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City of Bellingham  
Planning

SUNNYLAND  
PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AMENDMENT  
Submitted 12-03-07

The submitted materials include the following:

A letter of intent. Four pages

Neighborhood Plan Amendment and Zoning Table. Two pages.

Survey Data and Public Meeting Feedback. Thirty pages

2008 N-7  
OP-1

## **SUNNYLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AMENDMENT**

**AREA 8** The area includes Squalicum Park Block 4, lots 9,10,11,12, 53.34ft of lot 13, and lots 36,37,38,39. The area is approximately four acres in size, and is currently vacant land. Area 8 is surrounded by lots zoned "residential single, detached, low and medium density". A large church owned property lies on the west side, and is a permitted conditional use.

This entire area was owned by the Washington Dept of Transportation for many years, and most of the area was zoned for "Public Use". In 2007, the entire area was sold to Sunset Commons LLC. As a result of the change from public ownership to private ownership, default zoning, required by municipal code, was immediately put in place. About ninety percent of the area is now zoned "residential single, low density", and about ten percent is zoned "residential single, medium density".

All of Area 8 should be rezoned "residential single - medium density". The description of density should be given in terms of "dwelling units per square foot", prior to any dedication of land for public purposes. This is intended to provide flexibility, and efficiency in lot design, and will result in lots of varying sizes. The per square foot density of Area 8 should be set in the higher end of the medium density range. A density of 6250 sq ft per dwelling unit average overall density is recommended. After Area 8 is improved with roads and sidewalks, defined lot sizes should range between 3000sf and 5000sf. "Attached" residential-single housing should be permitted in Area 8. This would require the addition of a new "Use Qualifier" to the "residential-single" zoning table. Area 8 could then be developed with a mix of "attached" and "detached" single-family homes. Attached "row homes" should be limited to two dwelling units. Attached single-family dwelling units should be permitted only in an area 150ft south of the Sunset Dr right of way boundary line. Detached single-family homes should be permitted throughout Area 8.

In accordance with the character of the established, surrounding neighborhood, each new dwelling unit built in Area 8 should be sited on its own defined lot, with a front and rear yard. Each lot should be served by a public street with sidewalks. Large homes built on small lots are not desired in this area. Lot coverage requirements, and yard setbacks should not be reduced.

A design overlay district for Area 8 should be enacted to ensure architectural style, height and mass blends with the character of the established neighborhood. Specific elements should include at least half of the housing to include front porches. All buildings should have pitched roofs, although a variety of pitched roof styles could reflect the diversity of styles in the existing neighborhood. No garages should be allowed on the front of the property, but rather on the rear. Providing both small one story homes, and larger two story homes, will retain some affordability within the neighborhood as well as make it representative of the established pattern. With pleasing and attractive homes sharing similar historic characteristics, we can ensure the vitality and character of the established residential neighborhood.

Traffic generated by development in Area 8 should be directed to both Sunset Dr, and to Illinois St. The site design must prohibit north-south cut through auto traffic between Sunset and Illinois, but allow for pedestrian, bicycle and emergency vehicle access.

**AREA 8 LAND USE DESIGNATION – RESIDENTIAL SINGLE, MEDIUM DENSITY**

**ZONING TABLE**

**ZONING: residential-single**

**USE QUALIFIER; detached/attached with new single-family use qualifier (as described in the Neighborhood Plan)**

**DENSITY:** 6250 sq ft per dwelling unit

**PREREQUISITE CONSIDERATIONS:** construct public roads to serve Area 8, enact a design overlay district incorporating design themes described in the Neighborhood Plan.

**SPECIAL REGULATIONS:** access from Sunset Dr and Illinois St. Through traffic between Sunset and Illinois prohibited. (Except for pedestrian and bicycle traffic). All homes will be sited on a defined lot, with a front and rear yard. All homes will front on a public street. Street standards may be reduced. Lot coverage requirements, and yard setbacks may not be reduced. Attached single-family dwelling units should be permitted only in an area 150ft south of the Sunset Dr right of way boundary line.

**Sunnyland Neighborhood Association**  
P.O. Box 2515, Bellingham, WA 98227

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Date: December 1, 2007

To: Tim Stewart, Planning Director, City of Bellingham  
James Bishop, Chair, Bellingham Planning Commission  
Bob Ryan, Chair, Bellingham City Council

Re: Letter of intent requesting rezone of Area 8 of the Sunnyland Neighborhood Association

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Dear Mr. Stewart:

On behalf of the Sunnyland Neighborhood Association, we request that you docket the rezone of Area 8 of Sunnyland Neighborhood. Attached is proposed language to update the Sunnyland Neighborhood Plan, and attachments documenting our public process and consensus reached to date. We understand that our proposal may change through the public process to follow, but our proposal expresses many of the values and vision of the neighborhood. We encourage docketing for 2008 to further engage the City, the landowners, and the public in crafting a rezone for this area that meets as many stakeholders' needs as possible.

### **Background and Process**

Until early 2007, Area 8 was owned by the Washington Dept of Transportation for many years. The change from public ownership to private ownership triggered an immediate rezone to default zoning for nearly all of the property as "detached, single family residential, minimum lot size 20,000sf." In early 2007, the Bellingham City Council turned down a proposed docketing of the site submitted by the landowners, Sunset Commons LLC, instructing the owners to work with the neighborhood through the neighborhood plan review process. During review of the docketing proposal by the Planning Commission and City Council, nearly all public comment opposed commercial development of the site.

The SNA Planning Workgroup, created by the SNA Board of Directors in November 2006 and open to any interested participants, began a systematic review of each area in the neighborhood plan in February, 2007. Area 8 presented the most immediate need, and the Planning Workgroup engaged the Cornwall Neighborhood and the landowners in May. The landowners joined the workgroup, and we were able to quickly come to consensus on two issues: the area should include only single family residential development, and a cut-through street between Illinois and Sunset should be avoided to reduce north-south cut-through traffic onto neighborhood streets.

By August, the SNA Planning Workgroup and the landowners came to consensus on Seven Principles (see attached survey for list of principles) that we wanted to guide the

rezone and development process, but we did not agree on proposed density. In the absence of any specific written plan offered by the landowners, the SNA Planning Workgroup crafted a draft rezone of Area 8 that reflects many of the values identified in the 2006 Neighborhood Survey, as well as the Seven Principles. In September the landowners presented two visual representations of their ideas but no written plans. The SNA Planning Workgroup hosted two neighborhood public meetings for neighbors to learn about and discuss the landowners' visual representations (Oct. 17) and the SNA proposed rezone language (Oct. 30). The meetings, as well as an online survey to give input on the proposals, was advertised signs posted around the neighborhood, meeting notices in local newspapers, and by a postcard mailing to all residents and landowners in Sunnyland, as well as all landowners within 1000 feet of Area 8 in the Cornwall neighborhood.

The proposed neighborhood plan amendment was edited and modified to reflect the feedback gained through work with the landowners and the public process.

### **Request for Planning Director Sponsorship**

The follow sections of this letter address the Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) requirements for amendments to neighborhood plans Group A type proposed amendments, as we are requesting the Planning Director to sponsor the proposed docketing to move the process forward so we may use 2008 to engage more discussions with the City, landowners and public to come to a final plan amendment that addresses as many interests as possible.

#### **1. Consistency with Comprehensive Plan**

Among other CompPlan elements, the following are supported by this proposal:

- VB1: The proposal supports "distinctive neighborhoods," with special conditions that reflect Sunnyland Neighborhood character.
- VB2: The proposal accommodates growth and infill.
- VB15: The proposal promotes pedestrian and bicycle connectivity through the new development.
- VB25: The proposal encourages mixing housing types.
- LU27: The proposal focuses increasing density in an undeveloped area, keeping existing character intact, and promotes development "in a manner consistent with the neighborhood's existing character, building style and height, density, and development pattern."
- LU29: While keeping with LU27, the proposed zoning increases infill by increasing density from the surrounding single family low-density to single family medium-density, "at least six units per acre."
- HG-1: The proposal encourages "a healthy mix of housing sizes, types and prices."

#### **3. Accommodating Infill**

The proposal far exceeds the new housing units estimated for Sunnyland in CompPlan Table LU-16c, which estimates 17 new housing units.



#### 4. Stakeholder Consensus

The following table summarizes consensus around the principles that shaped the proposal. We ask that these principles be considered as the proposal is shaped by input by the Planning Department, Planning Commission, City Council, and the public process set in motion by the requested docketing. See Background section, above, for description of outreach to solicit stakeholder feedback via the SNA Planning Survey. See the attachments to this letter for details about the SNA Planning Survey and the two public meetings held to get input.

Areas of strong consensus **indicated in bold**.

