



NEWS

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Property Tax Reductions Available to Qualifying Property Owners through PBRS Program

Recently a group of Hollywood Hill homeowners in the Gold Creek area organized themselves and jointly applied to be part of King County's Public Benefit Rating System (PBRS). PBRS is a state program implemented by King County. Property owners can receive significant reductions in their property taxes in exchange for protecting assets on their land or preserving public access. Hollywood Hill residents Ron Baum and Jan Hunt recognized the ecological value of the woodlands in the area and led a neighborhood group through the application process. This is Jan Hunt's story:

Last year Ron Baum came to a HHA board meeting and told us that he had qualified his property for the Public Benefit Rating System. With all of the natural assets his seven and one half acre parcel contains and his willingness to protect those assets, he stands to enjoy an 80% property tax reduction on 80% of his property. He suggested that the program might be appropriate for the HHA's Ten Acre Wood. I volunteered to represent the HHA in the application process. One of the application requirements was to take forest management classes given by WSU for the King County Department of Natural Resources.

One of the classes entailed home visits by forester Kristi McClelland and the students to evaluate their wooded parcels for qualification in the program. Even though Kristi was only required to see the Ten Acre Wood, she volunteered to stop by our house as well to see our one half acre of woods. At our house, she saw that our neighborhood had contiguous forest joining each property over a four street area. Kristi told me that we could qualify for the PBRS program if enough neighbors applied so that the total qualifying area would equal four acres. I was very skeptical about the idea, but Ron and Kristi kept working on me until I realized what an opportunity we had. It took some months to convince everyone else that the plan was a good one! The turning point came during a neighborhood meeting with Ron. He explained the benefits and requirements of the program and answered questions. We saw people begin to get excited.

Enough neighbors said they wanted to apply so that there was a possibility of coming up with four wooded acres. Then we needed detailed maps drawn to scale to show how much land each household was setting aside for the program. Homes, outbuildings, and lawns had to be separate. Ron and I started measuring (since he knows how) and found we had 6+ acres! Several homeowners were amazed at how much qualifying land they had, including one who had much of his woods in a Native Protection Zone. For those on our street who had an interest in the program, Kristi came out again and spent hours walking around in the freezing rain answering our questions, looking over the properties and giving advice on forest health. Then Ted Sullivan, who runs the program, Kristi and Ron came to a third meeting and answered the remaining questions. By this meeting we really began

Letter from the President

I spend a lot of time extolling the virtues of Hollywood Hill (both in this column and to whom-ever will listen), but there is one virtue which I cannot claim the Hill enjoys: that of cleanliness. (Most of the time) Our roadsides look terrible! There exists a strange incongruity between nicely kept landscaped yards and our trash littered road shoulders. How sad it is to drive up our lushly forested ravines and to see the natural beauty of that landscape marred by fast food wrappers, drink containers and other assorted debris.

I do not know why we have such a problem with this. Perhaps there is a huge amount of litter being thrown about everywhere, and we, being outside city limits, don't get ours cleaned up often enough. Because litter removal for unincorporated King County is virtually non-existent, the Hollywood Hill Association, many years ago, took over the responsibility of keeping these shoulders clean through the Adopt-a-road program. To participate in this program, we have agreed to pick up litter twice a year. King County is then responsible for disposal.

Obviously, the Association needs help from the community during these events. Typically, turnout is very low. Last year the Clean Up was held in conjunction with Hollywood Hill Elementary School's Pancake Breakfast, and for the first time in years, we had many families participate. The turnout was tremendous and the result of this valuable service to the community was that our neighborhoods looked great—at least for a while.

Unfortunately, there is no Pancake Breakfast scheduled for this year so we will not have the same exposure for this event that we had. However, I hope that you will take this opportunity to mark your calendars for Saturday, May 1st for the Spring Clean. You choose how much you clean and when, making this a convenient and easy way to help out. This event is also a fantastic chance to show our children the value of giving back to their community and to have them experience the satisfaction of a purely benevolent deed.

