**MINUTES: CLEARVIEW’s TOWN HALL** – **Thursday, Aug 18, 2022, 7:00PM**

The View Church, 17210 Highway 9 (WA-9), Snohomish, WA 98296

 *COMMUNITY BARBEQUE Before the Meeting! Hot grills available at 5:15! Free HOT DOGS!!*

**Attendees:**

Kevin Sabora Lori McConnell Bruce Caruthers Sarah Wilhite

Sam Low John Lovick April Berg Brandy Donaghy

Dominic Bulygo Jim Turner Janet Miller Debbie Wetzel

Jenn Peralez Joann Sather Jonathan Argue Thomas Wunderlich

Brian Berg Jeff King Anuja King Michael Lawson

Mike Messer Hung Huynh Adam Emerson Scott Robertson

Chad Gwordski Michael McCrary Doug McCormick Don Saelt

Peter Grosvenor Katherine Grosvenor Susan Dittmann Judy Hedreen

Mark Rohde Sarah Jusko Gene Whiteside Debbie Noeske

Eric Kunz Dominic Bulygo Jan Hettinga Scharme Hettinga

Art Brediger Connie Brediger Margaret Bender Wanda Moralez

Hillary Moralez Richard Williams Bob Johnson Donna Guinn

Ann Graves Kirsten Stout Kyle Veach Bob Simpson

Bev Simpson Jameson Norton David Lalton Russell Sarbora

Patty Karthas Van Elander Lolly Elander Elva Van Donge

Jerry Van Donge Leslie Foley

VERY BIG THANK YOU TO THE VIEW CHURCH FOR HAVING A PERFECT VENUE FOR OUR TOWN HALL!!!!!

7:00 pm: Clearview Town Hall

**General quick summary of Clearview Community Association history—**Kevin S

**Introductions of the elected officials**

State Senator John Lovick, 44th Legislative District [(contact info is here)](https://senatedemocrats.wa.gov/lovick/contact/)

State Representative April Berg, 44th Legislative District [(contact info is here)](https://housedemocrats.wa.gov/berg/contact/)

State Representative Brandy Donaghy, 44th Legislative District [(contact info is here)](https://housedemocrats.wa.gov/donaghy/contact/)

County Councilmember Sam Low, District 5 [(contact info is here)](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/768/District-5)

Sheriff Adam Fortney [(contact info is here)](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/210/Sheriffs-Office)

Not attending: County Councilmember Jared Mead, District 4 [(contact info is here)](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/767/District-4)

Also present were representatives from the following Agencies:

WSDOT, Hung Huynh ( Engineering Manager) & Adam Emerson (WA-9 Project Engineer) (contact info: 425-754-7991 Adam.Emerson@wsdot.wa.gov)

County Planning and Development, Mike McCrary [(contact info here)](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/5169/55439/Planning-Development-Services)

County Public Works (Roads), Doug McCormick [(contact info here)](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/3703/About-the-Roads-Divisions)

Regional Fire and Rescue, Mike Messer [(contact info here)](https://www.srfr.org/about-us/contact-us/index.cfm)

Sheriff’s Department: Officers Chad Gwordski and Scott Robertson

Introductions of elected officials: Sam Low, John Lovick, April Berg, Brandy Donaghy, Adam Fortney (see links above for more information on their backgrounds)

**Q & A:**

Q1. Resident since 1990. County is allowing Urban development on corner of Cathcart Way and Highway 9. This resident’s knowledge of the original vision was that a new transit hub would be built over the old county dump site. Instead, the transit hub in **Cathcart Crossing** (see below for more information) is now planned to be on the other side of Cathcart Way, on the southwest corner of Highway 9 and Cathcart Way, backing up to the residential property on 152nd. This is not what the residents local to the area want. The quiet feel of a rural area will be destroyed by the noise and traffic.

