As we begin to head towards the holiday season, there are a few great events happening in Port Orchard in the next two months.

Chocolate Ball & Festival
On Friday, November 8, the 1st Annual Chocolate Ball will be held at the Port Orchard Pavilion at 710 Bay Street. Tickets can be bought at www.fathomsofun.org

The Chocolate/Craft Vendors & Demonstrations will be held at the Port Orchard Pavilion at the following dates and times:
- Saturday, November 9: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Sunday, November 10: 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

15th Annual Festival of Chimes & Lights
The Festival of Chimes & Lights kicks off the holiday season with an abundance of fun and beauty for all ages. Be dazzled with all the lights including the giant Christmas tree in front of City Hall, the decorated boats in the harbor and all the shops lit up along the way.

Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive on a fire truck, hay rides run throughout, choirs sing, pets compete in the Pooch n' Purr Parade and families are entertained with crafts and stories at the library
Included is the Jingle Bell Run/Walk, a benefit for the Arthritis Foundation, with costumed participants ranging from the serious runner to friends chatting as they stroll the 5K route.

www.cityofportorchard.us
www.portorchardjinglebellrun.org

Breath of Aire Christmas Concert
Mayor Matthes is hosting the 2nd Annual Breath of Aire Christmas Concert on December 8, 2013. The concert will be at 6:00 p.m. at the Christian Life Center located at 1780 SE Lincoln Avenue.

Admission is by donation. Please make donations payable to the South Kitsap Helpline.

Upcoming Meetings

- Council Meeting, November 12, 2013, City Hall, 7:00pm
- Council Work Study, November 19, 2013, City Hall, 7:00pm
- Council Meeting, November 26, 2013, City Hall, 7:00 p.m.
- City Hall Closed on:
  - November 11—Veteran’s Day
  - November 28-29—Thanksgiving Break
New Crosswalk Installation
-By Mayor Matthes

Past Vice Commodore of the Port Orchard Yacht Club knows how to make things happen.

Captain Sherry Barnhart obtained over 200 signatures on a petition that requested the Washington State Department of Transportation place a crosswalk between the Yacht Club’s two parking lots on Hwy 166/Bay Street in Port Orchard.

The lack of a crosswalk on Bay Street/Hwy 166 between the Port Orchard Yacht Club and their parking lot created a huge safety concern for the many residents who live aboard their boats at the marina. These residents toted carts of groceries across the street without the aid of a crosswalk.

Had Captain Sherry not taken the lead on collecting and presenting her case to the Department of Transportation in Olympia, I doubt if we would have this crosswalk now!

Captain Sherry is a great example of citizen activism that works for us all. Thanks to her efforts, her club members and other guests have a safer crossing.

Thank you, Sherry!

How can we reduce our carbon footprint?

One rideshare at a time!
-Deborah Howard, PHR, HR & ETC Coordinator

We love our cars. They get us to work and take us home, they give us the freedom to explore our beautiful country, and for many of us they are our mini sanctuaries. How can we live without them? Well unfortunately, this love affair is taking its toll on our environment and our personal health.

Our City’s Wellness Program encourages everyone to eat a little healthier, get more exercise, and reduce stress. So why is it that healthy people, who seem to do all the right things, still become ill? Could it be the quality of our air? According to RideshareOnline.com, every car annually emits its own weight in carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Carpooling or ridesharing reduces that amount significantly. If you carpool/rideshare to and from work, you could cut your transportation emissions number in half. It is beneficial on an individual level and for your community as a whole. Ridesharing reduces air pollution while saving you money.

You don't have to rideshare every single day — simply choose days that work best for you. Carpool as little or as often as your schedule permits. Start with a commitment you think is realistic. Pick one day a week and stick with it; you can always add more days later. If we all tried to carpool one or two days a week, our air quality and traffic congestion would improve significantly.

RideshareOnline.com is a convenient and easy-to-use tool to aid Washington’s traveling public. It also helps to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and sustain our quality of life. RideshareOnline.com is the gateway to free information on travel options and incentive programs for commute and non-commute trips. It also offers tools for employers to implement effective commute re-
duction programs.

Think about one rideshare at a time to help preserve our environment and quality of life for ourselves and for future generations!

The US could save 33 million gallons of gas – each day – if the average commuting vehicle carried one additional person.

Can I get a variance for that?