Principle	Consensus by Sunset Commons LLC and SNA Planning Workgroup?	SNA Planning Survey 81 Responses	Notes
Principle 1: Default zoning of the site would create large lots (20,000 sq ft). I value smaller lots, integrated with Sunnyland neighborhood's character, and which accommodates urban infill to limit sprawl.	Yes	<b>83% Agree/ Agree Strongly</b>	
Principle 2: The site should be developed for single-family residential use. I value housing for people instead of commercial uses, and I want to discourage commercial development along this part of Sunset Drive.	Yes	<b>93% Agree/ Agree Strongly</b>	
Principle 3: I would support a mix of single-family dwelling units, varying sizes and prices, including attached and detached single family homes, to accommodate a variety of people.	Yes	54% Agree/ Agree Strongly; 12% Neutral; 31% Disagree/ Disagree Strongly	Attached/detached housing types and traffic issues generated the most discussion at the public meetings. These issues should be addressed more fully through the public process following docketing.
Principle 4: No north-south vehicle traffic cut-through should be allowed between Sunset and Illinois. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be accommodated. I value a walkable/bikable neighborhood with public access to sidewalks and trails.	Yes	<b>86% Agree/ Agree Strongly</b>	
Principle 5: Vehicle access should be allowed from Sunset onto a new street to service the northern part of the site, and from Illinois onto a new street to service the southern part of the site. Vehicle access should not be allowed	Yes	<b>79% Agree/ Agree Strongly</b>	

from new homes directly onto Sunset or Illinois. We value minimizing negative traffic impacts for both northern and southern neighbors.			
Principle 6: Design of new dwelling units should maintain neighborhood architectural character. The characteristics of front porches, pitched roofs, and detached garages at the rear of properties should be maintained.	Yes	91% Agree/ Agree Strongly	
Principle 7: Landscaping should blend the site into the existing Sunnyland neighborhood, minimize visual impacts of development for neighbors to the north, and provide a sound barrier between Sunset and new housing.	Yes	87% Agree/ Agree Strongly	
The City's new Comprehensive plan calls for infill of new dwelling units into existing neighborhoods, while protecting the valued character of established neighborhoods. How many single family dwelling units do you believe should be built on this Area 8 lot? 12, 24, 36, 49	No	8: 3.0% 12: 28.8% 24: 50.0% 36: 15.1% 49: 3.0%	

We are confident that the requirements have been met for this proposal to be initiated via Group A type proposed amendment process, and for the proposal to be docketed for 2008. The Sunnyland Neighborhood Association believes the proposal reflects the principles outlined above, and we look forward to engaging the public process that will continue shaping a Neighborhood Plan amendment that upholds the spirit and intent of the principles, and meetings the interests of the landowners, neighbors, and the SNA.

Sincerely on behalf of the SNA Board of Directors,



Theresa Tripp, Chair

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**SNA Board of Directors:**

Chair: Theresa Tripp

Co-Chair: Erin Macri

Treasurer: Hugh Conroy

Co-secretaries: Mary Anne Stuckart and Margaret Lyons

Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Board: Patrick McKee

Area one Rep: Jeannie Fitzsimmons

Area Two Rep: Polly Gilbert

Area Three Rep: Open

## Appendix

### Survey Data and Public Meeting Feedback

<b>Section 1: Detailed Survey Data</b>	<b>1</b>
Principle 2	5
Principle 3	7
Principle 4	10
Principle 5	13
Principle 6	16
Principle 7	18
Density	20
What other principles would you like the neighborhood to consider when rezoning Area 8?	21
<b>Section 2: Proposed Sunnyland Neighborhood Plan Amendment Feedback</b>	<b>24</b>
PROPOSED SUNNYLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AMENDMENT	24
ZONING TABLE	25
Comments Regarding Section 1	25
Comments Regarding Section 2	26
Comments Regarding Section 3	27
Comments Regarding Section 4	27
<b>Section 3: Public Meeting Evaluations</b>	<b>29</b>
October 17 <sup>th</sup> Meeting	29
October 30 <sup>th</sup> Meeting	30

#### Section 1: Detailed Survey Data

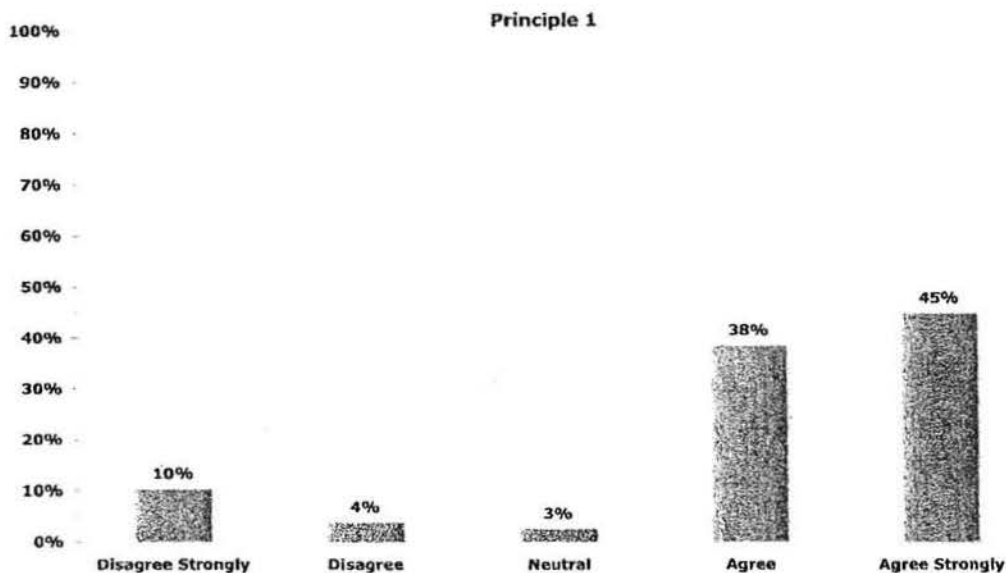
The Sunnyland Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan Work Group (SNA-NPWG) created a survey to assess neighbors in both Sunnyland and surrounding neighborhoods about a rezoning proposal for Area 8 in the Sunnyland neighborhood. The survey was available at the SNA web site and at two public meetings. Surveys were mailed to those who requested.

Statistics were calculated using data from complete surveys submitted on or after October 17, 2007. A survey is considered complete when it includes the respondents name and address. 81 of 98 surveys submitted met this criterion. Percentages were calculated based on the total number of responses not the total number of completed surveys (i.e. if 3 respondents did not select an answer for a particular question the percentage was calculated using 78 as the total number of answers not 81).



93% of respondents are homeowners in the Sunnyland neighborhood or surrounding neighborhoods such as Cornwall Park and Lettered Streets neighborhoods.

**Principle 1: Default zoning of the site would create large lots (20,000 sq ft). I value smaller lots, integrated with Sunnyland neighborhood's character, and which accommodates urban infill to limit sprawl.**



**Disagree Strongly**

If the rear of the property is opened to Humboldt St, traffic flow down thru to Alabama will increase considerably. With addition of Trader Joes, and the impending Social Security office, people avoiding the busy intersection of James and Alabama is already BAD. Pleas for more traffic control at Humboldt and E. North have fallen on deaf ears. Not to mention, I can foresee crime increasing if it were to have apartments built in that location.

The larger the lot the better. The fewer people and cars the better. Allow infilling w/ individual accessory dwellings.

Maintain character

Smaller lots are nice, so let's create a small cluster with center courtyard and play area

The deer live in the back of the large lots along Illinois.

**Disagree**

I value the default zoning. Smaller lots would create more congestion in an already congested area.



I simply don't like the idea of too many smaller lots. If you look to the north and to the east of the site, the lots are large as well. I really would like to avoid overcrowding the neighborhood. Last little piece of Sunnyland can reflect the rest of it.

**Neutral**

Larger lots would be nice if it promoted more green space with houses not larger than the typical/larger craftsman found in the neighborhood.

**Agree**

Limit infill in relation to neighborhood

Infill is desirable. However it must be in keeping with this burgeoning, exciting and charming neighborhood.

This more conducive to maintaining the character as a young family neighborhood.

Up to a point. Don't OVERFILL! Need to retain neighborhood character. 10 per acre top. better to maintain single family character.

All lots should remain single family

Should match existing neighborhood

Lot size 6,000 sqft, single-family residence ONLY.

I would like to see something consistent to other Sunnyland residential lot size.

I would be open to the idea of a co-housing project on this site.

It would be nice to have consistent lot sizes.

**Agree Strongly**

Density within neighborhood character is needed to prevent sprawl.

