

Item 0.8 of “Adapting Woodstock” Charrette “Site Planning Topics & Reference Items”

A Review of Site Adaptation & Development Constraints, Noting a Few Potential Strategies, Opportunities & Work-arounds

Rough draft outline compiled by Tim Wahl, July 2008. Item numbers refer to materials posted on the Adapting Woodstock charrette website under “Site Planning Topics & Reference Items”.

Note: “Constraints” can also be “Opportunities” and even “Assets”, it depends on the mission, pocketbook and customers.

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A. FUNDING ISSUES

- Public funding is extremely limited, especially for maintenance and adaptation of the historic buildings. Public funds, usually in the form of matching grants, are most likely in two categories: for trails and trail amenities and shoreline access projects and for highway and transportation related projects. (Parks category funds are less likely with historic building emphasis/adaptation.)
- \$673,500 is allocated for the Inspiration Point overlook, van drop/ADA stall, Farm gateway and walkway during 2008-2009.
- \$424,000 is now reserved for the Kopperdahl Trail or the "California St. Trail" between Woodstock and the N. Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead.
- \$1,000,000 is budgeted for 2012 improvement of trails and parking at and serving the N. Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead, potentially including the California St. Trail to Woodstock. (These funds might be combined with a State matching grant.)
- Some Washington State grant funds for building maintenance and adaptation are possible given historic register listing and adoption of registry related objectives. (500-1,000k, with match?)
- Limited Greenway Program Endowment Fund monies are available for grounds maintenance, notably trail work and hazard tree work and volunteer labor support.
- Limited funds (200k) have been committed by a private party for critical repairs and structure protection for the main Woodstock buildings. (Parks hopes to proceed with critical roof, water damage prevention and electrical work ASAP.)
- Caretaker rental income generates minor income for supplies and equipment and the bulk of day-to-day site maintenance.

Summary: Significant funding for adapting the buildings and for programming activities at the Farm is not presently available. Public funding for adaptation of historic buildings is extremely limited and very competitive. (Historic structures programs have traditionally emphasized preservation rather than adaptation, although this trend seems to be changing. Public funding IS more likely for highway frontage and transportation related projects, including trail and scenic byway elements, and recreational trail elements.)

B. PHYSICAL ISSUES

Prehistoric cultural features.

Archeological features are considered as physical entities here, but they are also regulated cultural resources discussed below under regulatory/institutional constraints. Three shell middens have been surveyed as discrete physical entities. Two are in upland areas. State and Federal regulations restrict excavation in these areas and indicate that passive uses which minimize surface disturbance will be preferred. The exposed face of the Boathouse midden must be closed before the public is invited to use the beach. Best practices and good will lead to designation of these areas for quieter and smaller group uses in order to promote learning and contemplation,

activities which compliment observation of abundant offshore and littoral wildlife. Basically all construction activity on the site should be monitored to record and protect the archeological record. To many people and some potential site operators the archeological features are an asset, one with relatively low costs to protect.

Historic estate buildings and landscape features.

These are visible and popular but generally require immediate maintenance and extensive improvement and remodeling if adapted for present day public use. Retaining them significantly increases the City's cost of site maintenance, and, unless significantly renovated, maintenance and operating costs for any party operating the site. The buildings require some party to improve and program their use, otherwise, in the long run, they will merely take up open space that could be alternately used for outdoor public park features. Programming the buildings for the public will increase the need for transportation improvements, because many prospective building users are often quite different than trail and passive open space site users. Many building use options involve activities traditionally reliant on private auto access, repeated classes and enrichment type uses for family groups and individuals, for instance. (Other types of building uses, say for medium size, institutionally organized groups using ridesharing or shuttles, or for leisure-time "slow highway" tourists, are less affected by limited parking and can rely in walk-in service from nearby sites and organized ridesharing or van services.)