-By Nick Bond, AICP, Development Director

One of the most frequent questions that a planner receives upon informing a property owner of a restriction on his or her land is, “can I get a variance for that?” Quite frequently, the answer is “no” and this newsletter is an opportunity to explain why and when variances can be approved.

Generally speaking, variances are divided into two categories, area (dimensional) variances and use variances. Area variances authorize a deviation from the zoning regulations that govern physical location and improvement of a property, for example, setback, building height, lot width, or lot area. Use variances authorize a use of property that would otherwise be prohibited within the property’s zone district. In Port Orchard, area variances may be approved, but use variances may not. ¹

Most cities in the United States have adopted zoning maps and zoning regulations, which dictate what uses can occur where. If a use is not allowed in a specific location, it is likely that the land is not zoned for that use. Zoning can be and is frequently changed through the rezone process. Someone that wishes to have the zoning of his or her property changed may apply to the city for such a change and it will be considered through a lengthy public process, which may include a revision to the city’s comprehensive plan.

If a city such as Port Orchard were to allow use variances, it would be allowing special privileges to certain owners of land zoned for a particular use that is not afforded to other owners of land with the same zoning. This is problematic for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the equal protection clause under the 14th amendment of the US Constitution. Other reasons why a city would not want to allow use variances is due to the fact that (1) allowing changes through use variances can dramatically undermine the stability of neighborhoods, and (2) changes in use are more likely to help a city achieve its vision when considered by the legislative body through a comprehensive planning and rezoning process rather than on a lot-by-lot basis upon individual request. ¹


A Huge Thank You!

-by Mayor Matthes

Thank you to Mr. & Mrs. Epperly, who decided to give the Van Zee tennis courts a facelift this summer by pressure washing both courts with their own equipment. I truly appreciate the time and effort you took to make Port Orchard a better place to live.
The City of Port Orchard does allow area or dimensional variances. An individual might seek a dimensional variance in a situation such as when the only buildable portion of a piece of property due to the presence of wetlands, steep slopes, or other physical constraints is within a required setback. The decision whether or not to approve is very straightforward. The City has adopted a list of 13 requirements, all of which must be met in order to grant an area variance. If the proposal does not meet all 13 requirements then the application must be denied. The criteria are as follows:

1. The strict enforcement of the provisions of this title creates an unnecessary hardship to the property owner.
2. The variance is necessary because of the unique size, shape, topography, or location of the subject property.
3. The subject property is deprived, by provisions of this title, of rights and privileges enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity and under an identical zone.
4. The need for the variance is not the result of deliberate actions of the applicant or property owner.
5. The variance does not create health and safety hazards.
6. The variance does not relieve an applicant from any of the procedural provisions of this code.
7. The variance does not relieve an applicant from any standard or provision that specifically states that no variance from such standard or provision is permitted.
8. The variance does not relieve an applicant from conditions established during prior permit review or from provisions enacted pursuant to a property-specific development standard.
9. The variance does not allow establishment of a use that is not otherwise permitted in the zone in which the proposal is located.
10. The variance does not allow the creation of lots or densities that exceed the base residential density for the zone by more than 10 percent.
11. The variance is the minimum necessary to grant relief to the applicant.
12. The variance from setback or height requirements does not infringe upon or interfere with easement or covenant rights or responsibilities.
13. The variance does not relieve an applicant from any provisions under the critical areas overlay district except for the required buffer area widths.

To conclude, if you are looking to conduct an activity on your property that is not allowed under the current zoning, then you would want to apply for a rezone. If there are conditions on your property which make the development or use of the property difficult, then you may want to request a variance. For further information about applying for a rezone or variance, please contact the Department of Community Development.

November Tip of the Month
- adapted from KC Dept. of Emergency Management

Before winter approaches, consider the following supplies for your emergency kit:

- Rock salt or a more environmentally safe product to melt ice on walkways.
- Sand to improve traction.
- Snow shovel & other snow removal equipment.
- Sufficient heating fuel. You may be in your home with your heat source cut off. Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.
- Adequate clothing and blankets to keep warm.
- Make a copy of your Family Communications Plan. It is important to know how you will contact one another and get back together in an emergency.
- A battery-operated radio or a NOAA Weather Radio to receive critical information from the weather service or local news station.
- Keep a disaster supply kit in your vehicle.
- Have a kit prepared for your pets and ensure there is shelter and feed for your livestock.
- People with additional needs should have extra equipment, medications or other items on hand that they require on a daily basis.