We realize that twice a year is not adequate to keep our roadsides even reasonably clean, but we hope that with your support we can get our community into better shape again.

Please look on the back cover for the details regarding this important event. I hope to see you there.

—Susan Cyr

•••Dues•••

Check the top line of your address label to see if your dues are current. If you have not sent in your dues for the current year, an envelope and application form are included in your newsletter. Dues are \$25 per calendar year.

Visit your community web site for more on these and other issues effecting our community.

www.hollywoodhillassoc.org

YOUR ASSOCIATION

The Hollywood Hill Association is a private, state nonprofit corporation, formally chartered in 1976. We are an all volunteer, community based organization, dedicated to the preservation of our community character.

President	Susan Cyr: 487-2908
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Secretary	Jan Hunt: 806-0118
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Directors	Marsha Martin: 883-8561 Lincoln Potter: 481-8382 Ron Baum: 806-8044 Vacant

Website www.hollywoodhillassoc.org

The HHA is managed by a 9-member Board of Directors. Elections are held by mail each autumn at the time of the HHA annual membership meeting. The existing Board selects candidates from those volunteers who have demonstrated a willingness to actively contribute to the HHA and who support its goals. Board meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Thursday of each month at the homes of Board members. The Board welcomes HHA members who wish to attend these meetings as long as prior arrangement has been made. Because these are business meetings, space availability and legal issues may require closed meetings from time to time. Contact any Board member if you are interested in attending.

Property Tax Reductions (Continued from page 1)

to get the hang of what we were doing and to see how important our efforts were to help preserve the Gold Creek watershed. Ted told us that only one other group, located in Seattle, had accomplished getting into PBRS and that it took them two years to organize themselves and complete their paperwork. All other applicants have been individual landowners.

At the meeting, Kristi reminded us that the Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) draft had to be submitted too. The FSP is used to describe the forested area giving details about habitat, water issues, topography, as well as plans for preservation and restoration over the next ten years. Once a portion of a property qualifies for the PBRS designation, the owner cannot make changes to the qualifying area except those stated in the plan unless there is an actual threat to the property. Future revisions to the plan may be submitted to the Office of Natural Resources for approval.

By this time, it was getting very close to the Dec. 31st deadline, but we pulled it off. One neighbor, Don Toenyan, took Ron's rough maps and made finished ones. Ted and Kristi answered all our last minute questions and provided handholding. They showed us the many categories in which we qualified for extra points (more than we realized). One neighbor has a public trail which, with the watershed and forest points and being adjacent to Gold Creek Park, produced the maximum allowed deductions.

As of this writing, we are still under application because one year is required to evaluate all applications. Once Ted Sullivan makes his determinations, he takes them before the County Council which decides who will be accepted and the degree of benefit. Any trails put into the program must be entered into the County's dedicated easements. Once we are accepted into the program, our tax reductions as well as our commitment to land stewardship are permanent.

This effort has been a rewarding process, both learning about our woods and watershed, how vital they are to the greater ecosystem and having a group working together for the benefit of the area. Now Ron and I both know enough to help others too. And finally, this year the application for the Ten Acre Wood will be submitted.

New Park Proposed for the Hill

Have you ever sought a place close by home to have a picnic, throw a frisbee or take a stroll through a quiet woods? Such a place has taken several steps closer to becoming a reality on the Hill.

A public park is envisioned to be located on King County land adjacent to the Hollywood Hill Elementary School. With a total of just over 30 acres, this park would be able to accommodate a wide variety of uses.

Friends of Hollywood Hill Park is a newly formed organization whose purpose is to focus community support for the establishment and maintenance of the Hollywood Hill Park. Friends was incorporated with the participation of diverse interests, including the Hollywood Hill Saddle Club, the Hollywood Hill Association and other community members. The Northshore Schools may become involved as well.