I believe we should fill in the city's empty lots in the most efficient manner, so we don't eat up all the farmland with housing.

Large lots would encourage apartment complexes

I think family homes would be better.

2,0000 sq ft. is nearly a 1/2 acre and is an absurd lot size for our neighborhood which does not typically have lots larger than 5000 sq ft. In addition, smaller lot sizes will tend to lower the final price of those homes, thus providing more affordable housing to Bellingham residents.

If possible we should change zoning to stop any new rentals properties being built. I realize that this project would never be subject to that.

20,000 is unreasonable 5,000 is

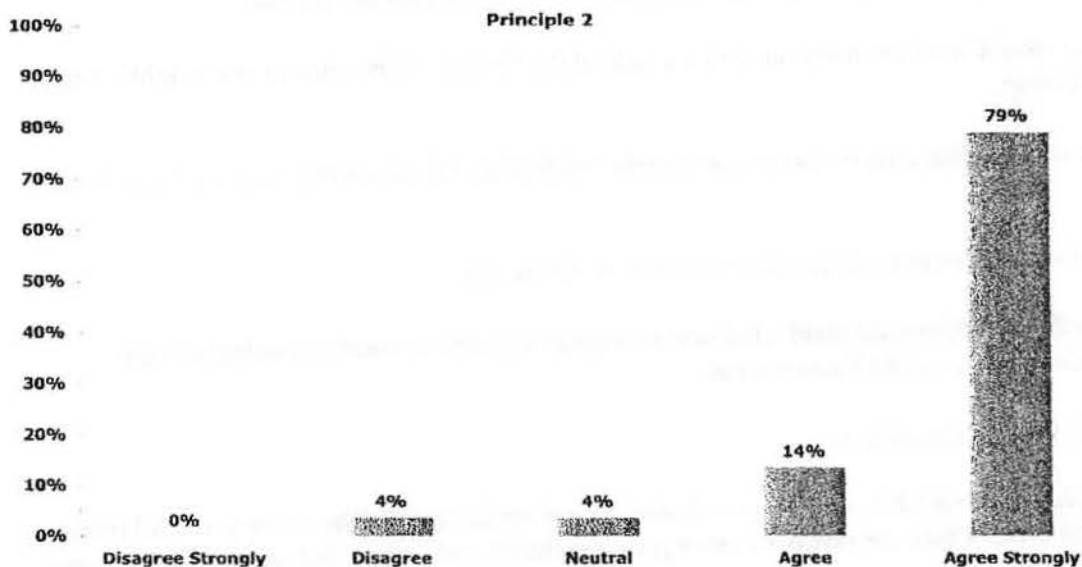
Best use of land

20kft2 lots weird, waste of time. 5kft2 lots are us-people who move in will be like us, which is selfish but true.

Large lots in the Sunnyland neighborhood may facilitate developments that are not in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. I believe this will contribute to a lower standard of living and quality of life in the neighborhood.

## Principle 2

The site should be developed for single-family residential use. I value housing for people instead of commercial uses, and I want to discourage commercial development along this part of Sunset Drive.



### Disagree Strongly

No comments

### Disagree

Multifamily is ok as long as parking is underground and it looks nice

Some commercial space, coffee shop, small market, decreases reliance on cars for locals  
I wouldn't mind a coffee bar with room to sit (not a drive through), barber/beauty salon, bakery, little restaurant, etc

### Neutral

No comments

### Agree

Reduced traffic on Sunset and Illinois St

I value housing for people and not commercial use. Large lots and single-family homes.

### Agree Strongly

Commercial development is not wanted in our neighborhood.

I do not want a north/south thoroughfare.

Residential zoning all around the site so this should be the same.

Light industrial sites are available near Harmony Motors on Grant and around.

Yes! Who would want the mess on the East side of the freeway to be sited in our neighborhood?  
No spot zoning.

Since the surrounding area is almost completely residential, I think it's important to keep it that way.

We need to keep commercial development east of the freeway

Let's keep the neighborhood residential and encourage retailers to conduct business in our beautiful downtown and Fairhaven areas.

I prefer the neighborhood as is.

I feel that this area, which has been a residential area since the turn of the century should remain a residential area. There are plenty of other great neighborhoods where businesses & commerce would fit better.

There is plenty of commercial use south and east. Our neighborhood does not need to be surrounded by commercial use.

Fits character of the neighborhood

Commercial across freeway and down James from N strte?? to Sate/Iowa

Build communities

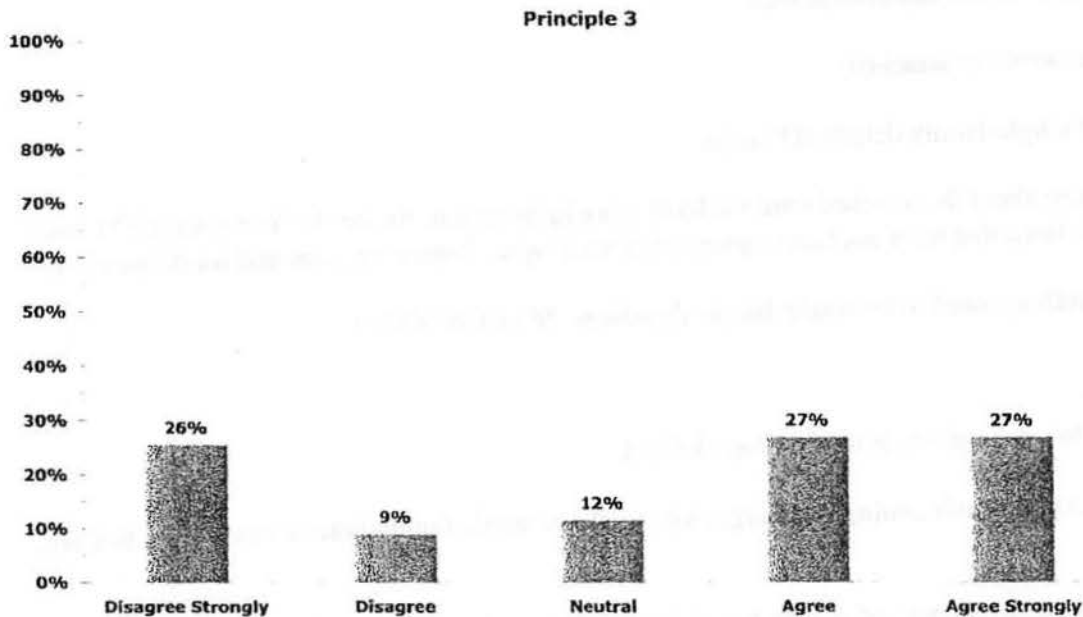
Maintain character

Commercial development should be limited to James Street in this part of the Neighborhood. There is plenty of commercially zoned space along James and Alabama Streets, we do not need nor want additional commercial property in the vicinity.



### Principle 3

**I would support a mix of single-family dwelling units, varying sizes and prices, including attached and detached single-family homes, to accommodate a variety of people.**



#### Disagree Strongly

Single family, detached only! The rest of the neighborhood is detached and this site should be also. As far as sizes and prices the market should dictate this.

I want single-family homes only.

This neighborhood doesn't need any apartments/town houses if that's what you mean. There is plenty of that on E. Sunset Dr. east of the highway. The police already have their hands busy keeping that area patrolled and safe. I don't think they want another crime zone. To erect apartments or town houses here would be to ignore the essence, character and tradition of this particular area of the Sunnyland neighborhood.

This neighborhood is improving as exemplified in many remodeling improvements on existing homes. If we can stop investors from coming in to create rentals that is a good thing.

Multi family dwellings WILL increase traffic flow and crime in our neighborhood. We don't want another Texas street!

I believe we need to develop houses that are in character with the average size craftsman style homes with a detached garage in the neighborhoods. Aesthetic architecture combined with a reasonable size will promote green space, affordable housing for middle income professionals like teachers etc... and complement the existing great houses in the neighborhood. There are many great model craftsman houses in the Cornwall and Sunnyland neighborhood.

Does not fit in the neighborhood

1 house to 1 lot No association fees

No town-homes or attached

I support single-family detached homes.

I'm not sure about the attached until we have more information. As for the "cottage style" I have more questions that have not been answered by developer. Regarding price and lot delineation.

These dwellings need to be single-family dwellings. NO CONDOS!!!

**Disagree**

Question too general needs to be more defined

I think that the default zoning with larger lots can have single-family homes that vary in size and price.

Concerned about upkeep and ownership of town-homes and carriage houses. Who would be responsible for the upkeep in this situation? Would like to see a majority of the space go to detached.

no condos, no townhouses on Illinois

A mix of prices and sizes is fine, but NO attached or 'town house' style units should be allowed.

