



KING COUNTY Councilmembers (L-R) Jane Hague, Kathy Lambert, Larry Gossett, Reagan Dunn, and Larry Phillips came to the Ravensdale area to listen to testimonies concerning the 2008 King County Comprehensive Plan Update.



AUDIENCE MEMBERS wait their turn to testify before King County's Growth Management & Natural Resources Committee at a public hearing (held on Thursday, April 3 at Tahoma Jr. High School in the Ravensdale area) concerning the 2008 King County Comprehensive Plan Update.

King County Comprehensive Plan public hearing held in Ravensdale area

Continuing to gather public input as to the Executive's proposed 2008 King County Comprehensive Plan Update, King County Councilmembers made their way to Tahoma Jr. High in the Ravensdale area on Thursday, April 3, where they listened to local leaders as well as community members voice their opinions on the Update.

Councilmembers present at the meeting included Growth Management & Natural Resources Committee Chair, Larry Gossett; Vice Chair, Jane Hague; this area's representative, Reagan Dunn; Larry Phillips; and Kathy Lambert.

During introductions of each of the Councilmembers, Lambert, who represents the largest land area of the County in the northeast section, encouraged everyone coming to testify to be "brutally honest" about the effects and impacts the Comprehensive Plan would have on them. As the evening's testimonies unfolded, many took her comment to heart.

As the only King County Councilmember living in the greater Maple Valley area (Dunn lives in unincorporated King County near Maple Valley), Dunn stated that he was actively involved in what is transpiring with the Donut Hole. He emphasized very emphatically that Maple Valley needs to be at the table when it comes to the planning of that site because impacts to the City will be so great. He also stated that he was watching the Covington/Jenkins Creek "Notch" public testimony very closely to understand the community's concerns.

With approximately 60-70 people in attendance, Maple Valley Deputy Mayor Glenn Smith was first to take the microphone. Stating that he was "profoundly disappointed" with King County so far, he continued that he wanted the County to get on with a joint planning process between the County and City. After spelling out four points for the County to consider, Smith asked the County to "please work with us."

Drawing a chuckle at the beginning of her testimony was Maple Valley Councilmember Linda Johnson. In her comment, she stated that she was not really surprised that the County and City were having such a tough

time getting together with the Donut Hole issue. After all, she stated, the two jurisdictions can't even agree on a name; King County calls the area - the Summit Pit - while Maple Valley has come to know the 156 acre area as - the Donut Hole.

She went on to ask the County to follow their own ordinances as well as to suspend the current Request for Proposal (RFP) to immediately sell the land. She asked that the land use today - recreation and a maintenance facility - are two things the City needs. She emphasized that the City does not need thousands of more homes on what is today recreation land.

Taking his turn at the microphone, Maple Valley Councilmember Noel Gerken echoed the previous Councilmembers by stating that Maple Valley still did not have a serious place at the "table", and called on the County to work with Maple Valley. He also stressed that in working together, the County needed to have respect for local government - such as Maple Valley.

Concerned about where King County was putting their information from in order to come up with the recommendations for the Donut Hole, Councilmember Layne Barnes challenged that the document was flawed. Of concern to him was the lack of any environmental features within the document.

In his testimony, Rick Perez a Maple Valley citizen, called on County Councilmembers not to reward the Executive for his behavior - as it reflected on the County Council as a whole. He suggested that the County go with an R-6 zoning for the Donut Hole, rather than the proposed R-8, as it more accurately reflected the surrounding area. Yet another citizen stated that he had a lot of confidence in the local "electeds" and does not want anything to happen to the area until Maple Valley has it under their jurisdiction.

The City of Black Diamond was not without concerns when it came to the John Henry Mine area. Former Councilmember, and active in his watch over the environment, was George McPherson. The City has had

a long standing concern about what waste products are being dumped into the mine and its affects further down the hill with Lake Sawyer. He stated that if the City was in control of the John Henry Mine area, it would be able to have a bigger impact in the reclamation process of the mine.

Andy Williamson, Black Diamond's Economic Development Director, read the following statement into the record - "The City of Black Diamond will only be able to wholeheartedly support the inclusion of the John Henry Mine into the Urban Growth Agreement and Potential Annexation Area at the time that agreements are in place that assure it will be developed in a way that protects the environment, is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Black Diamond Urban Growth Area Agreement the Black Diamond Open Space Agreement and their implementing regulations, and that ownership has transferred to Yarrow Bay."

Then there were a number of comments coming forward concerning the Covington/Jenkins Creek Notch. Those testifying stated that they wanted to preserve the area as unincorporated. They did not want any big boxes or to become urbanized along with the density it could bring. They also voiced concern about the City of Covington not being able to service the area properly as the City

did not have their own fire/police departments or schools.

They were also very concerned about Jenkins Creek itself. Testimonies as to what would happen to all the wildlife in the area as well as salmon were voiced. One community member stated that King County is the gatekeeper when it comes to protecting the area - and that it should stay unincorporated.

Other testimonies from community members that were brought forward included the Lake Desire area, Snoqualmie I-90/Hwy. 18 area, the Solly Urban growth area border expansion in east Renton. There were also a couple of other comment made, one concerning DDES, which, according to the speaker, was killing family business homeowners, and a second comment from a Hobart citizen wanting more access to open space for disabled citizens.

Rounding out the meeting was Maple Valley City Manager, Anthony Hemstad, who stated that he felt the County was striking a bad policy when it came to the Donut Hole issue. He asked the County Councilors to listen to their elected peers and cited that the 37 cities in the Suburban Cities Association in King County have unanimously asked King County to not move forward on the Donut Hole without joint planning and a pre-annexation agreement in place between King County and Maple Valley.