(Note: This property is owned by DR Horton under the name of Pacific Ridge Homes, LLC. No webpages by Pacific Ridge describing the project are available)

*(Received from the County after the TownHall:
The Cathcart Crossing proposal includes 286 townhomes plus a fast food restaurant and a self-storage building under file number 21-107654. On August 8, the Hearing Examiner issued an amended decision approving the project. An appeal of that decision was filed yesterday (August 22). This means that the County Council will need to hold a quasi-judicial hearing to review the approval decision. For quasi-judicial matters, councilmembers need to limit their contacts with people on the topic.*

*The council clerks will be scheduling a hearing. [To be added to the list for notice of the hearing, contact] Lisa Campfield (**Lisa.Campfield@snoco.org**) Hearings are in a hybrid format, both in person and via Zoom. Most hearings happen on Wednesday’s at 10:30 am. Given requirements for advance notice, this hearing will likely be sometime in late-September or October. There will be links to relevant documents in the hearing agenda when that goes out)*

Q2. **Highway 9** [(Follow this link for WSDOT current project info](https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-projects/sr-9-176th-street-se-sr-96-widening)): The stretch through Clearview is most dangerous due to driveways, narrowness, speed of traffic. Question to State Legislators – can widening funds be provided soon?

* 1. Lovick: He and Donaghy both serve on Senate’s Transportation committee. Lovick also patrolled here as a State Trooper and County Sheriff and knows the issues, and now has access to state transportation decision making. Highway 9 here is a concern.
	2. Berg: The last Transportation Bill included a 1200 page report. Funds currently available for Highway 9 improvements are $860,000. The biggest short-term issues are safety improvement, getting the signals right, adequate lighting, storm water management, appropriate signage, and (Snohomish River) bridge construction. Widening is important, but is currently limited by funding.
	3. Donaghy: Residents need to make sure to communicate with legislators! Send questions, ask for help, keep the subject alive so that when the discussion comes up they know what constituents want.
	4. Low: We have had a change in our Legislative District (district for state legislature). Clearview used to be in the 1st Legislative District, and is now in the 44th. When the District change occurred, Lovick reached out to Low within a week of being our senator, and together they toured the area to look at the situation.

2A. For **WSDOT: What’s the plan for Highway 9?**

Adam Emerson, Project engineer for WA-9 from 176th to Broadway (Lowell-Larimer). The work that is going on is in preparation for widening. The design is generally available, the time-limiting activity right now is communication between property owners along WA-9 and WSDOT, regarding purchasing right of way. There are 175 different property owners who need to give permission, with varying speed of responses. Overall construction timeline is TBD due to delayed funding for making the changes to Highway 9. When funding is available WSDOT is ready to make steady progress.

2B. Whiteside Towing has been in the area since 1956. The traffic congestion on Highway 9 is a problem and coordination between the County and State needs to happen to provide **safety for the community around Highway 9.** Commercial trucks from our area and coming to and leaving Clearview need somewhere to turn around-- Currently large trucks are forced to use narrow local residential streets (176th, 164th, 180th, Snohomish Ave, Broadway) to turn around. These local roads are not built to handle the big trucks from the perspectives of space and load capacity. The situation is dangerous and has caused accidents. The work on Highway 9 should be more than just “pushing [traffic] through our area”-- this impact needs to be taken into account and accommodated.

Lovick: Thanks to Gene Whiteside for all the years of work.

Q3. **522.** Lovick: In 2022 – $17 billion transportation bill passed. Understanding the issues with the local state routes helps legislators prioritize our issues. Aside from Highway 9, the other large state highway in our area is 522. Construction of the additional lanes is also delayed, with funding not yet available. When John Lovick was a State Trooper in our area 522 was referred to as the “Highway of Death”. It has historically been very dangerous compared to other highways in the state.

Low: Funding for 522 is being added to the budget in incremental amounts: there is $5 M for 2025-2027, $7 M 2027-2029, all of it being used to move the 522 project forward. The total is a $150 M project-- the funding has not been available all at once.

WSDOT Emerson: The plan for 522 is that there will be 4 Lanes, two in each directions with a median in the middle, with left turns eliminated for safety.

Low: one of the issues with funding 522 development over the years has been the increasing requirements for environmental concerns.