**Neutral**

I'd have to see the site plan, I prefer one which encourages ownership over rentals

I suppose it would depend on what the mix was. I certainly don't want to see the site filled with rental duplexes/triplexes or larger apartments.

I need to give this more thought.

It would depend on the look.

**Agree**

This is fine, so long as there is no large multiplex.

There will be more home

Good use of the land

and a bit of small commercial. If residents were above the commercial couldn't be too smelly or loud

I'm not sure about the attached until we have more information. As for the "cottage style" I have more questions that have not been answered by developer. Regarding price and lot delineation.

I think it is important that affordable housing be part of the project, but enough outside space be left for outside living as well.

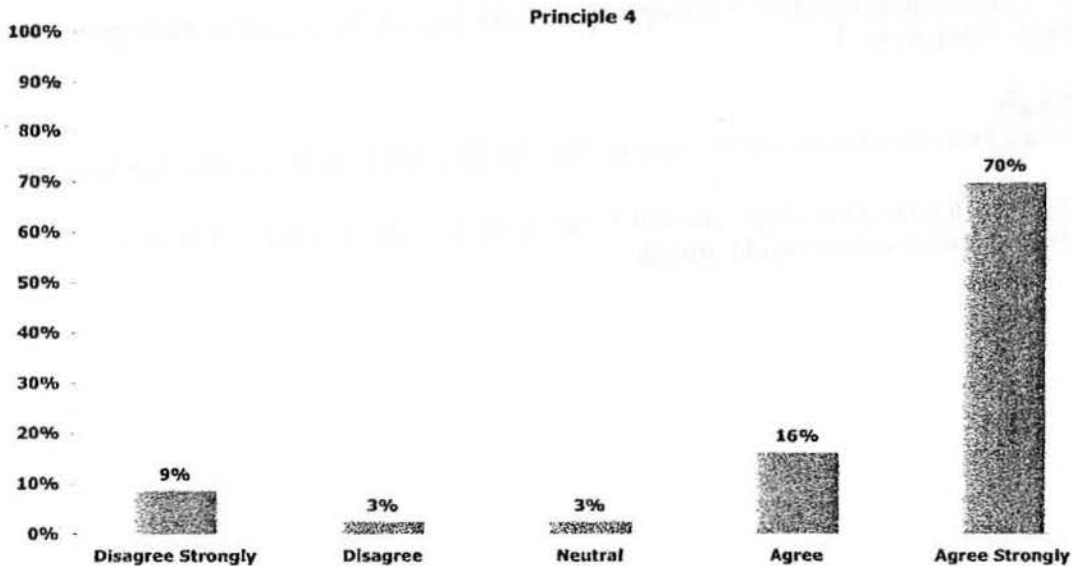
**Agree Strongly**

I think it would keep the character of the neighborhood if the houses aren't cookie-cutter houses.

I feel strongly that a mix of housing types will ensure more-affordable housing than larger detached single families homes would provide.

#### Principle 4

**No north-south vehicle traffic cut-through should be allowed between Sunset and Illinois. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be accommodated. I value a walkable/bikable neighborhood with public access to sidewalks and trails.**



#### Disagree Strongly

With this particular point I adamantly oppose access between Sunset and Illinois. This would create a significant traffic impact that would change the entire 2800 block stretch from James street to Cornwall. Unacceptable.

I work and own a business on Sunset Dr. and one thing that Sunset could use is another street to get people off of it and onto where they are going. A North-South traffic cut-through would be a great idea that would alleviate traffic off Sunset before the traffic congestion around I-5. I would recommend that Humboldt be extended right up to Sunset Dr. and a small park be installed at the jog in the East property boundary.

Too much traffic specifically on Illinois

North-south direction access is not the same as ped-bike friendly

Who would use a N/S road but us? There would be more traffic near the site but less further away, less distance to travel, less waiting @ lights. Saves gas, lowers air pollution. Should include major traffic calming bike lanes separated, narrow road., lots of trees, etc. Maybe one-way north bound?

"Cut-through" traffic is a perceived problem. There's no logical reason to cut through to gain access between Sunset and our neighborhood. A WELL DESIGNED local access through connection should be provided so the new residences aren't forced onto either street. Lack of a through connection will actually result in MORE traffic using Illinois Street.

Grant Street has tons of children between 1-10 years old. Cars constantly travel between 35-50 MPH up Grant Street. I would GREATLY oppose using GRANT street as a cut-through. BAD IDEA and an accident waiting to happen if it isn't already.

**Disagree**

A single cut-through should run next to the church, with at least one stop sign between Sunset and Illinois to keep traffic pace reasonable.

**Neutral**

No comments

**Agree**

No north-south cut-through should be allowed between Sunset and Illinois. The area south of sunset is one where neighbors frequently walk, run, jog, and bike--Having the neighborhood as a short cut for Sunset traffic would change the neighborhood completely.

We need more places to walk/bike

Keeping the units few is the best way to minimize the traffic impact

**Agree Strongly**

No north south street from Illinois to sunset

Creating a cut-through would completely and negatively change the layout and feeling of this neighborhood. Part of why we live in the Sunnyland neighborhood is that we value the small neighborhood sense of community and believe a cut-through would negate that.

Use existing arterial streets for the increased traffic. Several families on the block (including us) walk and ride our bikes to the store and downtown. Please promote sensible and green growth by limiting newly developed arterial streets.

It would be too easy for a north-south road to be used as a short-cut for vehicles going through.

It just makes sense. We don't need people racing through Sunset and Illinois St. Driving along James St and Ellis St provide more than adequate routes to cut through while providing little additional impact on those already living along Illinois St. and James

It would keep the traffic down.

I prefer a pedestrian friendly neighborhood.

There are so many kids and automobiles should not be granted access to Sunset through our neighborhood.

As well as Humboldt to Alabama st!!!!

I believe it is a must that the developer create a pedestrian and bike corridor through the property with green space on either side.

N-S access would change the neighborhood

We've done so much to limit/slow car traffic along Illinois, it would be a mistake to undo that progress.

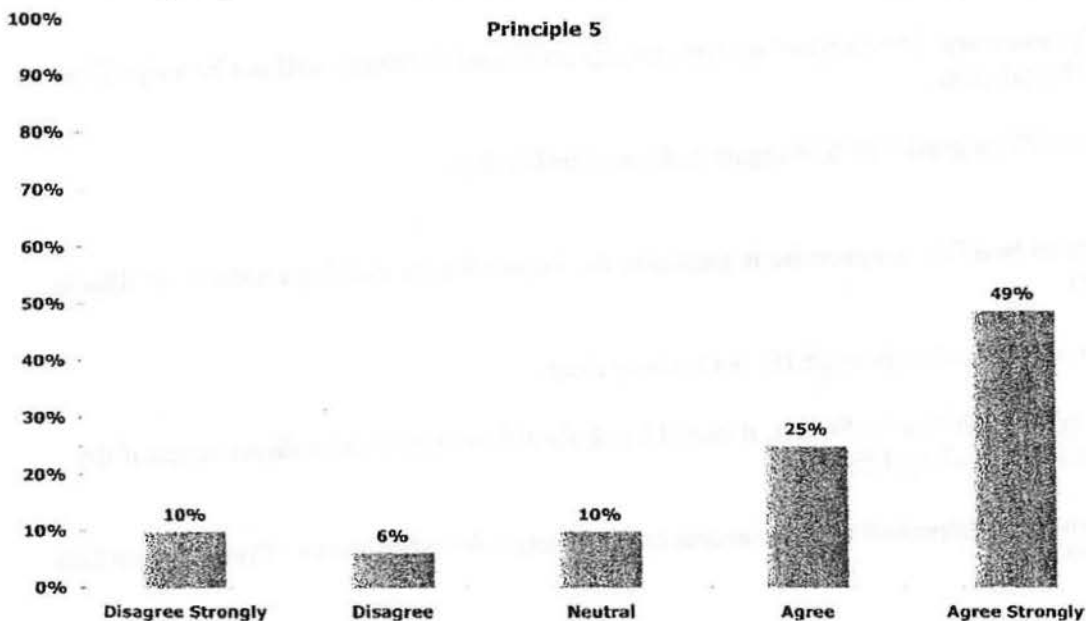
It is essential new plans in the city be progressive and include encouraging people to walk and bike for transportation.

I agree strongly with this -- traffic on the east side of Sunnyland has increased a great deal with the opening of Trader Joe's -- streets that would be effected by a cut-through would only add to the noise pollution and reduction in air quality in this part of the neighborhood. Making the new neighborhood walkable without a major cut-through auto conduit would add to its character.



