



Lake Stevens South Master Plan

Summary of Public Comments and Question & Answer Session

Public Workshop #2

February 26, 2008

The following summary of comments includes both written comments received at the workshop and comments voiced during the workshop question and answer session. Questions asked by attendees, and the responses from the planning team and or Mayor Little, are shown further below in this document, under the Summary of Question & Answer Session heading. Numbers in parentheses indicate the quantity of identical or very similar comments received.

Summary of Comments

General Comments about UGA Expansion

- Hewitt makes more sense as the boundary between Snohomish and Lake Stevens.
- Highway 2 as a natural boundary is absurd.
- We do not want to be a part of your master plan.
- Leave us alone. (3)
- No UGA. That's why we move to this area. Keep it rural. Woods are beautiful, houses are not.
- I would rather hear frogs at night, not zooming cars. The kids like it rural. (5)
- It seems like Lake Stevens wants our land strictly for revenue. That is probably why the City of Snohomish wants our land, too.
- It is greedy to uproot families who have lived in this rural area and have chosen to build their houses and raise their families in this environment just to obtain a "source of revenue." Knowing this is going to happen, I choose for this area to be "Snohomish".
- My primary concern is being forced to sell and move from the area I love due to excessive taxation caused by overdevelopment.
- Lake Stevens needs to keep their community around the Lake and leave our area alone.
- Snohomish Mayor explained you would not negotiate a boundary between Snohomish and Lake Stevens. You want the whole area.
- You are acting like there is no choice of development here in the Joywood area. This just is not true. The citizens in this area have a choice, we have a voice. It's not a choice of just one or the other.
- A lot of your facts [from the Workshop #2 myth and fact presentation] can be refuted; this will be posted on the Futurewise website: www.futurewise.org/snohomish, issues page
- Lake Stevens' master plan process wasn't initiated until the City of Snohomish had a proposal.
- Lake Stevens can't annex the last 4-5 neighborhoods of their own UGA. Why grab more?

Comments Related to Type of Development

- I want to see managed growth that puts in improved Highway 9 and Highway 2.
- No more strip malls along Highway 9. They are awful for traffic and an eyesore.
- Recognizing the area will develop, we wish to maximize the value of our property. Would like to be rezoned to high density, i.e. 12 du/ acre. Preliminary information is that the City of Snohomish is more receptive to such a recommendation.
- Slide #18 mentioned Lake Stevens' interest in an economically, socially and environmentally "vibrant" community. Please show me one place in the Lake Stevens area that can be

described as that! Lake Stevens has no “heart” or downtown. It has strip malls, cheap subdivision housing, restaurants surrounded by parking, back-lit plastic signage.

- Why does City of Lake Stevens say Cavalero won't look like Whiskey Ridge or Avery Park? City of Lake Stevens encourages developer upzones.
- Visioning never ends up in the final plan – was done in past when Lake Stevens was bringing in other UGA. We have heard “the County is responsible for bad development” before.
- What types of business are you trying to attract?

Comments Related to City Affiliation

- I am a citizen of Snohomish. I want to ensure that my identity as a citizen of Snohomish remains intact.
- Joywood has always been affiliated with Snohomish. (3)
- Snohomish people want to be a part of Snohomish not Lake Stevens. Work with Snohomish Mayor!
- It's not that people care about the name of the city they live in. It's more about the fact that Snohomish has been better at maintaining the quality of life that we want.
- We do not want to be part of Lake Stevens.
- I'm opposed to incorporation into Lake Stevens. Much of my time and tax dollars has gone to City of Snohomish. I don't want to sever those ties with Snohomish.
- I'd rather be part of unincorporated Everett just like I am now or in Snohomish.
- I can walk to Snohomish. I have to drive to Lake Stevens.

Other Comments

- The Lake Stevens High School is no where near as good as SHS.
- There is a park planned on Cavelerio Hill. The County owns the entire area now and is developing a park there. The newspaper article was incorrect.
- A light at the top of Cavelerio Hill causes major accidents. We don't want it. (2)
- What are the County's plans for the Highway 2 trestle?
- I hate Frontier Village. I have a hard time getting in and out of there.
- There are two trashy houses on S. Lake Stevens road, inside UGA that Lake Stevens should do something about.
- No sewers on Cavalero Hill.
- You're not working with developers now, but if Lake Stevens is given area, how soon will you sell us out to developers and how many homes will you steal in the future?
- I see many facts as being your spin on the situation. Facts can be disputed. (2)
- Next time bring a laptop with website up. Maybe even find someone who can put together a Powerpoint presentation for comments we'd all like to see.
- I prefer to respond formally and request it placed in public record.

Summary of Question & Answer Session

Question: Who gets to define the term “high quality of life”? Are those the current residents or are those the developers who want to turn it into essentially a modern slum?

Response: *The City is undertaking this planning process with the community, and there are no developers involved in this process. So it's a community based process only, sponsored by the City of Lake Stevens.*

Question: You tell me you need more land because you've over-developed Lake Stevens already. Why should we get involved?

Response: *Most of the area within Lake Stevens' UGA was developed under the County regulations and is outside of the City. If the project study area continues to be developed under County regulations, the same thing is likely to happen. This is the reason the City wants to plan and involve the community in the planning process.*

Question: Why all of a sudden are you looking for public comment, if you have been planning for this area for the last 15 years? Isn't it because the City of Snohomish is also interested in this area?