Huynh: the original plan to improve the Paradise Lake/522 interchange was established 20 years ago. Funding for that design was finally made available 5 years ago and now costs have gone up and environmental rules have changed. Rights of way have been purchased, but the modified design requires Rights of Way in other locations.

[Link to classification of Clearview’s local roads](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6441/Arterial-Circulation-Map?bidId=)

**Q4. 180th::** Traffic is a problem on 180th St SE and becoming more so due to the building of new homes, new schools in surrounding areas. Can anything be done? 180th St SE and 51st Ave (at road’s lowest point, near Little Bear Creek crossing): The speed limit is 40 mph at this intersection, but few cars are going that slow on 180th, and the stop signs on N/S 51st Ave are difficult to see. There have been multiple recent collisions.

McCormick: Info on this was recently forwarded the county traffic engineer. The intersection is on the to-be-worked-on list, but is not a high priority. There is more traffic on 180th, and the construction west of 51st will cease soon.

**Q5. Development off of Lowell-Larimer Road** (SR 96 east of Seattle Hill Rd): Residents have recently seen huge property valuation increases, and there is a fear of equivalent tax increases. Development above Lowell-Larimer Rd accesses it, increasing the number of trips on it by 240/day. It is a 2 lane, unlighted highway that doesn’t seem to be built to support this level of traffic. Safety is an issue.

Low: Much of the hillside above Lowell-Larimer is inside the Growth Management Area—all development has to happen inside of its boundaries, and with the growth coming to our area, it will be developed. There is no chance that, with the Comprehensive Plan update (2024), the area in the GMA will be reduced. On the other hand, the only changes near Clearview that have much of a chance of happening will be around 43rd Ave between 180th and 196th St SE.

Resident familiar with **development happening down 188th** west of Highway 9: All of this development dumps more traffic onto Highway 9—there is nowhere else for it to go. But I’m hearing the funding for improvements to Highway 9 is not available. What is the logic behind allowing development to get so far ahead of roads?

Low: For roads managed by the County “Concurrency” is required-- meaning roads have to be in place to support new development within 6 years AFTER a development goes in. [(click here for more information)](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8119/59---Transportation-Concurrency-Requirements-PDF?bidId=). State Highways have no such concurrency requirement (Highway 9 and 522 are state roads). For the county, housing developers pay mitigation fees, but these go into an overall roads fund, and the money may not be spent directly on the affected roads.

McCormick: Transportation fees paid by developers go into a county road fund and do not necessarily pay for local projects—there is a prioritized list of roadwork. An update to the Comprehensive Plan is currently underway and it has a “[Level of Service (LOS)”](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6598/Overview-Concurrency?bidId=) requirement for development depending on traffic levels. Developers pay only for those affected directly by their development—the rest is paid for by the county and state.

Q5. In the case of 35th Ave (near Mill Creek) it was not required that the developer observe road easements years later the road work is now very disruptive. How do we **ensure that property lines are being observed properly by developers?**

Berg: Impact fees, taxation, mitigation fees. Need to think differently as a state: Schools are impacted as well. Current mitigation fees are not commensurate with costs. Transit through Clearview is not available even though most of the people on transit would not be from this area anyway. The laws had to be changed to allow the Fire Districts to change to a common sense solution. More conversation on a local level is needed.

Q6. **Law Enforcement coverage:** Lowell-Larimer is currently State Route 96 west of Highway 9 and east of Seattle Hill Rd. At Seattle Hill SR 96 goes up the hill, and then 132nd becomes SR96 to I-5. Shouldn’t the state route designation be moved to Cathcart Way? The State Patrol never patrols Lowell-Larimer in either direction. This would allow the sheriffs to cover Lowell-Larimer.

Fortney: With current changes inside the Urban Growth boundary, south Snohomish County now has 5 officers per 300,000 people in the unincorporated and rural areas. This is a low staffing level. Emergency calls will bring a sheriff quickly, but non-emergencies may not get them here so fast. Issues of citizen safety qualify as emergencies and sheriff coverage should not be an issue.

WSDOT: Is not familiar with a possible change of jurisdiction of Cathcart Way.