Some notable infrastructure needs associated with the buildings include:

- A sophisticated new sewage system is required for significant use by the public. The three residential septic systems on the site are not useable in a public adaptation scenario and extension of sewer to the site is unlikely.
- The main waterline from Chuckanut is probably in poor condition and subject and subject to failure near the meter.
- Electrical systems in the barn, garage and Gates-Lee House, particularly, need replacement.(The more emergent aspects of this will be addressed by the City in 2008, but actual adaptation and improvement will require more internal rewiring.)
- The fuel oil heating systems in the Gates-Lee and Cook's House are old and inefficient and piping compromises adaptation of spaces like the Gates-Lee House basement.
- There are foundation issues with the Cook's House and barn. See Item 4.0.

In spite of these looming costs the old buildings represent powerful historic themes and community values, and opportunities and assets for many citizens and, hopefully, for some prospective site operators.

Automobile access issues, transportation challenges and work-arounds. (The driveway, a semirural location, limited parking opportunities and

The main Woodstock driveway requires extensive work in order to provide for emergency vehicle break-over, visibility and stability for vehicles exiting and entering the site and to reduce conflicts. Unfortunately the fill and cross section work illustrated in the conceptual plan Item 2A.1 take a significant toll on aesthetics and character and involve significant costs.

There will only be one vehicle entrance to the Farm, although van stops for walk-in passengers can be provided at Inspiration Point and near Spokane Street. Combined with adaptation of the buildings for group uses limiting parking means that a site operator will have supply, contract for or depend on shuttle and van services and off-site parking such as that provided at the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead.

In particular, the driveway is not adequate for emergency vehicle access associated with indoor public uses. The driveway is also threatened by culvert and subgrade failures associated with the Woodstock Creek culvert and poor drainage around the Cook's House. See Item 4.0.

On-site parking is expensive to construct on the Farm due to near-surface bedrock, slopes and groundwater. A goal of protecting open areas means that parking must be limited in extent, let alone by topography. It's likely that less than 30 paved spaces will be possible given topography and objectives to preserve the orchard and lower lawn areas.

Off-site parking improvements are desirable at the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead, where City funds are budgeted for trail and trailhead work in 2012. Sixty to seventy spaces may be provided there and along its Chuckanut frontage, in addition to a shuttle vehicle stop. (Presently there are about 50 spaces, often utilized informally.)

A degree of remoteness can be an asset for some land uses, especially those with unique site qualities. A prospective Woodstock operator must make access services "part of the product" while harnessing the special character of the site in its business plan. A Woodstock operator basically has to become a transit operator or a transit provider's partner (at least with shuttle service), a champion of alternative transportation and an advocate of expanded public transportation.

The sit-down, programmed Woodstock product, say its unique spaces for meetings, social events or classes (in addition to passive trail system/trail park uses) should probably focus on:

- "Stay-put" users who remain on the site for several hours.
- Government, business, education and private institutional users with cultures and vehicles for ridesharing and shuttling.
- Families and individuals who use:
 - A. Nonmotorized transportation (foot & bike) with or without prior off-site trailhead parking for multi-modal access (N. Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead.)

- B. Expanded publicly accessible transit services. (Perhaps only a WTA extension to the N. Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead, or, as some have ventured, a new service along the entire Chuckanut Mt. corridor. An initially fair-weather, scenic-drive service from Fairhaven's hotels and business district to the Chuckanut drive parks, beaches, campground, restaurants and viewpoints could service Woodstock and serve mountainside locations where new parking is unlikely.)
 - C. An operator or partner provided shuttle service. (Connections would vary with programming and could extend into the Fairhaven Business District.)
 - D. Call-ahead parking reservations, available on a scheduled basis.
- Strategic partnerships with hospitality service providers, for visitors who can and will readily use shuttle services and occasional, "sag wagon" eco-tour type excursions by foot or bike.
 - "Slow highway" tourists who are travelling for leisure and who would visit a cultural or historic site during mild weather and daylight hours using the .4 mile trail to the trailhead parking lot.
 - Special events based on planned transit and shuttle services from several parking lots. (Concerts, festivals etc. have used parking at Hillcrest Chapel, Fairhaven Middle School and the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead. Paying participants and no-admission visitors would receive commensurately provided event transport services as part of an event package.)