This park concept enjoys broad support within the halls of King County (KC) government, however there are some hurdles to overcome. The property is currently "owned" by KC Department of Transportation. In order for the land to be developed as a park, it needs to be transferred to KC Parks Department. That transfer may seem to be a simple proposition, but in these times of tight budgets, the first challenge is finding a way to compensate the Department of Transportation for the property. There are several avenues that can yield results, but the solutions are primarily political. Demonstrating the support of our community for a park is vital to reaching any solution.

Another challenge is operation of the park. Because of budget cuts, King County does not have the money to maintain any new parks. In order to establish a new public park, other means must be found to develop and maintain it. The likely solution is for this proposed park to be managed through the County's ADOP system. In this program, the County owns the land and pays the taxes and insurance. Maintenance and most development would be provided by private sources.

Time is of the essence. This property has been surplus by the Department of Transportation. If a use for it is not soon realized within the public sphere, the land could be sold on the open market, and this unique opportunity would be lost.

Friends of Hollywood Hill Park has been founded to address these challenges. Friends will provide us, the community, with an avenue to collect and focus our energies for a project that will provide great benefits now and for generations to come.

You will be hearing more about Friends of Hollywood Hill Park in the near future. Let's pool our efforts to create a legacy of which we can be proud.

Design Ideas for the Proposed Hollywood Hill Park

The 23 acre property that would comprise the main body of the park is just south of Hollywood Hill Elementary School. It is tucked into a natural hollow with steep terrain on its east flank and heavy timber around most of its perimeter. An old gravel pit stretches from the middle of the parcel to the school's property line. In fact, the school was built on part of the original pit site.

The park concept starts with using existing access from 148th Ave NE. Parking slots will be tucked between the trees and the gravel pit would be re-graded and planted in grass to provide a large open field. A perimeter trail will be built through the woods to tie in to existing trails that cut from the Saddle Club across the property. Hollywood Hill Elementary would be able to conduct outdoor classroom activities and science projects using these trails. Several picnic tables could be located in appropriate clearings and fitness stations have been suggested for use by the school's gym class as well as the general community. These changes could be accomplished without the removal of any trees. A low spot near

the back of the school has been targeted for a possible wetland restoration site at a future date.

Another benefit of the park will be to our horse community. The Hollywood Hill Saddle Club, whose facilities are located on 7 1/2 acres of the proposed park, hosts regional equestrian events and is a wonderful local venue for our neighborhood riders. In spite of being a vital part of the Hill for over a quarter century, the Saddle Club has suffered the uncertainty of lease renewals and the possible loss of their facilities. This park would ensure that the carpet won't be yanked out from under their significant investments and secure the future of the Club on the Hill.

A public easement trail links the property to Gold Creek Park which is located about 3/4 of a mile to the south. In addition, there are several other trails linking the site to the neighborhood pathway system.

Such a park would be a beautiful amenity to our neighborhood. It can become a reality, but only with the active backing of our community.

Junior High Students make a Difference

Did you know that Northshore schools have a community service requirement for students 6th grade and up? Children may serve in any capacity, from helping at food banks to planting trees along the Sammamish Slough, and this winter the Hollywood Hill community benefited directly from this service requirement. Several students from Leota Junior High School donated their time to a variety of projects here on the Hill in January, February, and March. The kids spread wood chips on sections of the

Neighborhood Pathway System and The Ten Acre Wood trails, built a new section of the Pathway on 168th Ave NE, cleared and renovated trails in The Wood, and picked up litter from roadways around the top of the hill. The students making a difference are: Spencer Viera, Greg Kachmarik, Mia Trost, Christina Cyr, Matt Peterson, Matt Kachmarik, and Jasper Wang. A huge thank you to these kids who contributed a total of 54 hours to help make our community safer, cleaner, and better cared for.

Help the Birds and Your Windows!

