

The Two Point Whistle By Rhona Baron

Summertime, when all we want to do is play. It's hard to keep up with meetings, regulations and issues. So instead of diving deeply today, The Whistle team offers updates on two ongoing community talking points.

First, an update on Alpenglow Village, the major subdivision proposed for Ski Hill. Alpenglow will populate the green field that lies immediately north of the Pinegrass development with up to 400 people living in a mixture of dwellings. As we reported last week, the official determination to begin construction was postponed indefinitely following the June 9 Hearing. Leavenworth's Development Services had neglected to provide a complete and required Traffic Impact Analysis.

The requirement for a traffic analysis is stipulated in Leavenworth's Comprehensive Plan (CP). Understand, the CP is the big cheese! It's not supposed to be nibbled away by mousy efforts to sidestep the mandates it contains. Hearing Examiner Kottkamp was spot on when he expressed concern about the lack of complete data regarding impacts of Alpenglow traffic.

To the Whistle's surprise, the additional data was submitted by the City, within a week of the June 9 Hearing. And it's still incomplete! Leavenworth's Comprehensive Plan requires that both weekday and weekend traffic impacts be accounted for, including impacts measured between 11am and 3pm on Sunday. The newly submitted data was collected several years ago and gives zero indication that traffic counts were conducted between 11 and 3 on Sunday. We don't anticipate that Hearing Examiner Kottkamp, an experienced lawyer, will accept non-compliant data.

But I will say that last September, when I began writing The Whistle, a primary motivator was my dismay at the disconnect between the direction provided in the Comprehensive Plan and the direction taken by the mayor, council and planning commission. So, if you are looking for a small slice of summer reading, check out the CP, found on the City's website. It's fairly short, reasonable and pretty darn interesting.

Now let's turn our attention to the Mayoral race. With three candidates in the ring, and one destined to be dropped in the August primary due to lowest votes, we've got ourselves a race. The candidate statements have been published by VoteWA. Check it out online.

Incumbent Carl Florea is positioning himself, first and foremost, as a champion of workforce housing. While Carl and I have always agreed on the need for affordable housing, if you've read this column you know I believe his approach, which has accelerated developer driven growth before neighborhood, environmental and infrastructure considerations, has done the opposite of what he claims he wants. Increasingly Leavenworth is a community for the wealthy and second home buyers. If the mayor was open to collaborating with the ideas and desires of the community

regarding neighborhoods and other issues, we'd declare him a decent candidate. But much of the community has learned the painful way. He is not. Search: carlfloreaformayor.com.

Rich Brinkman has served in Leavenworth before and seems to have support for returning. His tag line, "Restoring Leavenworth Pride" is puzzling, however. If he is referring to bringing back Project Bayern to run "Leavenworth Oktoberfest," I'm afraid that door has closed with much of the community simply adding "don't let it hit you on the way out." We sincerely hope Mr. Brinkman will clarify his messaging and explain what exactly he believes will make us proud. Meanwhile, we appreciate his claim of integrity, unity, and concern for our streets, neighborhoods and natural resources. He also states the need to restore a strong business community. Much of it sounds mayoral. Search: brinkmanformayor.com/

The third candidate, Becky Subido could be our dark horse. According to her candidate statement, she is educated and has relevant experience. She's lived in town for 22 years and we understand she operates a B and B. She mentions issues like infrastructure, authentic communication and growth management. A leading tagline on Subido's site reads: "We are all afraid of losing our small and beautiful mountain community. Our fear is understandable." She grew up in a small town and feels Leavenworth has become fractured, suggesting she is the person to address the divides and provide a more respectful approach to the community at large. Maybe so. Search: beckisubido.com

Regardless of the issues, The Whistle applauds and appreciates each candidate's willingness to serve Leavenworth. To foster better understanding of the people who want to be mayor, The Whistle, RC3 and other community leaders and volunteers are sponsoring a Candidate Forum. All three mayoral candidates will be present. The date is Monday, July 10th @ 6:30 pm at the Firehall.

Enjoy your summer in our beautiful valley but don't forget that we can't be a community without our full time, voting residents engaging in whatever way they can to shape the future of our village. Please feel free to contact us through the Whistle site with your thoughts on future columns at LWhistle.com. Until next time, keep whistling. We hear you!