Bicycle access issues.

Bicycling to the Farm involves barriers for less fit and less experienced bicyclists, which, in fact, means the majority of prospective bicyclists. Although roadway cycling is increasing many people prefer to avoid highway cycling. Addition of shoulder space or provision of one-way sidepath segments at two locations would enhance conditions for slower, southbound cyclists ascending to Woodstock. Use of the Interurban Trail by cyclists is also less than ideal for casual cyclists due to steep, sustained grades, a "pointless" elevation gain and loss and discontinuity with the "city segment" of the Trail north of Lake Samish Road. Two trail alignments have been researched west of and below Chuckanut Drive, both of which will provide access to the Farm from the NE. Neither of these alignments, nor their trail environments, are suited to bicycle travel. (See below for a description of their character and functions.)

In summary, experienced roadway cyclists will make increasing use of Chuckanut, especially if spot widening is accomplished at the "California Creek" culvert and adjacent to the Owl Gallery Woods approaching the Woodstock driveway. Making the Interurban Trail bicycle-friendly requires addressing and expensive missing link between Lake Samish Road and California Street and, ideally, a new hill-climb from the Chuckanut/California St. intersection to the original Interurban grade above Woodstock. Even with this large scale project Spokane Street remains a steep part of the route, unless a portion of the Clark property is purchased opposite the Woodstock driveway for a new connection.

Foot access/off-site trail system issues.

Construction of the "California Street" Trail between the Farm and the North Chuckanut Trailhead is vital and will provide a direct and attractive foot trail just under .4 mile in length. About \$400,000 is now earmarked for this trail (which requires a bridge over California Creek) and Woodstock access trails. This trail will be much easier to walk than the California-Interurban Trail-Spokane St route but will be more rustic than the wider Interurban route. The existing Interurban route is very steep in segments and involves a significant gain and loss of elevation prior reaching the Farm.

An additional lower elevation trail, tracing parts of an old wagon or hauling grade, is anticipated between the Kopperdahl Trail along the Chuckanut Creek shore, between the Cook's House and Creek dam and Chuckanut Village, where it enters the Village at the intersection of Okanogan Street and the alley between 18th and 19th Streets. This trail should also remain narrow and foot-oriented and should be planned as part of a wildlife management effort to bypass the rich habitat located where the Okanogan St. ditch enters Chuckanut Creek (the Chuckanut Creek Saltmarsh). This trail will serve Village residents (via the Village street grid), Briza residents (via the walkway from Sea Pines Rd. to the Chuckanut Village Marsh) and walkers entering the Village via Fairhaven Avenue at the art gallery.

An improved connection between Woodstock and the Interurban, for all trail modes, could involve purchase of a portion of the Clark property: either to reopen the old road alignment opposite the Woodstock driveway (less steep than the existing Spokane St. cut) or to construct a trail underpass below Chuckanut Drive along Woodstock Creek. (Woodstock Farm used to span Chuckanut Drive and a trail existed in place of today's Highway Fill feature, which replaced a timber highway bridge in 1953.

In summary, the two "west-of-Chuckanut" foot trails entering the Farm from the NE will not be formal in character, in stark contrast to some of the potential improvements at the Farm itself. The wider Interurban Trail route above Chuckanut may eventually be formalized but is now functionally compromised at the Chuckanut Creek fill (being merely highway shoulders), in the old City gravel pit tract (having both narrow foot trail and steep roadway braids), and NE of Spokane St. where the pleasant, wider trail grade is severely affected by a steep grade at the site of the former California St. trestle. These dramatic changes in width and character cannot be easily or cheaply resolved; the trail experience is unpredictable and hostile for users seeking a longer continuous off-street experience.