Tired Of birds hitting your windows? After four thrushes died in one week by flying into our windows, I called the Audubon Society for assistance. They suggested purchasing decals that help the birds "see" the glass. I went to a specialty store for birds and bought decals that stick to glass by static

cling. These decals may be removed during window cleaning and then reused again and again. There have been no more dead birds under our windows, and we really saw how much the decals help when a bird flew up to the glass and suddenly veered away. So nice NOT to be contributing to "birdycide"!

Dateline: 16-Mar-04 By now, most of our residents and Newsletter readers will know of our pocket park — 10 Acre Woods — on the Hill and the new compact between Woodinville Montessori and the Association. Here is a spring progress report:

Woodinville Montessori's Park Adoption: Update, March 04

"We aren't really twins." Shubha gaily quips as the two giant-step along the trail, loudly counting out paces. The girls sport identical blue nylon jackets, pants and matching mud. Shubha's dark complexion and flashing eyes belie her Asian roots while Meleigha's red hair, freckle-splashed face and azure, laugh-creinkled eyes reveal the charming joke.

They are the Montessori junior high kids ages 12 to 14, and I ask them what's happening? Are they actually learning anything?

Shubha Guha: "We're mapping the trails and boundaries and doing an orienteering course with the map we've created. Well, technically, it's sort of 'our park'. We're responsible for mapping and stuff. It's educational; we have a study called Pacific Northwest where we learn about different Native Americans and regional ecosystems. It ties into that."

Corey Koczarski wizecracking: "I'm learning about all the mud and wet stuff."

Robin Wyatt-Stone: "I found this one interesting landmark. It's kind of where a large tree fell down there's a huge root stock that is upended off the ground that's almost like 12 feet high — and where the root used to be is now a lake, and I think that's just a really interesting thing."

Merissa Roecks: "Lotsa stuff about vegetation and different kinds of trees, but mostly, I'm learning about map-making and orienteering, and I'm getting better at it. Rick (Breseman) teaches us our map-making and that includes lots of math. You have to like count how many meters and convert it — something like that — and put it in the computer. It's hard to explain."

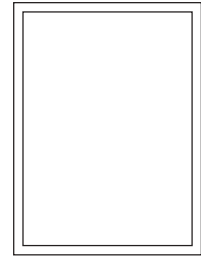
Head Teacher, Sharon Dunn: "The original Woodinville Montessori campus is near here, and many of our constituent families live in this area. The skills the students learn in mapping, understanding terrain, orienteering and math can be used to their advantage to hone their skills, and it is to the advantage of the community to get a better understanding of the ecosystem on the Hill. Once you spend some time exploring here, you get a better feeling of the evolving nature of that ecosystem. For instance, the rootstock that Robin found is a particularly stunning example of how a tree turns into an integrated part of a whole new ecosystem once it comes down. Their discovery forges a link to the students' appreciation of their local environment. Many native and invasive species are represented (in the park) so it helps them interpret the ecology of the region."



On location in Ten Acre Wood, Montessori Students compare mapping calculations."

The footprint of man is evident but the residents have also tried to protect this little area — you see that push and pull — it's connected to our families, our neighbors, our communities. Whatever we do here that's helpful to our neighbors; it's a way we can give back to the community."

Hollywood Hill Association
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CHECK YOUR LABEL -- ARE YOUR DUES PAID UP?



Spring Clean-Up

Your chance to contribute to the community is coming up soon. Hollywood Hill's Annual Spring Clean is set for Saturday, May 1st, 9:00- 11:00 am, and the sign up area will be located at the entrance of the Hollywood Hill Saddle Club. At that time, you will be able to pick up trash bags, borrow gloves and safety vests and choose a section of road to clean. You do **not** have to clean during these hours. You may pick up litter at any time over the weekend, but filled bags (and any other debris) should be returned to the entrance of the Saddle Club by Sunday evening for pick up by King County crews.

This is a great chance to give back to the community and has become for some Hollywood Hill families an annual tradition. Furthermore, this is the only event scheduled until fall so if we don't pick up now just think of what we'll have to look at all summer long...