Response: *Rural Urban Transition Areas (RUTAs) are typically designated [by the County] many years before any proposals come forward. The RUTA has been identified in the Lake Stevens Comprehensive Plan as an area to study since 1994.*

Question: Can you formally ask the citizens living in this area what they want?

Response: *That's exactly why we're here. This proposal will go before the County, and it may not go anywhere from there. If it is loud and clear that you want to go to Snohomish, then there's a good opportunity that that will happen. But in our [City of Lake Stevens'] opinion, that would result in a piecemeal approach to development, based on what they've proposed.*

Question: Doesn't the City only try to annex areas when residents want this to happen? Or wouldn't it make sense for City to have [residents] support before it spends money on looking at this?

Response: *In most cases that's exactly what happens, and then we help [residents] through that process, however this is currently not an annexation area. The City is sometimes required to spend money so that it can be sure to get public comment regardless of whether that comment is negative or positive. All comments are appreciated, and that is really what we are here for – so that you have an opportunity to speak. Ultimately, the issue of UGA expansion will go to Snohomish County, and they will make the final decision.*

Question: Why does it all have to go to Lake Stevens? Has there been any talk between the two cities of dividing up [the study area], to make it a little more equitable between each city and keep the people who want to stay in Snohomish in Snohomish?

Response: *There have been some conversations about that, and it can still happen.*

Question: How will the strong statements about not wanting to be part of Lake Stevens get conveyed to the County Council?

Response: *All public comments are part of the public record and are being openly shared as part of a disclosure agreement with the City of Snohomish. The City of Lake Stevens' application will ultimately require approval from the Snohomish County Council. The County Council's process entails public hearings at which public comments are heard.*

Question: We've looked on the web site and we haven't been able to find the comments from the first workshop. Are they very obvious or are they a little difficult to find? Also, we were told last time that the comments from Workshop #1 would be here tonight.

Response: *The comments from Workshop #1 are posted on the City's website in an easily visible location. We can send out an email when the next comments [from Workshop #2] are posted if that's helpful. If anyone wants to have a hard copy mailed to them of all the comments we receive in the process we would be more than happy to do that.*

Question: If we do not hook up to sewer does that mean we will not be assessed for it?

Response: *Correct, if sewers are installed, you will not be assessed a sewer fee unless and until you hook up to it. Under Sewer District policy, you're not forced to connect to sewer, unless you are part of a group of people that forms a utility district and you assess yourselves in order to install the sewer. But if a line goes [near your house] and you have not had the ability to be part of the process of forming the utility district, that means that you're not going to be forced to connect with that sewer except by a Health District determination.*

Question: If you were to sell your home, is the sewer assessment made then?

Response: *No, the sewer assessment doesn't go on when you sell your home. It automatically gets suspended. It would have to be placed under a public process that you would have to go through to assess yourself. Feel free to contact the Lake Stevens Sewer District and we will be glad to sit down and go through these misconceptions regarding sewer installation and fees. We can provide the correct information which is based on State law.*

Question: Would a working septic system that needs permits to repair or replace result in [a requirement to connect to the sewer and] an assessment?

Response: *No. If the system is repairable, and is likely to meet code after repairs are made, then a permit would be granted. You're not forced to connect to sewer as District policy.*

Question: Will my taxes go up because of sewer installation?

Response: *Taxes and sewer are a separate issue. You will only be charged a sewer fee if you connect to the sewer. (Note: attendee suggested that property taxes may increase because having sewer service available makes the land more valuable. This point was not disputed.)*

Question: Will we see a theoretical map as part of the master plan in May/June? There should be some sort of general idea of what may be around us. People need some sort of certainty.

Response: *Yes, draft conceptual diagrams will be a part of the draft master plan and initial drafts will be available for public comment at the next public workshop. These will be bubble diagrams at a strategic plan level, not at the level of detail that would be part of a detailed annexation plan. They will address generalized circulation, such as roads, public trails, etc.; open space; and parks and recreation uses. (Note: a draft framework plan will be presented at Workshop #3.) This is different from a full neighborhood plan or what we call a sub-area plan, in that it does not go to a detailed policy level. If the proposal is approved by the County, in the future this whole area will have to go through a detailed annexation plan just like those areas that are inside the UGA today, where detailed policies, zoning, utility plans, and so forth are developed. All of that would go through a very specific public review process.*

Question: Can you explain what Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) means and how it might apply to an area south of Hewitt?

Response: *The response at the workshop was insufficient and a fact sheet is being produced to better explain how TDR may be part of the proposal.*

Question: What kind of commercial/job development are you talking about in the area near the top of Cavelero Hill?

Response: *There hasn't been a decision on exactly what is going to be there, or whether it would be businesses or housing. (Note: the planning process is not yet at the stage of drafting a specific land use plan.)*

Question: Why did they put a light at the top of Cavelero Hill?

Response: *One of the things we are studying with the Washington State Department of Transportation is changing that intersection and actually fixing it. Under the State and the County, it did not get fixed. We agree with you 100%, and we're looking at that now.*