Soils, topography and geology.

Much of Woodstock is sloping and the effects of slopes on construction of parking are noted above. Trails and drives must also be constructed for stability and durability on these slopes, where drainage provisions are often critical. See Item 0.1 for information about the soil present on much of the site, probably mostly deposited as glacial till. Trail workers have remarked how unsuitable the subsoil is for tread material, where it becomes slippery in wet weather. Bedrock is close to the surface and probably will affect anticipated re-grading of the Gates-Lee House Lawn and, definitely, the widening of the driveway at Flag Pole Hill. Bedrock and soils may determine much in the manner

of how groundwater and drainage issues (Item 4.0) and sewage treatment systems are designed and constructed. The Windlift Wall, Oak Cliff, and the Inspiration Point headland are all extremely steep parts of the Farm, but they are rich, vertically organized wildlife zones and they are the stuff of its dramatic views and separation from the BNSF railway. The challenges posed here increase with the intensity of development and public use, which is partly a matter of scale. Even removal of the buildings to accommodate alternate park uses could, however, involve significant drainage and construction challenges with provision of multiple gathering areas, parking sites, trails and viewpoints.

Biological and ecosystem components, critical areas, wildland and wildlife.

Woodstock's bay and creek shorelines, its wetlands and habitats represent biological and ecological features that are also discussed below as regulatory constraints.

Woodstock is extremely rich biologically. Four distinct life zones are characterized in Item 3.3, based on the site's complex mosaic of varied wetlands and uplands. Species and habitat diversity are good things for a public site incorporating learning and passive recreation activities involving wildlife and wildland. Ecological diversity is a constraint in that development actions will and should be subject to careful scrutiny and regulation when it comes to impacts on wildland resources. However, many potential site users, managers and operators with wildlife related or enhanced missions will view species diversity and abundance as an asset and execution of things like biological assessments and mitigation as opportunities to add value to a project. The positive aesthetic, recreational and educational or demonstration values associated with the site's marine and creek shorelines come with restrictions on clearing, development and active human usage. They also involve greater obligations (required and voluntarily assumed) to mitigate upland impacts from recreation and physical plant operation on sensitive aquatic lands and resources, including commercial fin and shell fisheries, migratory and resident birds and nonfood fish. Without its wetland system, shorelines and adjacent aquatic lands things like septic systems would be easier and less expensive to maintain, but what set of alternate human uses and values would they support? Without Woodstock's marine views, along a regulated shoreline with diverse habitat values, vegetation management would arguably be much easier. Without wetlands

High quality habitat resources lay along the foot trails planned to connect the Farm with Chuckanut Village and the North Chuckanut Trailhead, chiefly the Okanogan Street Wetland and the Chuckanut Creek Saltmarsh. These resources both significantly enrich and complicate improvement of access to the Farm.

Noise.

Train and highway noise affects parts of the site at certain times and may interfere with some outdoor activities involving intense concentration and contemplation. The highest part of the Upper Bluff around Inspiration Point has some highway traffic noise, notably recreational motorcycles at times. Train from the main Burlington Northern and Santa Fe line noise affects the West Point and Lower Bluff Pasture areas, albeit relatively infrequently and more noticeably at night when highway noise is down. The quietest

parts of the site are the Creek Meadow (Creek People's Meadow) and Boathouse Beach and the Kopperdahl Overlook.

C. REGULATORY/INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

Zoning.

Relatively unimportant and largely replaced as a regulatory mechanism by public processes involving site plan adoption and redesignation of its land use classification as "Public".

Shoreline Master Program.

The State-approved shoreline classification for most of the Farm is *Natural*, the most restrictive category. The build shoreline comprising the BNSF Railway causeway is *Urban Conservancy*. While well intended to protect many of the Farm's resources, a rigid regulatory approach based on a static, contemporary view of habitat function may prove annoyingly onerous in efforts to recreate a historic meadow mosaic vegetation pattern, manage view windows, and stabilize the anthropogenically built Boathouse Midden. Preservation of the historic Woodstock boathouse is an important place-holder for managed recreation at the Boathouse Beach.

