



NEWS

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Dealing with the New CAO

King County's new Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) is now the law. To say that the debates leading up to adoption of the CAO were controversial would be an understatement. Even though the furor seems far from over, now is a good time to look into the effects of the new law and how we, as landowners, can work within the current realities of this law.

As Hollywood Hill is situated in rural unincorporated King County, these new ordinances may affect what can be done with many of our properties. Our area is mostly developed so the CAO will have less affect here than in some parts of King County. Still, there are certain activities, such as the clearing of trees, which can be affected by the CAO. These guidelines are dependent upon the specifics of a property: size, as well as the proximity to creeks, ponds and other water-related features are factors to be considered.

Media attention has been focused on the restrictions of the new law.

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Proposed Woodin Creek PBRS Area

Inspired by an article in the Spring 2004 HHA newsletter, a group of homeowners on Hollywood Hill have recently joined together in submitting Public Resource Benefit System (PBRS) applications to King County. The PBRS program provides tax reduction incentives to encourage landowners to voluntarily conserve and protect land resources, open space and timber.

The proposed Woodin Creek PBRS area covers approximately 4 acres along the headwaters of Woodin Creek. It includes most parcels on the south side of 172nd Street, extending from the 4-way stop intersection adjacent to Hollywood Hill Elementary down the ravine to the intersection of NE 171st



*Judy Fani, Joanne Wood and Chet Murphy, PBRS applicants standing in Woodin Creek
--Photo by Lincoln Potter*

Street and 143rd Place NE. The area is covered by a forest and includes the creek, wetlands, old growth snags, downed trees and steep hillsides. It is a wild area that is difficult to explore on foot.

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Letter from the President

I've often extolled the virtues of our neighborhood in this column because I think the Hill is a truly special place to live, but I hadn't fully realized the depth of *community* until recently. Just before Christmas I was diagnosed with breast cancer and was suddenly facing major surgery to be followed with aggressive chemotherapy. In the past month, my family has been deluged with help, offered assistance with every aspect of our complicated lives. Needless to say, this generous outpouring of love has made my diagnosis infinitely more bearable because I have so much caring support but it goes much farther than that.

The Rev. Dale Turner wrote in the Seattle Times, "that the deepest need of the human spirit is community-common unity, goodwill, love, and acceptance. Ours is a complex and often puzzling day, but the simplicities of love and caring must come to center stage because a good life is marked by little deeds of love and helpfulness done throughout the day."

I can't imagine another place that better exemplifies the virtue of community; where more people understand and practice the values of giving and selflessness. To the extent that we have arrived at a place where giving really is the same as receiving, we all then reap the benefits of recycling generosity. We are all stronger for our kindness to one another, better able cope with the adversities life throws our way.

Are you still with me? I realize I've strayed past the limits of a folksy letter to you but it's funny how one's perspective changes when you're faced with a crisis. Forgive me and let me return to business at hand. I will be taking a leave as president for a while with Michael Tanksley stepping up to lead our terrific board. I'm sorry to be taking a hiatus at such an interesting time as there are many pressing issues before the HHA right now. We are continuing to monitor and give input to the Woodinville Village project, we will continue to fight against code violations of the Stupid Prices sign and store, to inform you about the local impacts of the recently passed Critical Areas Ordinance, to assist the Friends of Hollywood Hill Park in the development of the new park behind Hollywood Hill Elementary School, and to initiate construction of entrance signs for Hollywood Hill.

If you are at all interested in any of these issues or have other interests relating to our area, think about attending one of our monthly board meetings. Now is a great time to make a difference, and your participation is a terrific way to be involved in this amazing community. You may be surprised at how much you get back from a little bit of giving.

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 affecting 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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	Lincoln Potter: 481-8382
	Ron Baum: 806-8044

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.

Dealing with the New CAO

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However, there is a great deal of flexibility built into the CAO that tends to be overlooked. Affected landowners may use this feature to adjust how the ordinance affects their land and, often, the associated property taxes.

In this and coming newsletters, we will explore how the CAO is affecting property owners. We will also look at examples of the individual management strategies that some of our neighbors are employing to their advantage.

One of the primary tools landowners have to mitigate the effects of CAO is the Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs). As a program that pre-existed and is independent of the CAO, PBRs can give a landowner significant tax reductions based on the landowner's agreement to leave natural vegetation cover on a portion or all of their property.

The current minimum size for participation in PBRs is 4 acres, but landowners with contiguous areas of otherwise applicable property can put them together to reach the minimum size requirement. Or, if one's property abuts certain trail or natural area easements, a smaller area can be considered for inclusion in PBRs.

Granting a public trail or equestrian easement across one's property is another way to utilize PBRs. A trail may be located along the edge of the property, but changes in the law now allow a landowner to claim a corridor much wider than just the trail for purposes of tax reduction. The 4-acre minimum does not apply to such trails. The laws also protect the landowner from liability for accidents that may happen to people using the trail.

Additional categories that can gain PBRs tax reductions include allowing active or passive public recreation on one's property, providing additional surface water buffer area around ponds or streams or granting additional buffers around public lands and right-of-way corridors.

Development of a Stewardship Plan can be part of the process for applying for PBRs but can also be used to access the flexibilities built into the CAO. There are three categories of Stewardship Plans: Forest, Agri-

cultural and Rural. The Rural category, in response to the CAO, is new and still under development. With an approved Plan, landowners may selectively harvest timber from within the 50-65% of their property that the law requires be left in "native vegetation."

There are still some unanswered questions and changes being considered concerning how PBRs will work with the CAO. The Hollywood Hill Assn. is urging our county officials to maximize the applicability of the PBRs to properties restricted by the CAO. We will be letting you know about this as the programs are clarified.

