

Item 2B.1 of “Adapting Woodstock” Charrette “Site Planning Topics & Reference Items” (Sept. 10, 2008)

Conceptual Trail, Walkway and Plazas Plan for Woodstock Farm

July 30, 2008. Based on map compiled by Tim Wahl at the “Adapting Woodstock” site plan charrette.

SEE MAP, BY LABEL

The pedestrian system elements described here are located on the following map. They are presented to recording charrette discussions and to incorporate past staff and community ideas in a unified but preliminary plan, one whose elements will be refined, prioritized, expanded or dropped as site work continues.

The “P” or Primary Trails

The arterial “P” trails connect the core of Woodstock Farm (the Gates-Lee House and the Barn/Garage plaza) with external neighborhoods, the Interurban Trail, North Chuckanut Mtn. Trailhead and thus the major elements of the Bellingham trails system. They take people to and from the center of the site and around it on one or more trail loops based out of the North Chuckanut Mountain Trailhead or off of the Interurban Trail. With the exception of the ambitious P4 projects these trails are foot traffic oriented. (Topography and critical area features greatly constrain construction of off-road, multiple use trails that accommodate bicycles.) Four potential “gateways” and primary trails are shown:

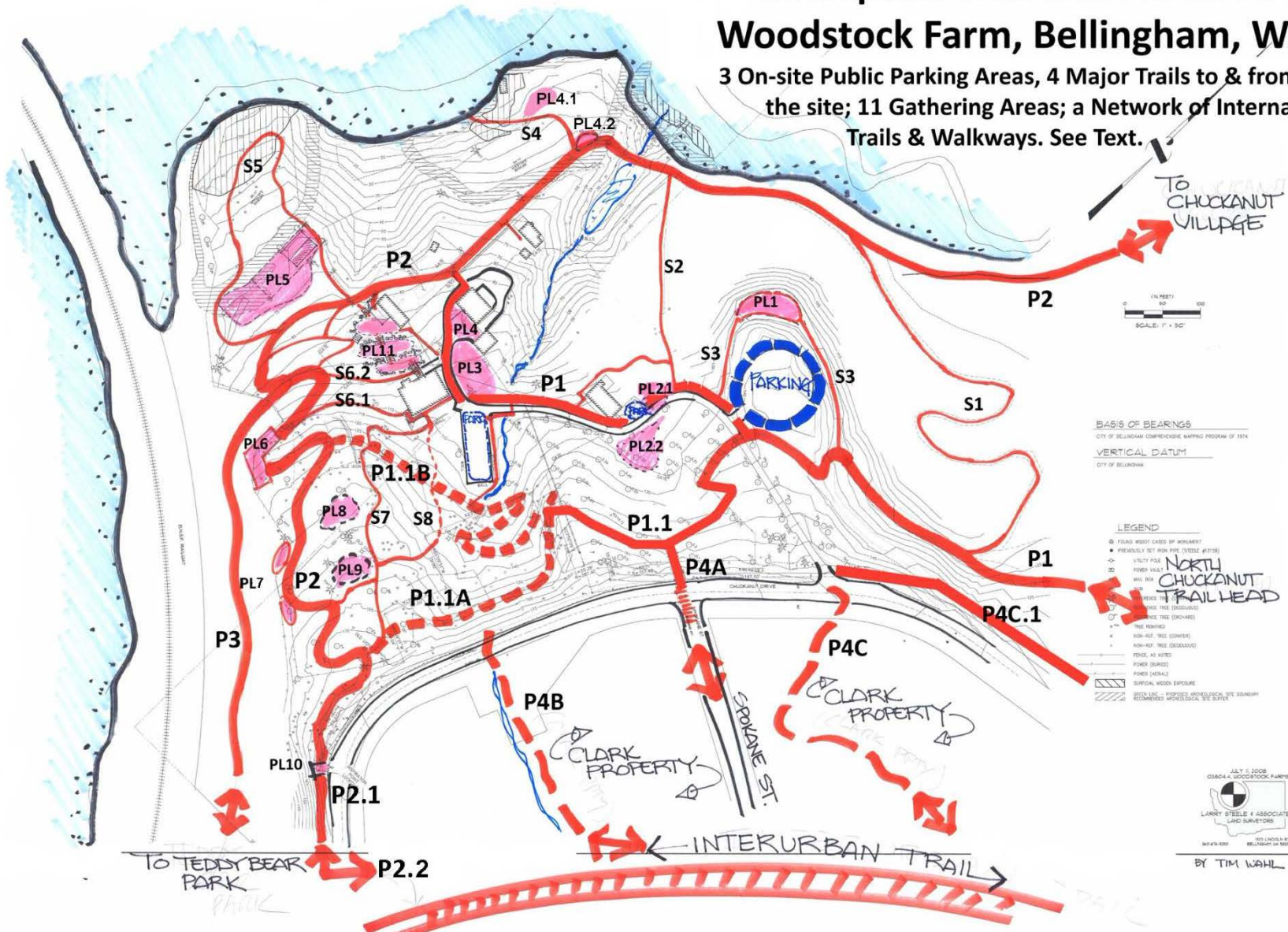
P1 The “California Street Trail” now recognized as the most important and most feasible way to get walkers from the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead to Woodstock, bypassing the steep grades between the Farm and the Trailhead and providing a more direct connection. Funds are currently reserved for this project. The P1.1 braids provide for a direct passage around the core of the Farm to the Upper Bluff/Inspiration Point area and for loop walks involving the “Shoreline Trail”, P2. P1.1A and B are alternate routes being evaluated for the Trailhead-to-Inspiration Point movement.