Critical areas and wetlands.

The Farm's steep slopes, shorelines and wetlands are much discussed elsewhere. Regulations applicable to these features also affect off-site impacts associated with trails and parking needed to improve access to the Farm, particularly with respect to foot trails passing over and around the Okanogan Street Wetland, "California", or Bergsma, Creek and the Chuckanut Creek Marsh.

State and Federal provisions for protection of shell middens and prehistoric and traditional native cultural resources.

State and Federal laws seek to protect the historical record comprised by archeological features (information about climate change, species changes and human history) and enable the cultural heirs of protect their traditional cultural properties and their burial sites.

Federal and State provisions and popular sentiments associated with listing, maintaining and managing historic cultural resources.

Removal, demolition and modification of the historic Woodstock buildings would be controversial, with many advocates of historic preservation and local character objecting. Listing the Farm's buildings and landscape features on State and Federal historic registries, probably as a unified project, would place some regulatory burdens on the site owner and operator. (See Topic 5 Items for a start.) Such burdens become more significant if certain grant funds are used for site improvements. Public interest and regulations concerning historic features are typically considered burdensome by

operators whose mission does not include historic preservation or enrichment of public appreciation of history.

Health Dept. regulations re wastewater treatment etc.

A major consideration for adaptation of the Farm. Woodstock's septic systems are old and cannot be used for residential structures adapted for public use. Interim operation for limited public use will have to involve temporary arrangements such as the portable restrooms used at public trailheads. Food service facilities and arrangements are also under the purview of health regulations. There is a relatively minor asbestos abatement issue involving replacement of the hot water heating system in the Gates-Lee House.

Building/fire codes.

Adaptation of the Farm buildings for public uses requires a series of expensive improvements. These include, at least, improvements such as the following:

1. A new 8" fire supply main from Chuckanut Drive to a new hydrant in the core of the building complex, with a 4 standpipe extension to a point near the north wall of the barn and the Cow Man's Cottage. (See item 0.9.)
2. Driveway widening and vertical and horizontal curve realignment similar to that conceptually illustrated in Item 2A.1.
3. Provision of ADA access improvements for public areas. (Appears quite feasible for Cooks House and central buildings except barn basement, Gates-Lee House upper floor.
4. Sprinklering of indoor gathering areas if certain occupancy thresholds reached.
5. Various electrical system upgrades and replacements.

WADOT/City authority regarding highway frontage improvements.

Transaction costs are higher SR 11 related improvements because roles and responsibilities for various design and operations matters are shared or coordinated between the City of Bellingham and WADOT. Speed reduction on SR 11/Chuckanut Drive will be desirable to complement improved cross-walks for Farm access at Spokane and California Streets and with increased bike use of the highway. However, a reduction from 35 MPH to 25 MPH will be administratively difficult while average speeds remain higher and these crosswalks, surface lighted and signed, are part of an interim package that may build justification for a speed reduction. Highway channelization and barrier modifications will affect the main driveway design, a needed walkway to the Spokane St. crosswalk, and shoulder provision approaching the Farm.

Highway related improvements affecting the Farm include:

- Speed controls (reduction of legal base speed to 25 MPH)
- Spot shoulder widening for southbound bicyclists
- Crosswalks for foot trails serving Farm at California St. and Spokane St.
- Driveway improvements at the Farm and an expanded North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead

- Scenic highway amenities like Cascadian them guard rails (could thematically join several heritage sites)
- One or two shuttle vehicle stops (in addition to that planned at Inspiration Point)
- Construction of a missing link trail segment over Chuckanut Creek (part of Interurban Trail)
- Possible construction of a round-about or transit turn around at the Lake Samish Road/Chuckanut intersection to extend WTA service to the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead.