### Principle 5

Vehicle access should be allowed from Sunset onto a new street to service the northern part of the site, and from Illinois onto a new street to service the southern part of the site. Vehicle access should not be allowed from new homes directly onto Sunset or Illinois. We value minimizing negative traffic impacts for both northern and southern neighbors.



#### Disagree Strongly

Make it consistent with the rest of the neighborhood. The property directly fronting on Sunset should be one row of lots/houses with rest being accessed from streets extended from Illinois. The overall look would be the same as the current lot and block platting

A traffic cut-through is a much better solution to the traffic problem.

A vehicular connection is necessary to limit traffic on E. Illinois

Illinois St. & Sunset Dr. are existing streets and should be utilized. There is no reason to limit the direct access of those streets to property owners who are there now.

See comments above. I favor a new public through access.

#### Disagree

Access to the site should remain as it is, from Sunset, period.

Agree with everything but the Sunset access.

If the development is held to the default setting then half the homes should front Sunset and half should front Illinois. These larger lots would number between 8 to 12 so that would not add that many houses to either side. The neighborhood already is set up that way.

**Neutral**

Not to sunset

Not really necessary. The number of units actually on Sunset or Illinois will not be a significant number of total units.

This sounds like a good way to mitigate additional traffic flow.

**Agree**

This seems to be a fair compromise to minimize the impact for the existing residents on Illinois and Sunset.

This seems appropriate, although It's not entirely clear.

I strongly agree with this for Sunset, it would be ok for Illinois lots to have direct access if the lots matched others along Illinois.

I think it would be important to make access to the streets safe and effective. Consider turn lane on Sunset??

**Agree Strongly**

I support creating a new access road rather than widening Grant Street, for example. Again, using already established neighborhood streets would negatively impact the feeling of this neighborhood.

Many young children live along Grant St. We should be installing round about like on Ellis St to slow down traffic rather than talk about increasing traffic.

Less traffic always makes for a more pleasant neighborhood.

Less traffic.

Absolutely, agree. We don't need more traffic here. Illinois gets enough traffic as it is. Creating a through street here would increase traffic on Humboldt, East Maryland along streets with many kids. No. No. No on a through street.

These questions have multiple parts that don't necessarily go together

Should be split to both streets

Definitely- a division of traffic to both Sunset and Illinois

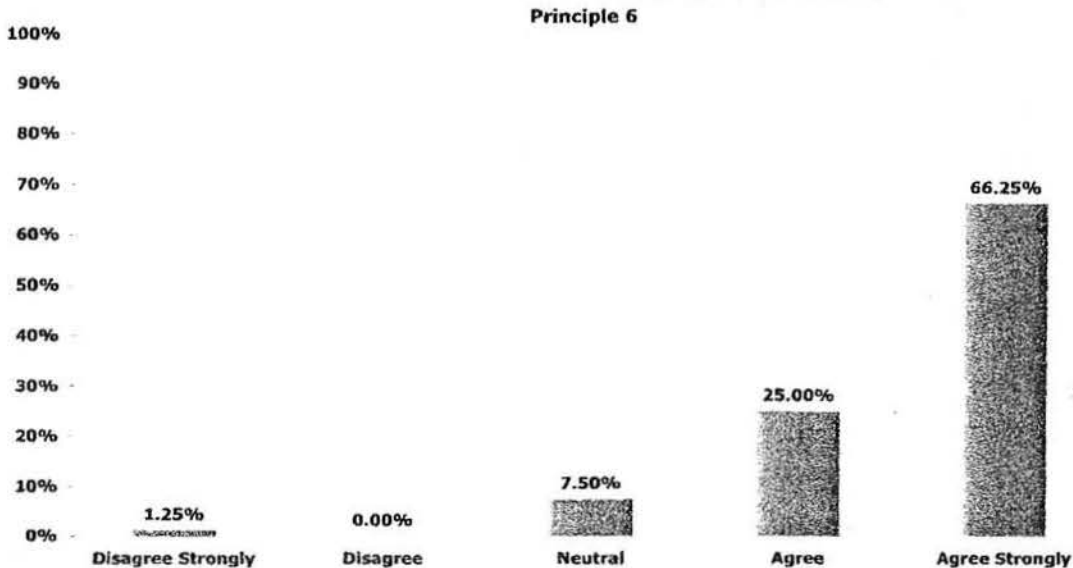
Any traffic should be spread out

New homes should not access directly onto Sunset or Illinois because it wouldn't be safe (more turning movements, stops in the middle of the street etc.)

I support city managed streets not private roads.

## Principle 6

**Design of new dwelling units should maintain neighborhood architectural character. The characteristics of front porches, pitched roofs, and detached garages at the rear of properties should be maintained.**



### Disagree Strongly

I value all of the neighborhood characteristics listed, but disagree that garages should be detached and located in the rear.

### Disagree

### Neutral

I don't think the design matters, so long as it's a house and not apartments.

Not my decision

These characteristics might put any new development out of the reach of people that would want to live in our neighborhood.

### Agree

But not 100%. Like the carriage houses.

With the current default zoning this should not be a problem.

Retain character.

I think we should remain somewhat open to potential plans for potential co-housing units.

**Agree Strongly**

Increased density must fit in neighborhood character so that the neighborhood may be open to additional projects

Street facing garages at the front would not be consistent with the character of the neighborhood

This makes sense as to preserve the look and feel of the Sunnyland neighborhood.

Why wouldn't you try to conserve the neighborhood architectural character?

Or intelligently designed modern architecture that would blend with what is here.

The developer needs to build in character with the architectural character of the neighborhood. Specifically, craftsman style houses that are average in size and closely resemble the best the neighborhood has to offer.

Fits in the neighborhood

ABSOLUTELY. We should do a character survey and require common elements. Include horizontal siding 2-6" max reveal, trim on windows, alley access, etc.

Require alleys, too.

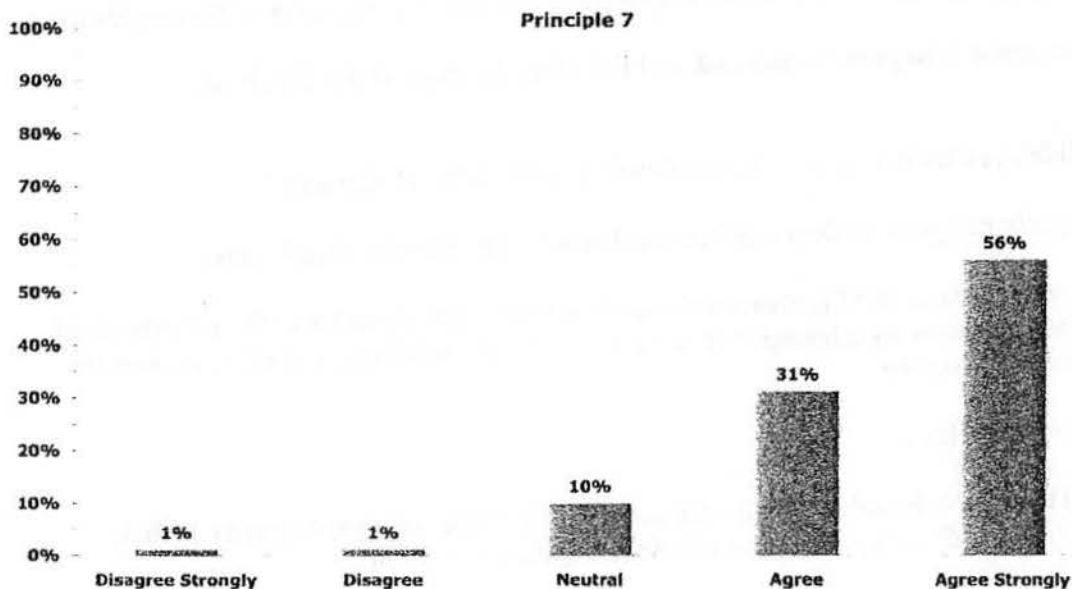
We should strive to make OUR neighborhood to OUR benefit and not try to contort ourselves to accommodate a outside builder for their profit

I would include dormers and a mix of 1 and 2 story homes. I am ok with mixed sizes as long as the small houses are affordable and not just small.

This is one of the features of this neighborhood that makes it a great place to live -- and most houses have unique features and do not come out of a box.

### Principle 7

**Landscaping should blend the site into the existing Sunnyland neighborhood, minimize visual impacts of development for neighbors to the north, and provide a sound barrier between Sunset and new housing.**



#### Disagree Strongly

Unless the developers are going to build some really unattractive shanty houses, I don't see how it would be fair to require them to install additional landscaping that has never been required by prior developers in this neighborhood. Doing so would represent an undue burden upon the developer and should not be allowed. However, if the developer chooses to build units that are completely outside of traditional styles for this neighborhood then extra landscaping to mitigate impact to surrounding neighbors IS warranted.