Q7: **Can we stop development until the infrastructure** is completed? All the local north-south roads through Clearview-- Highway 9, 522, major arterials, Broadway, Snohomish Ave – are all already seriously impacted. At Cathcart Crossing the proposal is for 250+ new units —who is looking at the whole picture? Traffic counts are made but apparently someone thinks it is “not so bad”. And there are more developments planned up Cathcart Way! Increased density is being allowed on 180th with cluster housing – and we aleady have gridlocked roads after 2:30 pm everyday. The “nuts and bolts” are not there to support the growth.

7A. **Property taxes increases:** Why, when property valuation and taxes are now so high in our area, do we also have an unfinished and gridlocked state highway running through it?

Low: **15,000 people are expected to move to Snohomish County each year for the next 40 years**. Most of the growth will happen west of here, near Lynnwood. The County Council’s only control is the Urban Growth Area’s border. The decision on what will happen is part of the currently happening [2024 Comprehensive Plan Update](https://snohomish.county.codes/CompPlan/GPP-IN) – right now it looks like there is enough room inside the UGA that the area around 43rd Ave may be the only area near Clearview affected by the Update. The County Council is doing its best to keep all the growth over in Lynnwood. There is room inside the UGA in cities north of here that is supposed to take up the population growth too, but with current funding transit and roads are unable to keep up. 7-8000 new people per year could be accommodated with current funding—the current rate is simply too much. Highway 9 south of 188th St SE has been widened. Improvements to Highway 9 through Clearview are not even in the state’s 6-year plan.

**Broadway Ave:** There has been an enormous increase in traffic as the load on Highway 9 seeks a faster path and the road upkeep to support that increase does not seem to be available. A bike event on was held on Broadway, causing further congestion. What is happening with the conversion of the railroad right-of-way into a bike and pedestrian path?

Low: That is in the 7 year plan. Transportation funding is badly needed

Berg: personal experience as a child with the condition of Broadway Ave. Upkeep issues are real.

Lovick: Despite all the problems, residents should feel safe in Clearview and not be fearful.

Q8. **When is the next State Transportation bill**?

Lovick: It’s not clear—the last time there was 7 years between packages.

**180th:** Long term resident of 24 years, raised 4 kids here: Very glad to see who represents us and that they are all willing to meet with us. Early August his wife and daughter were involved in a collision at 51st and 180th. People are passing on a two lane road with a speed limit of 40 mph and a crossroad. Truck driver on 51st ran the stop sign, did not even see it due to tree branches. Fortunately there were no major injuries. There was a petition started on NextDoor.com and 250 people signed on the first day. DO NOT PASS signs are needed on 180th, or flashing signs; the visibility of the stops signs need to be increased in any manner possible. Somehow the traffic needs to slow down to speed limit.

Low: He is in touch with Public Works continuously with info that comes to him. Sam monitors 150 social media groups to watch for issues in his District. Please keep the Elected officials up to date on what‘s happening so they can act on it, or forward it to people who can do something about it.

McCormick: Public works is aware of the intersection and looking at short term improvements that can be done quickly.

**Slowdown Development:** Resident in Clearview for 30 years. The community is saying in multiple ways that construction needs to stop until infrastructure catches up but the answer we’re hearing seems to be “growth needs to happen, everything else needs to wait.” The Community wants to say “let’s stop and catch up once and for all”, then proceed in a way that makes sense. It seems like we’re not being heard, or being ignored.

Low: Within the defined boundaries of Clearview growth has stopped due to the actions of the County Council after hearing from the local residents. Other areas, including Cathcart Crossing and much of the area south of Lowell-Larimer is not in Clearview and is within the Urban Growth Boundaries (UGA). The major issue within Clearview is Roads!

**Harm reduction:** Recent inheritance of property has created a problem with getting rid of dangerous and hazardous things, such as needles used for insulin, copious amounts of bullets, Opioids. Where can they be disposed of? How do we turn them in?

Fortney: Sheriff has taken discarded bullets in the past. Leave name with Sheriff and he will figure out how to get rid of it.

