

To:  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Subject: Fw: Transportation Mailin - Re: Fairhaven and Parking District(s)

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----- Forwarded by Heather J Higgins/pw/cob on 03/12/2012 08:48 AM -----

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Dear Commissioner McCabe, Mayor Linville, et al,

I find it regrettable that John Servais, in reaction to the ludicrous street-closing plan proposed by the Transportation Commission, accused Ms. Biciunas of "hatching a plot." I am sure, from her negative reaction to the plan, that she was not behind it.

However, I find her characterization of the Parking District just as ludicrous. Those "special privileges" were the result of the participants paying for the development of much parking in the district. The Parking District was never seen as a comprehensive parking plan. It was, as some have asserted, a "bandaid" that served us well for many years. And the notion that a "parking plan" exists is also mistaken. There is no comprehensive parking plan for Fairhaven. She basically (ironically) goes on to say that in this email, after asserting that a plan exists.

The parking district HAS been part of the solution to the parking issue in Fairhaven. But, it is not (nor did it ever intend to be) the be all and end all solution to parking issues in the district. No one has been more vocal in a call for a comprehensive parking plan than those of us who formed the Fairhaven Parking District. A comprehensive parking plan is an integral part of a comprehensive urban village plan--especially for a tier one urban village. There is, as Ms. Biciunas asserts, a need for creative solutions for parking in Fairhaven (proof positive that a comprehensive plan does not exist), and I too urge the commission to withdraw, or soundly defeat, its previous proposal, and spend its time getting a comprehensive parking plan for Fairhaven.

Thank you, once again, for serving the citizens of the City of Bellingham.

Sincerely,

Chuck Robinson

On Mar 11, 2012, at 11:02 PM, Vince Bičiūnas wrote:

Dear Commissioner McCabe, Mayor Linville, Directors Carlson and Thomas, and Staff:

I would like to make some comments about the Fairhaven Neighborhood and Urban Village Plan and the Transportation and Parking elements. But first, I would like to set the record straight about allegations made by Mr. Servais on March 2, 2012 in an email to the Chairman of the

Transportation Commission Jim McCabe, and cc'd to Mayor Linville, Planning Director Jeff Thomas, Public Works Director Ted Carlson, and others.

I would like everyone concerned to know that Mr Servais' suppositions stated as "I have reason to believe" that members of the Transportation Commission worked with me (Vince Biciunas) and perhaps others to write up the TC draft proposal as a "breach of public process" is totally untrue and an unfortunate projection. I did not work with anyone on that document and did not know of its existence until I saw it posted on [cob.org](http://cob.org). There is no "illegal document that has been hidden from the public." I found that draft on the [cob.org](http://cob.org) website the day before the meeting in the Public Comments section. (And did wonder at the location for it.)

Because Mr. Servais also says "I welcome any corrections of fact contained in this email" I would also like to add that neither Fairhaven Neighbors nor myself have retained any legal services. This again is Mr. Servais making an assumption, merely because Mr. Bode was sitting in a chair next to me. Mr. Bode was in attendance at the TC meeting retained by Mr. Carlsen, an interested party and stakeholder in Fairhaven as a property and business owner. For full disclosure, I can add that Mr. Carlsen is also a member of the board of Fairhaven Neighbors, but again, there is no legal services connection between the neighborhood association and Mr. Bode or any other attorney. Mr. Carlsen is, of course, free to do what he considers appropriate.

Here is the meat of the matter:

a "parking plan" exists for Fairhaven, together with a Parking District, and both are plainly inadequate to fulfill the existing parking demand. Indeed, they have no capacity to address future demand. Even though I only saw and heard at the last TC meeting a benign proposal (Recommendation #11) to explore "best locations for pedestrian-only streets," that issue now seems exaggerated. Truly, how could a hotel business operate without vehicle access, as just one example. The important thing to recognize is that not one single on-street parking space is expendable for merchants, most of whom are tenants, because some Fairhaven landlords rely on the substandard on-street supply to provide all parking for the Parking District, or else the off street lots which are themselves ripe for development.

Therefore, I ask, what about TC discussion of the Parking District? City documents that outline parking plans and the establishment of the Parking District, as well as comments and suggestions, have been submitted more than a week ago by Mr. Carlsen. They have yet to be posted on the [cob.org](http://cob.org) Public Comments link. Those documents indicate that substantial off-street parking is needed within or adjacent to the Parking District boundary to provide even minimal parking. Parking scarcity in Fairhaven is exacerbated by the special privileges accorded members of the Parking District, and the diagonal parking solutions of the 90's don't necessarily solve today's problems for easy, safe bus and bicycle access, and parking for larger than compact-sized vehicles. Is there a possible way the Parking District could become part of the solution now? We could use some creative ideas here. This is a much more salient topic for discussion, I believe, than the distracting suggestion of pedestrian-only streets.

I do not have the answers to these questions, and I trust that the professionals in Public Works, Planning and the Transportation Commission can and will take this on.

Thank you for all the work completed to date. I know it is a huge and complicated undertaking. I hope we can go forward with a more realistic understanding for all the players, and continue to assume the best of each other.

Yours truly,  
Vince Biciunas, President  
Fairhaven Neighbors

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