#### Disagree

#### Neutral

Blending into existing neighborhood is a must. Provide a sound barrier only if it is consistent with adjacent properties.

Keep the general appearance the same, but don't get carried away.

#### Agree

I expect the new occupants will appreciate a sound barrier.



I would rather advance design criteria and end up with something that's fine to look at.

sound barrier would be nice

**Agree Strongly**

We have the opportunity to upgrade our neighborhood. Let's keep this lovely area moving up!

The more green space the better.

Maintains greenspace

Sound barrier needed on Illinois side too!

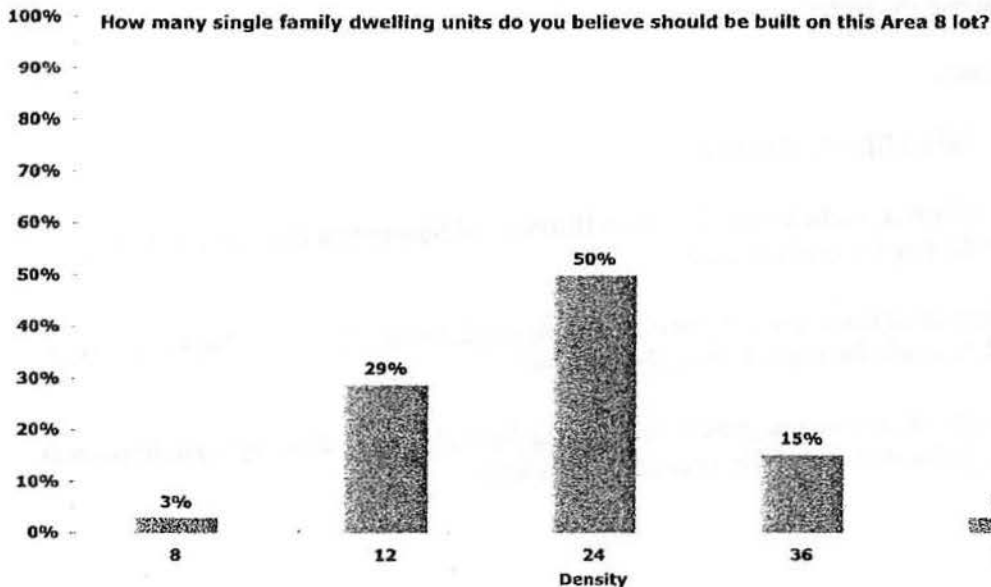
The more plants the better. Include small trees on Illinois and Sunset that can grow to be big.  
Maybe applicant will pay for offsite trees?

I want to see some mature trees and not just on the peripheral. I also think some landscape trees and barrier should be made for the side neighbors as well.

The new development should be integrated into existing Sunnyland -- but not by an auto conduit. Landscaping, bike paths, and a sound barrier are great ideas.

## Density

The City's new Comprehensive plan calls for infill of new dwelling units into existing neighborhoods, while protecting the valued character of established neighborhoods. How many single family dwelling units do you believe should be built on this Area 8 lot?



## Comments

I would be willing for higher density on the site, if it were good design that included affordable housing units.

16 lots similar to those of rest of the neighborhood, with 6 lots used for a green space for park, ped and bike corridor.

500 sf just like the surrounding area

24 or 36. Depends on what will look good. Cottage (courtyard) housing with small homes might be nicer than medium homes.

Whatever will foster green spaces for wildlife and as buffer zone.

As few as possible -- with attention to a sound barrier and landscaping -- the neighborhood does not have enough green spaces -- even many yards have been filled with decks, outbuildings, and porches (as nice as these often are) -- green spaces will protect the beleaguered wildlife population of the neighborhood.

**What other principles would you like the neighborhood to consider when rezoning Area 8?**

park green space

As longtime Bellingham residents, we strongly believe in and support the promotion of public transportation, pedestrian friendly sidewalks and crosswalks and cycling lanes. We support high density infill to prevent urban sprawl. However, we do not support cut-throughs that would negatively impact already established community side streets. Part of what we're trying to do with Bellingham's recent growth is to create more community through thoughtful infill. We would negate the effects of such thoughtful infill by fostering more arterials when other more sustainable options should be encouraged. Please keep the integrity of Sunnyland's neighborhood strong by promoting infill options but not add arterials.

Mitigation of traffic impacts to Illinois St, such as a traffic light/crosswalk at James St for any more than the 24 recommended lots

INFILL not OVERFILL, OVERFILL kills community.

I would like to see any up grades at the expense of the developers not the neighbors. If Illinois needs to be widened I would like it to be like Ellis with traffic circles and stop signs--in an effort to keep the neighborhood intact and not as an alternate route for Sunset traffic (that would ruin our established neighborhood). For any of the homes that are developed I would like to see on site parking for each home so that neighboring streets don't have to deal with the overflow parking. Also I would like to know if the current site has any toxins left over from the previous users and if that needs clean up the developers should do the clean up.

I just don't believe that a huge apartment complex or any rental units would be an appropriate fit for the neighborhood. It would simply have a negative impact and not complement or enhance the viability of the neighborhood. People who own their houses take pride and typically have genuine concern for what goes on in the neighborhood.

When are you going to rezone the parts of the sunnyland neighborhood where industrial sticks into residential. We need HOMES in this neighborhood, not plumbing stores and car repair shops. Those businesses should be encouraged to relocate to INDUSTRIAL areas of Bellingham. The city is changing and there is a need for homes close to downtown!!

Please no apartment houses.

I believe that the current zoning of the neighborhood should be maintained. The decision to develop this particular plot is sound and in keeping with the idea of infill, but it should not be

overemphasized to the point of allowing large apartment complexes or condominiums to be built there.

Inclusion of a park

If rentals are to be built, there should be some commons so that the structure facilitates a sense of self containment. There should be adequate greenspace, and trails and/or bikeways are a good thing. It would make sense also to landscape so that the Sunset side of the project includes a buffer for the residents of the new building. Nicer units will attract better residents.

Maximize Green Space Build small, quality craftsman houses--quality rather than size.

Question: Why did the city not buy the property from the state to make a park?

5,000 single family zoning. Sidewalks, trees, community garden

All should be single family detached this is what people want. We have a shortage of houses. We do not want condos or town homes. I don't think it is fair to put all traffic on Illinois

What plans are there for storm water. Drains now to Whatcom creek.

There should be access to both Sunset and Illinois to divide up the traffic flow, as in plan B

I value most ideas, just not so many units. 10-12 is plenty and should satisfy the city's goal to 17 new units for all of Sunnyland by 20??

Infrastructure problems, street widening, traffic problems, impact fees paid by developer allows accessory dwellings to individual landowners equal to developing area 8

Not so many units. Only 12-20 units is enough

Sidewalks, thru streets, safety

Upgrading the infrastructure

green building, bicycle friendly please let's not hate on the poor folk...

The Bellingham comprehensive plan calls for 17 dwelling units by 2020. Why have more, we do not benefit by having more.

LID ???? LEED Buildings (Gold or Platinum) Communal Facilities Smaller lot Sizes

Limit hours and days of road construction? Construction (of roads/utilities) limited to Sunset (bigger road) or Illinois (safer?)

Consider using the lettered streets as an example - allowing slightly smaller lots- say 3500 to 4000 sq ft to help with infill, while preserving the single family detached dwelling character of the neighborhood.

Require 2 parking spaces per bedroom, excluding garages, for all construction to reduce on-street parking.

This is a misleading question. Nowhere is the size of the parcel stated and the determination that surrounding zoning would be 24 units ignores that the large area to the south consists of 5000 s.f. lots.

We definitely need to look at what benefits the residents! It makes no sense to have a outside developer corporation come in build a bunch of houses with outside labour and outside materials and then leave us who remain to deal with overcrowded schools streets and policing etc. Why do we need to consider the bottom line of the developer. It makes more sense to me to plan this site for the lot sizes and arrangement and have lokal builders build the units one at a time over a peiod of years, spreiding the jobs and labor out over time

parking - visitors, boats, trailers, etc pre rush hour exhaust fumes impact fees noise individual garbage pick ups not dumpsters lighting pets - noise over crowded schools, parks,

School over crowding.

The deer are used to the lot depths along Illinois. They live in the woods and would be displaced by denser development. Parking, both for residents and their guests should be incorporated into the plan. Improvements should be made to allow walking to Sunset Mall from neighborhood. Outlets should not lineup with Humboldt St. to prevent increase in traffic on this street.