**Development:** There is cluster housing going in off of Interurban Blvd. How are people being encouraged to live closer to transit? How are cities there being encouraged to take the growth?

Berg: There were legislative bills to encourage building of higher density near lightrail stations that did not go through this year, but they will come back around this year. It’s a Math problem—how many people can move into the urban areas and how short are the areas in housing? Funds can be used to help cities build more housing. The number of busses needs to increase to move people around. Right now the cost is borne through taxes paid by the people who live in Sound Transit’s area (not Clearview). There is no transit here in Clearview because it has been voted down twice (1997 and 2008) (editor comment: Community Transit has said the petition has to be started by local residents the 3rd time).

Lovick: Notes April Berg’s words about increased growth near transit hubs. The Lynnwood Sound Transit station is being built out with lots more housing surrounding it.

McCormick: Public works and P&D are working together on urban center planning around the [two Sound Transit Light Rail stations in unincorporated Snohomish County](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/4068/49291/Light-Rail-Communities). The current discussion is how to get people to the stations—transit TO the stations will be encouraged by minimal parking lots at the stations. Busses are the proposed solution to get to the lightrail stations and Community Transit is working on a new orange line that will go from McCollum Park to Edmonds Community College through Lynnwood transit center. Swift busses are also planned--parking will be limited at the lightrail stations!

McCrary: Sam Low is more knowledgeable about the GMA than other councilmembers. In the 2024 Update to Comprehensive Plan the options include more intense development around transit. Every effort being made by Planning and Development to keep growth inside UGA.

Q9. **Taxes and assessments.** Latest assessment increases the valuation $600,000 over value in this year’s tax statement! Residents are afraid of how much a tax increase will be next year. What can be done about taxes, especially for homes near the UGA boundaries where value is affected by home value within UGA?

Low: Suggests bringing the tax assessor to an upcoming CCA meeting. Yearly taxes do not necessarily follow house valuations, [there is a limit on how fast taxes can increase](https://dor.wa.gov/forms-publications/publications-subject/tax-topics/property-tax-how-one-percent-property-tax-levy-limit-works)(click for info). Taxes don’t go up the same as the property assessment, and may not go up at all. Property tax statements will come out February. The county only uses 10% of the property tax funds right now, with the rest going to the fire districts, schools.

Berg: Many things go into taxes. There is a bill for primary residence property tax relief on the first $250,000 of value that will be put forward at the state level this year. The State Congress Taxation group is working on bipartisan solutions for changing the tax laws in ways that will not change the overall revenue at the state level but that will redistribute who pays what.

Low: I know there’s been discussion about freezing seniors’ property taxes at 65 to keep from “taxing people out of their homes”.

Berg: There are [income-dependent exemptions](https://dor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/PTExemption_Senior.pdf) available now.

Q10. Clearview neighbor: [South Whidbey Island fault](https://www.heraldnet.com/news/buried-danger-a-slumbering-geologic-fault-beneath-us/) line goes through Brightwater—how can we better fund **emergency preparedness** for our area?

Donaghy: We should always be funding emergency preparedness. The pandemic has shown how insufficient funding is. We need to expand how current resources are used. One approach is to create “Islands of Community” due to difficulty it would take to travel our local geography after a severe quake. There is a bill in the legislature to connect Emergency Medical Technicians to local Public Health departments.

Lovick: The community group at Echo Lake had a disaster preparedness event the weekend of August 13. Planning ahead is important. Echo Lake has an [Emergency operations center](https://www.echolakecommunity.org/projects/emergency-operations) that is able to work with county’s Emergency Center. More funding is needed for more centers like that.

Q11. **Limiting Executive Management powers**: The emergency powers of the governor have now been in place 901 days in emergency order. What is the panelists’ opinions on this?

Low: Emergency powers in Snohomish County were limited to 30 days in 2019, with the county council voting on whether to extend the powers.

Lovick: This is an easy issue to debate, but difficult to resolve at the state level, but conversation on it needs to continue.

