening concludes with a Cocktail Party from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm at 4019 Hunts Point Road. Dress is business casual, and most people bring an appetizer to share. The cost is \$20 per person at the door. Refreshments are provided along with plenty of food. This is always a fun party.

On Clean Up Day, you can attend all of the events, or just a few. We hope you will join us.

EMERGENCY PRACTICE DAY

The Town will hold our third annual Emergency Practice Day on Saturday May 15th, 10 AM to Noon at Town Hall. We encourage all neighbors to attend, especially those on the Emergency Committee. This year our emphasis will be on communications, to practice getting the word out to all residents of a natural disaster or burglary. Thanks to all of you that have pitched in to help. We have made tremendous progress on our emergency plan in the past three years. All volunteers will enjoy pop and pizza at 11:30 AM as we discuss how to do it better for next year.

TREE CODE

The proposed Tree Code was thoroughly discussed at the Tully's meeting, where we arrived at a compromise between tree protection and property owner's rights. Since all issues don't fit neatly into the ordinances, we created a variance procedure where the Town Arborist can evaluate special circumstances and make recommendations to the Hearing Examiner. In the final draft, we limited the number of deciduous "significant" trees to Oaks, Madronas and Dogwoods. The emphasis remains on protecting and replanting native evergreen trees. Also, a property owner now has to notify his neighbors if construction activity could impact significant trees on the neighbor's lot. This is to encourage neighbors to meet and discuss tree issues before the bulldozers show up. With these changes, the Council unanimously passed the new tree code on May 3rd, 2010. Thanks to all of the residents, staff, planning commissioners and council members that dedicated hours of time to create a balanced, effective new tree ordinance.

RETAINING WALLS

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Monday, June 7th at 6:00 pm to discuss an ordinance that would eliminate retaining walls in the 10 foot sideyard setback. A couple of years ago, our hearing examiner ruled

that a boundary line wall (fence) could also be construed as a retaining wall on the property line. Deep land cuts, supported by large retaining walls at the property line can impact a neighbor's property and can also damage significant trees on the neighbor's lot.

With this ordinance, retaining walls could no longer be allowed in the sideyard setback. They would have to start ten feet in from the property line. Homes would be designed to work more with the existing topography. If you have an opinion either way, we encourage you to attend this public hearing on Monday, June 7th at 6:00 pm. The council will consider this ordinance at their meeting at 7pm, as this goes hand in hand with the objectives of the new tree ordinance.

SR520 UPDATE

Despite opposition by the Seattle Mayor, the Seattle City Council accepted WSDOT's preferred alternative, Option A, which provides for light rail in the future, but not upon opening of the new bridge. This landmark announcement was celebrated by the Governor, labor leaders, the Eastside, and the Seattle Council. The entire project design is now locked down and is on track. The Eastside is further ahead on design work, so the Eastside portion will go to bid this fall with construction beginning spring 2011. The current plan is for three years of construction, with the project being completed in 2014. SR520 will become a toll bridge in early 2011 to help fund the cost of improvements. I-90 will likely become a toll bridge in 2016, as the project is still \$2 Billion short of its \$4.65 Billion budget. This is the first time I can say that the entire project is designed, funded and headed for construction. For more information, click on the following link: www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr520bridge/.

HUNTS POINT ROAD SHOULDERS

One comment from the Tully's meeting suggested that some of the wet, dark grass shoulders should be replaced with gravel. After three years, the grass just isn't working in a few locations. The Town will get a bid to gravel these areas this summer. We will contact the adjoining residents before changing from grass to gravel.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Residents:

Hunts Point is a beautiful, serene little town nestled between two large, bustling cities. The value of these properties comes from the large undivided lots, the tremendous tree

canopy, and our strong sense of community. I am reminded of a quote from my predecessor and longtime resident Jim Barton.

"Nature made Hunts Point a beautiful place. I have done what I could to keep it so, to defend it against the attacks of us mortals who believe we can elbow nature aside and build something more beautiful. I expect my successors to continue this vigil."

James W. Barton served as Mayor of Hunts Point from 1968 - 1988. This quote is on a plaque at Town Hall.

We hope to see you on Clean Up Day. It is a great way to meet your neighbors and have fun cleaning up the Town.

Sincerely,

Fred McConkey

Fred McConkey
Mayor

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