Neighborhood stakeholder interests: Chuckanut and Chuckanut Village Neighborhoods in particular (traffic, privacy, noise).

These neighborhoods, and the South Neighborhood east of Chuckanut Drive, are very interested in their ability to use and access the Farm and its trail systems. Chuckanut Village residents are particularly concerned about use of local streets and beach areas by out-of-neighborhood motorists, particularly car-supported parties and drivers exploring for access to the shoreline and Woodstock. As in virtually all changing neighborhood situations there is also concern about loss of privacy associated with recreational walkers from outside Chuckanut Village, including noise and wildlife impacts. Chuckanut residents outside of the City Limits are very concerned about traffic interactions on SR 11 and some with residential area parking for visitors to destinations like Teddy Bear Cove Park and Woodstock. More bicyclists on Chuckanut, more people crossing Chuckanut and more driveway movements on to and off of the Drive are part of an ongoing trend along the entire SR 11 “mountainside” corridor, but public improvements are particularly disconcerting to longtime Chuckanut residents. With transportation improvements and adaptation Woodstock is potentially a close-to-home neighborhood meeting and recreation site for all of the above neighborhoods.

Native community stakeholder/tradition-holder interests.

Lummi, Samish and others have significant concerns about impacts to ancient cultural resources on the Farm and about maintaining traditional cultural property associated with Woodstock and Chuckanut Bay. Native people do not want others speaking for them or interpreting their traditions; they have formalities and recommendations associated with sites like Woodstock.

Treaty of Mukilteo.

Fin- and shellfish harvesting rights to the public waters and bedlands adjacent to and comprising part of the Farm property have been maintained and were asserted by native treaty signers in 1855, as interpreted by the courts and subject to traditional and historic accounts. Native treaty signers also reserved a privilege to harvest game, roots and berries on open and unclaimed land (nearby Chuckanut Rocks being unclaimed, for starters.)

Bellingham taxpayer/stakeholder interests; Greenway voters and citizens in general.

Woodstock was purchased using 1997 Greenway Funds provided as part of a levy heavily favoring preservation of wildlands and provision of trail access to and through such lands, as opposed to providing or developing parks for active recreation, for instance. Bellingham citizens expect to be able to use and enjoy urban open space purchased by the public, although in varying degrees and considering various levels of access. (Much of the greenway land base is generally expected to be accessible by trails served by occasional trailhead parking lots, if nothing else, and many citizens continue to rank improving trail experiences and passive conservancy sites as more important than developing parks.) Any party seeking to improve and operate the Woodstock building compound must address widespread and intense public advocacy for preserving trail and trailhead access to Woodstock, particularly its outer shoreline and woodlands, but also conveniently through the core of its building compound, where visitors will expect restrooms, sitting areas and amenities. While the public increasingly understands the need to manage and regulate parking and limit auto impacts it is doubtful that there will be public support for closure of drop-in, on-demand walking around the building compound and through it on one or more direct alignments which allow walkers to enjoy the layout and design of the building complex. Artful and responsible design is called for in designing and adapting yards and building spaces that may be periodically closed to the casual visitors. Managed parking, for instance, should permit ride-share and shuttle-based group uses across a wide spectrum of the community. Woodstock's shore and scenic view experiences are some of the best in the County and must be accessible—site themes and uses that favor one or few population or interest groups, and which appear to displace many others from such a unique and desirable place, will be subject to challenges from the community.

State Recreation and Conservation Office property interests.

Washington State holds a deed of right over the portion of Woodstock outside of and encircling the building compound and Upper Bluff. (The boundary of this line is shown with a light dashed line on the Item 0.4 and 0.5 base maps; it's light green on the color version.) Within this outer part of the site there can be no commercial uses or museum or learning center type facilities, unless careful and time consuming adjustments are made to the Deed of Right and approved by both the City and State. Essentially any use of the "out holding" part of the farm property will require a Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approved "conversion" involving substitution and encumbering similar property for the property withdrawn from the Deed of Right.