Berg: The state Senate did pass a bill to limit the emergency powers but the House did not pass it. There is difficulty in that the legislature meets for only 60 or 105 days a year, depending on the year, so there is no legislature available for decision-making—and the Governor is at work full time. There is a committee looking at how all states meet and what it costs because a fulltime legislative body is needed.

Donaghy: It is important to have someone able to make decisions as needed. The State Legislature has good mix of people for good decision making, but is not in Olympia most of the time unless called back for a Special Session.

**Development and Transportation coordination**: Can an ok for new development be required to go through an impact report from the transportation folks? Right now there is a **safety situation** every weekday on Jewell Rd—The road is completely blocked by school parents between 1:30 and 3:30 every weekday, with more construction going in across the street from the elementary school. It looks like no one knew this would happen and the situation is being ignored. There are a lot of elderly residents in the neighborhood—what if an emergency occurred?

McCormick: The plans for this development were reviewed by public works. There are frontage improvements required that are not yet in place. The traffic engineers do look at what is needed at new developments, and needed developers have to pay a fee.

Berg: Right now there are not enough school bus drivers even if the parents allowed their children to ride a bus. Mitigation payments from developers have not been sufficient.

Fortney: Berg is right, preventing problems like the one on Jewel Rd will take more planning. But the answer is not traffic control by the Sheriff’s department.

Donaghy: If Emergency vehicles cannot get through that is a very important issue.

Low: The road and schools are in District 4, but he and Jared Mead work together well so either of them can be contacted about issues like this.

Q12. **43rd Ave issue:** Thank you to the CCA Board for this forum—it’s the only one available for 43rd residents even though they are not officially part of Clearview. The issue for the 43rd area is that the boundary to the UGA runs along the back fenceline of the houses on west side of street and the area is zoned Rural R5. The county is planning to connect 43rd at the north end to allow traffic to flow between the urban zoned areas north and south, destroying the rural “feel”. The issue has been alive since early 2000’s. There is a traffic circle going in at 43rd and Jewell Rd and it is larger than the original plan. It will eliminate one newly purchased home, and the front yard of a house across the street will disappear.

**Local residents there WANT the boundary changed** to include their area within the UGA—this is the only place where this is true in the area.

Low: [The county’s Buildable Lands Report](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/1352/Buildable-Lands) is complete, a study of the situation at 43rd Ave happened, and both Meghan Dunn and Sam Low agree on the change in this area. There was a conversation with the owner’s of the newly purchased house and a financial deal was negotiated. The use of eminent domain is not supported by Low. There is a Light at the end of the tunnel for the 43rd Ave residents.

Q13. [Husayniah Islamic Center](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/5752/Husayniah) (proposed): Resident who lives in State St neighborhood believes the **noise** from the present arrangement is intolerable. A different church had planned to be located at this site, but moved into the town of Snohomish, town. Plans are that more construction is coming—what is happening as far as septic? Effect on local traffic? Is there more infrastructure needed?

Low: Rural zoning includes many things— Religious buildings are included.

McCrary: not familiar with project being discussed. Churches are allowed by zoning in that area. Asks for resident to contact him after meeting.

It is understood that Clearview is not in the UGA, but **doesn’t the magnitude of the traffic flowing through the community qualify Clearview for some compensation**? Traffic is increasing. How many more cars are coming? Local community needs accompanying infrastructure to support our area.

Low: Clearview has two of the state’s 3 LAMIRDS and what happens within them is governed by State law [(see this link and go to paragraph 6)](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=365-196-425) The County can make small tweaks, but any major changes are prohibited by state law. If Clearview residents can agree on changes that are needed and wanted, we can bring it to the County and they can go to the State about the changes.

Berg: Would like to work with Low to see what changes could be made to LAMIRDs. Davina Duerr (past state representative) also knows about this issue.

Low: Emphathy for the danger posed to tow truck drivers with more traffic and higher speeds coming.

9:30 pm **Adjournment –**next meeting TBD—possibly Nov 17, 2022—at Horseshoe Grange, 16424 Broadway Ave in Clearview

*Your CCA councilmembers welcome your attendance at council meetings during the year and invite you to participate by giving your comments or contacting any of five Board members listed below.*