P2 The “Chuckanut Village to Inspiration Point” or “Shoreline” Trail. Along with P1, forms a loop around the Farm for visitors starting and ending at the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead. This trail can be connected with the Interurban Trail, residential neighborhoods to the south, and the Teddy Bear Park trailhead via a sidepath or sidewalk along Chuckanut Drive, P2.1, and the existing Teddy Bear access stairs and highway crossing, P1.2. Public right-of-way is available for all of P2 except possibly its extension to the Teddy Bear Park entrance along SR 11. Northeast of Woodstock this trail passes close to some of the richest wildlife habitat in Bellingham. Special efforts should be made to develop an access and habitat management plan for this trail for implementation along with trail construction, possibly including wetland barriers and a wide bypass around the outlet of the Okanogan Street wetland and the Chuckanut Creek salt marsh.



Conceptual Trail and Plazas Plan Woodstock Farm, Bellingham, WA

3 On-site Public Parking Areas, 4 Major Trails to & from
 the site; 11 Gathering Areas; a Network of Internal
 Trails & Walkways. See Text.



P3 The “Teddy Bear Cove” Trail. A potential connection between the “Brickyard Flat” at Teddy Bear Cove and part of a longer loop combining the Farm with a rigorous visit to Teddy Bear Cove Park, returning to the Trailhead via P2.1, a future sidewalk or sidepath, or via P2.2, the existing Teddy Bear Park crossing and stairs, and the Interurban Trail. Right of way is not needed for this project. The alignment now includes deer paths and a short section of improved grade. This would be a narrow facility with several half-bridge segments constructed along the base of the cliffs like the “Windlift Wall.”

P4 The P4 series shows several potential linkages between the Farm and the Interurban Trail. Only P4A, a stairway from the Spokane Street crosswalk, can be built at present, considering its more modest scope and the right-of-way needed for the P4B and C. Plans for P4A would include a user activated, marked crosswalk. (Although Spokane St. is typical of many other challenging Chuckanut driveways and intersections it will be used by the public for the foreseeable future; there is no safer way for many nearby residents and Interurban Trail users to reach Chuckanut and the Farm. P4B and C both require purchase of right-of-way, land that was once part of Woodstock Farm, in fact. P4B would involve construction of an underpass through the 1954 highway fill placed across Woodstock Creek. P4C would involve construction of new trail between the Woodstock driveway intersection and the Interurban, more or less following the alignment of an old road that existed prior to today’s Spokane or Burfiend Street. (One more aggressive version of this project would be to construct a new road and trail link in this alignment and close today’s Spokane Street, consolidating a new and improved highway intersection at the gate of Woodstock Farm.) P4C.1 is a hypothetical new braid of the Interurban Trail which, with P4C, would become a main route for Interurban Trail traffic and a bypass around problem grades and construction challenges along between the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead and the south end of the former Interurban bridge over California Street. This is ambitious project that would involve construction of a multiuse trail alongside the Chuckanut Drive half-bridge. 2008 “Adapting Woodstock” charrette participants will recall this possibility being raised by Gwyn Howat, something which might both address a compromised link in today’s Interurban Trail and which would put Woodstock immediately on a major public trail. The feasibility of this project needs more assessment. In particular a grades and elevation loss comparison is needed between the existing Spokane to Trailhead segment of the Interurban and a new segment between Spokane and the Trailhead via P4C and P4C.1.

The “S” or Secondary Trails & Walkways

These secondary trails tie the internal parts of the site together. They are essential for linking individual buildings with site elements and with each other, but they are not the major “through” routes for greenway system hikers. Because internal elements of the site are still being defined the alignments and justifications for these facilities should be considered quite preliminary. They range from informal woodland foot trails to hard-surfaced, formal walkways intended for wheeled assistance vehicles.

S1 A Kopperdahl Trail Segment. Named for a past owner of the property adjacent to Woodstock and related to the Lee Family owners of Woodstock. The trail name is often used to describe to an existing loop route, which includes portions of the major P1 and P2 trail routes.

S2 The Old Creek Road Trail. Perhaps an early road grade; existing but now partly overgrown.

S3 The Kopperdahl Viewpoint Trail. Existing old driveway serving gathering area PL1, on property once owned by the Kopperdahls.

S4 The Boathouse Road Trail. Mapped as existing. Connects the Kopperdahl Trail with the boathouse, the beach there and a potential plaza, see PL4.1.