Last year, this newsletter reported the success of one group of neighbors who secured a PBRs designation for their properties along upper Gold Creek. In this edition, we have a short article about another Hollywood Hill group that is currently working on a PBRs designation for their properties. (See Woodin Creek PBRs article)

Proposed Woodin Creek PBRs Area

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The spring fed Woodin Creek which runs through the area is about 0.4 of a mile long and runs in a clearly defined channel. There is no visible connecting channel above the properties involved. The creek exits the area via a culvert that goes under NE 171st Street at 143rd Place NE and then continues underground through the Albertson shopping center. It surfaces along the South Bypass Road and eventually joins the Sammamish River.

The riparian zone (the creek and associated wetlands) includes many rivulets which connect a series of small ponds to the main stream. A few park-like open spaces exist around large cedars. The area is home to ring-necked doves, pileated woodpeckers, flammulated owls, raccoons, possums, rabbits, mountain beaver, and Douglas's and grey squirrels. Coyote and at least one bobcat live in or near the area. A bald eagle has also been seen on a few occasions.

For more information on the PBRs program, see: <http://splash.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/incentiv.htm>. Or, contact Ron Baum @ 806-8044 or Jan Hunt @ 806-0118

Burn Ban Solutions:

When the King County burn ban got tough, Scottish transplants and Hill residents Donald and Alison Farmer got creative.

Donald: "At first we thought about a wood chipper, but they're expensive, noisy and nasty."

Alison, "We have a couple of 'arts' friends, and they have a natural garden we greatly admired. They're members of the Native Plant Society."



Alison and Donald Farmer with one of their garden sculptures.
--Photo by Lincoln Potter

Donald: "We're moving our garden toward that ideal, gradually removing all the alien and cultivated plants and letting nature take its course. One of the things you need

to do is differentiate a Natural Garden so people don't think it's just a mess, that you're just letting the place go. There are a couple of psychological hints you can create: You can trim well-tended paths through the land which gives comfort that this is all meant to be."

Alison: "They also have a lovely arbor of piled sticks in a semicircle where all the brush goes and we've started one like that here."

Donald: "I like the idea of a brush pile. It's full of snakes and quail, all sorts of things. When you walk by, the quail scurry in and the snakes rush out then they reverse their little migration. It's like a farce."

I became interested in creating something more sculptural, something that would give more form to the nice complex lot we have. Andy Goldsworthy, a British land artist, does these lovely curving sculptures using natural materials. So we decided, not in imitation but in reference to his ideas, to follow the curves of the land and nature."

Alison: "Now he's just waiting for a big storm!"

Donald: "Before, I'd dread all the brush to clean up from windy days, but now I want more brush. The idea of a big branch falling off is quite exciting."

Alison: "The hardest part is to start turning random piles of brush into something, but once you've started, it's easy and satisfying to keep up with it. Already the animals are adopting it. When you go down there, birds fly up, and there are animal footprints in the mud near the pond."

Donald: Where I'm from in the Scottish countryside, there are drystone walls and dykes everywhere, and they follow the contours and it is satisfying to have something like that here on Hollywood Hill.

Full Day Kindergarten a possibility at Hollywood Hill Elementary

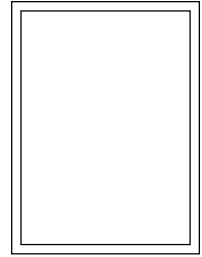
It is the time of year for the schools to start planning their programs for the 2005-2006 school year. One possible change Hollywood Hill Elementary is considering is to offer an option for an all day kindergarten class.

As in past years, half-day classes would continue to be the standard. However, the full-day class could be added if enough parents show an interest. A minimum enrollment of approximately 18 children is necessary for the all day class to be feasible. The cost for each child enrolled in this option would be \$240 a month for the months of September through June. The dollar amount is an averaged cost for 10 months. This means that even though the months have different numbers of school days, the cost per month is fixed.

If you are interested, then please call the school at (425)489-6347 and let them know. If you know someone who will have a kindergarten student in Hollywood Hill Elementary next year, pass the word. And lastly, if you have any questions please call the principal, Doug Hale. He will be glad to speak with you.

HHA Goals Page goes here

Hollywood Hill Association
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CHECK YOUR LABEL -- ARE YOUR DUES CURRENT?



Park Update from Hollywood Hill Saddle Club Task Force

For 28 years, the Hollywood Hill Saddle Club has been the caretaker of 28 acres of county land surrounding the Hollywood Hill Elementary School. The property, owned by King County Department of Transportation, is currently divided into two parcels: 7+ acres housing the Hollywood Hill Saddle Club Arena and out buildings and 20+ acres containing the county gravel pit and a linear trail connecting Gold Creek County Park to the Tolt Pipeline trail system.

King County DOT has informed us of their plans to surplus both parcels in 2007. Unless other arrangements are made, this property would be put on the open market. With the goal of preserving this exquisite acreage for recreational use into perpetuity, a task force consisting of representatives from HHSC and Friends of Hollywood Hill Park are working diligently to have the property transferred from King County DOT into King County Parks.

Phase 1 of this process is the transfer of the 7+ acres over to King County Parks. Because of certain unique agreements in the original purchase, this portion of the 28 acres has the potential to be moved over to Parks without an exchange of funds. The Hollywood Hill Saddle Club would continue as the caretakers of the facility insuring that King County Parks would not be burdened with additional budget or staffing responsibilities.

Phase 2 would be directed toward the remaining 20+ acres. Friends of Hollywood Hill Park along with support from the Hollywood Hill Saddle Club envision this property developed as a multi-use, low impact recreational park and a continuation of the linear trail system. The transfer of this property from King County DOT into King County Parks will involve major funding. Friends of Hollywood Hill Park is actively pursuing grant and funding opportunities.