Consider allowing cottage or single family attached housing with limits on the size of the building footprints to allow for full infill density at S.F. 5,000 sq ft lots while providing plenty of green space buffering due to the smaller residences.

Do not create more traffic on Grant Street! Cars in this new area should only be able to enter off of Sunset, not Illinois. This would keep Grant from being a cut-through and keep the growing number of families with children somewhat safer. A traffic island is GREATLY needed at the intersection of Grant and E. North to slow down the already existing traffic that speeds now.

Bike and walking friendly!!

A small park for neighbor children should be incorporated into the space.

See above -- the development of green spaces that will allow the wildlife population -- especially birds -- of the neighborhood to thrive. The neighborhood is close to several major automobile conduits -- Cornwall, Alabama, James, and I-5 -- on which thousands of autos travel every day. Traffic on these conduits are only going to increase, with concomitant loss of air quality (and everything that goes along with it) -- everything green needs to be protected and encouraged.



## Section 2: Proposed Sunnyland Neighborhood Plan Amendment Feedback

The SNA-NPWP held two public meetings in October 2007. During the first meeting, October 17, 2007, the SNA-NPWP gave an overview of the neighborhood plan review process and the reasoning behind selecting Area 8 for a Neighborhood Plan Amendment and rezone request. The current owner of Area 8, Sunset Commons LLC, gave a brief presentation about the site and provided preliminary sketches of ideas they had for the site. There was also a question and answer session during this meeting. A second meeting was held October 30, 2007. Preliminary survey results were presented at this meeting. The bulk of the meeting time was spent in small groups discussing a Proposed Sunnyland Neighborhood Plan Amendment. This amendment was created/shaped using feedback from the survey and October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The following proposed plan amendment was presented at the October 30, 2007 public meeting:

### PROPOSED SUNNYLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AMENDMENT

**AREA 8** The area includes Squaticum Park Block 4, lots 9,10,11,12, 53.34ft of lot 13, and lots 36,37,38,39. The area is approximately four acres in size, and is currently vacant land. Area 8 is surrounded by lots zoned "residential single, detached, low and medium density". A large church-owned property lies on the west side and is a permitted conditional use.

This entire area was owned by the Washington Dep't. of Transportation for many years, and most of the area was zoned for "Public Use". In 2007, the entire area was sold to Sunset Commons LLC. As a result of the change from public ownership to private ownership, default zoning, required by municipal code, was immediately put in place. About ninety percent of the area is now zoned "residential single, low density", and about ten percent is zoned "residential single, medium density".

1 All of Area 8 should be rezoned "residential single - low density". The per square foot density of Area 8 should be set near the permitted density of the surrounding neighborhood. A density of 7500 sq ft per dwelling unit should be required. After Area 8 is improved with roads and sidewalks, defined lot sizes will range between 4000sf and 5000sf.

2 "Attached" residential-single housing should be permitted in Area 8. This would require the addition of a new "Use Qualifier" to the "residential-single" zoning table. Area 8 could then be developed with a mix of "attached" and "detached" single-family homes. Attached "row homes" should be limited to two dwelling units. These buildings would look like the larger homes on Sunnyland corner lots. In accordance with the character of the established, surrounding neighborhood, each new dwelling unit built in Area 8 should be sited on its own defined lot. Each home should have a front and rear yard.

3 A design overlay district for Area 8 should be enacted to ensure architectural style, height and mass blends with the character of the established neighborhood. Specific elements should include at least half of the housing to include front porches. All buildings should have pitched roofs, although a variety of pitched roof styles could reflect the diversity of styles in the existing neighborhood. No garages should be allowed on the front of the property, but rather on the rear. Providing both small one story homes and larger two story homes will retain some



affordability within the neighborhood as well as make it representative of the established pattern. With pleasing and attractive homes sharing similar historic characteristics, we can ensure the vitality and character of the established residential neighborhood.

**4** Traffic generated by development in Area 8 should be directed to both Sunset Dr, and to Illinois St. The site design must prohibit north-south cut through auto traffic between E. Sunset and E. Illinois, but allow for pedestrian, bicycle and emergency vehicle access.

#### AREA 8 LAND USE DESIGNATION – RESIDENTIAL SINGLE, LOW DENSITY

#### ZONING TABLE

ZONING: residential-single

USE QUALIFIER: detached, attached

DENSITY: 7,500 sq ft per dwelling unit

PREREQUISITE CONSIDERATIONS: enact a design overlay district incorporating design themes described in the Neighborhood Plan.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS: access from E. Sunset Dr. and E. Illinois St. Through traffic between Sunset and Illinois prohibited (except for pedestrian and bicycle traffic). All homes will front on a public street. Street standards may be reduced

The proposed plan amendment was divided into sections for discussion. These sections are identified above by bold, underlined numbers and are included in the Comments section in italics. The following is a summary of comments collected at the October 30, 2007 public meeting regarding the proposed plan amendment:

#### Comments Regarding Section 1

*All of Area 8 should be rezoned "residential single - low density". The per square foot density of Area 8 should be set near the permitted density of the surrounding neighborhood. A density of 7500 sq ft per dwelling unit should be required. After Area 8 is improved with roads and sidewalks, defined lot sizes will range between 4000sf and 5000sf.*

- No condos or apts
- Parking is a concern
- General agreement
- Wants it to conform to neighborhood standards
- No condos
- Hard to agree, you don't know what the density
- Suggest removing ref. to infrastructure after roads
- Concern about how divided up – 2 townhouses on X lot?
- Some better design
- Agree wants to conform to neighborhood standards as they are

- Guarantee not smaller lots
- Concern about might become like apts if too small a dwelling unit
- This would look like a traditional subdivision
- Not dense enough
- Parking is not a concern
- Yes: 15 No: 3 Neutral: 3

The first two group members agreed with the paragraph. The next person felt the lot should be 7500 to build upon, after streets/sidewalks were completed. The next person felt the lot sizes could be smaller in some cases, but felt the 4000-5000 square feet should be an average. There should be flexibility to allow for diversity. The next person was fine with the size of lots proposed. The next person agreed with the idea of flexibility and variety of lot sizes. The group began to agree that this approach was appealing to them and that the "average" lot size be determined by the number (24) of houses for the four acres.

### Comments Regarding Section 2

*"Attached" residential-single housing should be permitted in Area 8. This would require the addition of a new "Use Qualifier" to the "residential-single" zoning table. Area 8 could then be developed with a mix of "attached" and "detached" single-family homes. Attached "row homes" should be limited to two dwelling units. These buildings would look like the larger homes on Sunnyland corner lots. In accordance with the character of the established, surrounding neighborhood, each new dwelling unit built in Area 8 should be sited on its own defined lot. Each home should have a front and rear yard.*

- Concern about more rentals in neighborhood
- Don't limit to 2 attached within conjunction with open space
- Attached ok if density the same
- Prefer no attached looks like rentals – potential for rentals
- Depends on how developer lays out plan
- Shared walls and green space ok
- Does not meet character of our neighborhood
- Too open to interpretation
- Exciting to see this type of density common wall construction in our area
- Depends on builder quality and design
- Whether the housing looks varied or uniform is more important than number of units
- Not sure about shared lots vs individual lots
- Doesn't want attached to look like condos
- Support affordability
- Concern with upkeep
- Reservations on getting what they see or agree to
- Safety concerns with non-specifics in design
- Concern with upkeep
- Yes: 5 No: 6 Too Vague: 4 Needs Work: 6

The first person stated they disagreed with allowing attached housing and that it did not match the overall character and aesthetic of the neighborhood. There was discussion that many units were attached in the southern part of the neighborhood. Some worried about less green space if

attached were allowed. Felt they should emphasize design controls and wanted a clear design criteria to the attached dwellings. Others felt that more than two units attached would be alright and allow for more affordability, they didn't want houses being too large for the area. There was concern expressed that attached housing would lead to an increase in renters, since it was believed that most home "owners" wouldn't want attached housing. In general, there was a diversity and wide range of agreement on this paragraph.