S5 The West Point Trail. Probably a quieter, contemplative trail, perhaps informal in character, built largely atop the West Point midden. The West Point is highly suited to reestablishment of a Garry oak/madrone meadow community, with sitting area and managed views.

S6.1 Rock Chopper Bank Walkway. Potentially a somewhat formal, wider, paved walkway following the contours of Rock Chopper Bank at the elevation of the main floor and adapted main entrance grade of the Gates-Lee House. Serves a destination view point plaza, PL6, connecting first floor activities with the stunning views from the bluff.

S6.2 The Maid's Walkway. A conceptual, minimum elevation gain/loss walkway connecting the basement level of the Gates-Lee House with viewing areas on the bluff. Similar in concept to S6.1 above but potentially justifiable in association with separately programmed floors of the main house and to link barn and garage area users with bluff viewpoints using minimal physical effort.

S7 Gate's Inspiration Walkway (Upper Bluff Walkway). Connects the Gates-Lee House to the Upper Bluff via a set of rustic concrete stairs. An early example of concrete pavement recycling. Formerly lighted in part.

S8 The Old Bluff Road Trail Lawn Route. Probably an old tract predating the Chuckanut highway bridges. Connects with the old "Gates Gate" location near Inspiration Point. Formerly lighted.

The "PL" Plaza Sites

These are flatter areas within the Farm which may be adapted to accommodating groups of people, usually in conjunction with specific buildings or external views. The potential functions of these areas are noted, although this will largely depend on the uses of the buildings, such as those uses identified in the Guiding Principles document and Reference Item 1.4

PL1 The Kopperdahl Overlook. An intimate terrace once intended for a house. Views must be managed carefully.

PL2.1 A potential "welcome" and passenger van plaza built in conjunction with adaptation of the Cook's House into welcome center/site entry feature.

PL2.2 The Orchard Basin area. See Reference Item 4.0 for related ground water issues. An area often used by the Bailey family for summer picnics.

PL3 The "Monkey Puzzle" lawn area. Possibly suited to sitting and gathering uses in conjunction with garage and barn activities and adaptations.

PL4 The "Barn/Garage Plaza". A natural magnet for visitors at the end of an attractive driveway. A key space for mingling and support activities associated with the barn and garage. One of the sunniest accessible places on the Farm, with views to the bay and islands.

PL4.1 The “Boathouse Flat” or “Old Ones Place” atop a significant cultural site. Tentatively identified as a place for quieter, contemplative gatherings and with view openings for birding. Boat storage has been a traditional use. The existing grade cannot be penetrated due to its regulated status as a prehistoric site. Sheep grazing patterns will determine use and management.

PL4.2 The “Creek Pasture” viewpoint. A potential trail wayside for sitting and bay viewing through enhanced view openings. Sheep grazing patterns will determine use and management.

PL5 The existing “Tennis Court Plaza” site of the Gates grass tennis court. A spectacular SW view to the islands and Olympic Range from a gallery formed by two well-formed American elms and a mature Douglas-fir. Long envisioned as a gathering area with a fire/speaking circle and informally used as same. Rock piles are artifacts of purposeful Gates era clearing and stockpiling. There was support for enlargement and some degree of formalization of this feature at the 2008 charrette. Ideas included excavation into the hillside to the east (possibly with green roof coverings in areas) and construction of a permanent or removable shelter over part of the plaza.

PL6 A potential “no climb” viewing deck accessible by a level walkway from the first floor of the Gates-Lee House over the “Rock Chopper Bank”. Would command stunning views of the bay, islands and mountains and could be designed for small gatherings and Gates-Lee House activities. Unites the “tucked in” Gates-Lee House with the coastal “Inspiration factor”.

PL7 Windlift Viewpoints. Several are possible: small gathering and sitting areas for savoring the view south over the bay and toward the Olympic Range.

PL8 Two Tree Rock Terrace. Apparently constructed by Gates, possibly with highway construction spoils. A potential gathering and sitting area for Upper Bluff users.

PL9 Flag Pole Terrace, named for the old flag pole. Apparently constructed by Gates, possibly with highway construction spoils. A potential gathering and sitting area for Upper Bluff users.

PL10 Inspiration Point Overlook, now the subject of a Scenic Highway Enhancement project and being considered for adaptation as part landscape ruin and park new overlook. A small gathering area with trees selectively removed and limbed for views to south. An important historical feature linking Woodstock to the creation of Chuckanut Drive and the scenic park and byway traditions of the early 1900s.

Other Potential Plazas.

The “Sports Court/Parking Lot” above the Gates-Lee House and the “Septic Tank Flat” below the barn are other notable, flatter areas sometimes identified as potentially useful for gatherings. The Sports Court is one of the coolest and shadiest places on the farm except for midsummer. It will probably continue to be used for managed parking and shuttle van maneuvering. The Septic Flat may continue to be used for sewage treatment purposes due to its lower elevation and its situation next to the Boat House Ravine Wetland suggests passive, soft surface uses may be desirable buffer elements.