### **Comments Regarding Section 3**

*A design overlay district for Area 8 should be enacted to ensure architectural style, height and mass blends with the character of the established neighborhood. Specific elements should include at least half of the housing to include front porches. All buildings should have pitched roofs, although a variety of pitched roof styles could reflect the diversity of styles in the existing neighborhood. No garages should be allowed on the front of the property, but rather on the rear. Providing both small one story homes and larger two story homes will retain some affordability within the neighborhood as well as make it representative of the established pattern. With pleasing and attractive homes sharing similar historic characteristics, we can ensure the vitality and character of the established residential neighborhood.*

- Fine with this
- Special regulations: don't include must front on public streets
- Easement for side street
- It's what it looks like, zoned
- Looks good on paper
- What about height limits
- Drainage needs need to be addressed – former creek
  - ❖ Cracked drainage pipe needs to be fixed
  - ❖ Needs to be maintained by owners
- Sounds great
- Owner willing to follow if denser. If traditional they will do whatever they want and will be pretty much identical to surrounding neighborhood
- Prohibiting things might be excessive
- Yes: 13 No: 2

The group liked the general direction, but discussion began to drift to quality of materials, visuals, and concerns about being able to see what proposed development/housing would look like. There were some questions for the city planning department staff about how specific this could be and the response was that usually the general ideas proposed were as far as neighborhood plans went into details. Some spoke out against too many details in this section and wanted less restrictions and prescription for builders. The group discussion moved to agreement on a more form-based design proposal for this section. There was interest in revisiting this paragraph.

### **Comments Regarding Section 4**

*Traffic generated by development in Area 8 should be directed to both Sunset Dr, and to Illinois St. The site design must prohibit north-south cut through auto traffic between E. Sunset and E. Illinois, but allow for pedestrian, bicycle and emergency vehicle access.*

- Only reason I came to this meeting is concern over traffic- no cut through traffic
- Ingress egress ok
- Totally agree no cut through
- Adamant about no cut through traffic only reason they came
- Concern about effects on Sunset and Ill (solution could be to turn into one ways)
- Ok with traffic onto sunset with directional restrictions
- Want standards for green/leed design (lower density bonus for green/affordable low density)
- Ex: private roads etc.
- Disagree doesn't want traffic onto sunset (maybe ok with turn restrictions)
- There may be a way to make it through w/o increasing traffic signal
- Add landscaping, public space to density
- Smaller lots to include wildlife habitat - buffer for deer
- Reduce street standards and add natural drainage
- Yes: 17 No: 3

Time was short, but there was agreement of all but one that a through street from Sunset to Illinois was not desired and should be stated for Area 8.

#### **Additional Comments**

- Lot survey should ask size of number of units
- What are our guarantees we get what we agree to
- Green space and trees important
- Doing fine with meeting GMA with 24 units
- Need breathing room
- Green homes
- Cluster for commons
- Fear of condos and rentals

Other comments included questions about any requirements for an association" if it is a development, preference for one-way traffic inside any development, possible green space within the area, possible Land Trust partnership in the area, and a desire from some to review visuals of proposed development.

### Section 3: Public Meeting Evaluations

#### October 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting



Skagit County Mediation Services  
309 S. Third Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
(360) 336-9494 ♦ Fax (360) 419-3392  
E-mail: mediation@co.skaqit.wa.us

#### Sunnyland Neighborhood Association

#### Evaluation of the October 17, 2007 Meeting

+	Δ
This was a civil meeting	Have a printed agenda available – email it before the meeting
Good meeting site	Have someone from the Planning Department
Good presentation of designs	More time for public comments
Food and Drink	Have the meeting be just neighbors talking with one another
	Have a sign-in for those who want to comment or ask questions,
	Establish and announce ground-rules (e.g., no clapping, no booing...)
	Have public and responders amplified
	Consider setting up a system of block representatives who would talk with neighbors, conduct local discussions

## October 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting

1. Did you gain a sense of the issues related to the development of Area 8 and how the neighborhood association is dealing with them?

	Response Percent	Response Count
0 No	4.8%	1
1 A little bit	9.6%	2
2 Yes	42.9%	9
3 A great deal	42.9%	9
Comments		2
<b>answered question</b>		21
<b>skipped question</b>		1

2. Was the meeting process effective?

	Response Percent	Response Count
0 Not to me	0.0%	0
1 I got the idea	9.1%	2
2 Yes	68.2%	15
3 Very inviting	22.7%	5
Comment		3
<b>answered question</b>		22
<b>skipped question</b>		0

3. Were you given a chance to voice your thoughts?

	Response Percent	Response Count
0 No	4.5%	1
1 A little bit	4.5%	1
2 Yes	59.1%	13
3 Very inviting	31.8%	7
Comments		4
<b>answered question</b>		22
<b>skipped question</b>		0



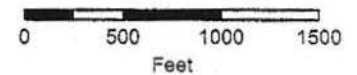


# SUNNYLAND NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE

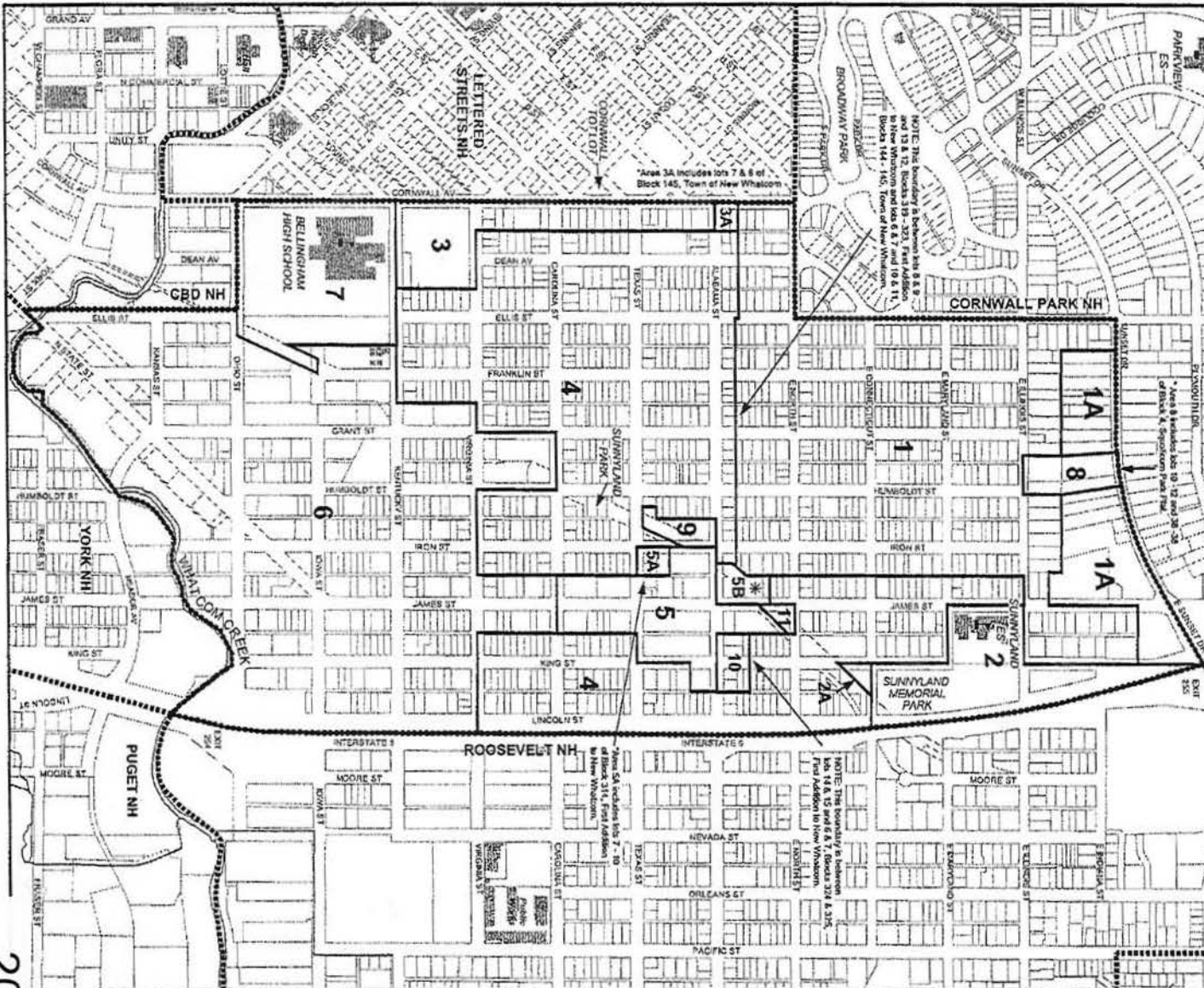
## Legend:

AREA	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS
1	Single Family Res., Med. Density
1A	Single Family Res., Low Density
2	Public
2A	Public
3	Multi-Family Res., High Density
3A	Commercial
4	Multi-Family Res., Med. Density
5	Commercial
5A	Commercial
5B	Commercial
6	Industrial
7	Public
8	Public
9	Public
10	Multi-Family Residential, Medium to High Density
11	Multi-Family Res., High Density

See Ordinance #9739, #9861



City of Bellingham  
Planning Department  
2005



IS this  
right?  
check  
w/Bebe  
lots 9-12  
and 54'0"  
lot 13 are  
36-39  
of Block 4

2008 N-7  
OP-40