

# West Panorama Ridge Ratepayer's Association

Spring 2006

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I want to start this message by thanking the Board of Directors of the West Panorama Ridge Rate Payer's Association (WPRRA) for their dedication and efforts during the last year. The names of the Directors are: **Tom Dent**, Vice-President, **Bob Campbell**, Past President, **Joan Mayhew**, Secretary, **Susan Williams**, Treasurer, **Bruce Fraser**, **Christine Regehr**, **John Briscoe**, **Ken Martin**, **Tammy Ritchie**, **Sandra Walters**, **Len Hanson**, **Hilda Straus**, **Allan Holmes**, **Tom Katronis** and **Kelly Bigelow**.

We have had another busy year as a community association; the main issues included: noise mitigation for the widened Highway 10, sanitary sewer twinning at the bottom of Panorama Ridge, All Candidates meeting before the Provincial and Municipal elections, a number of development issues, tree bylaw and reduction of train whistling. Our Board of Directors, comprised of 16 residents has met about 10 times and many have been active on numerous committees.

The WPRRA Board of Directors and affected residents whose houses back on to Highway 10 met with the Project Management team responsible for the widening of the Highway, February 21 at Colebrook Church. The Border Improvement Team proposes to build a one meter earth berm (where possible) with a three meter high cedar fence. This fence will be constructed with "heavy duty, tongue and groove" boards that will reduce the sound levels by approximately 10 decibels (current sound levels are approximately 60 - 65 decibels). This reduction will result in sound levels that Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon committed to, in meetings that the WPRRA had in 2004 to secure a satisfactory result after the Highway has been widened. Please note that **not** all houses that back on to Highway 10 qualify for sound mitigation and those residents that qualify and choose not to have the fence build behind their house will not get a second chance. This sound mitigation will reduce the noise and exhaust gases, enhance our home values and generally improve our quality of life on the Ridge. We have been assured that the fence will be maintained and when required, replaced by the Department of Transportation.

This year, Bob Campbell again has spent countless hours coming up with solutions to reduce the train whistling at the bottom of the Ridge and we are now close to eliminating

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## West Panorama Ridge Rate Payer's Association

### Annual General Meeting

Thursday April 27, 2006  
Colebrook Church  
7:30 PM

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**President's Report (continued from Page 1)**

train whistling. We also expect a response from the Vancouver Port Authority as to how they plan to mitigate train generated noise after the third berth at Roberts Bank will be constructed.

The WPRRA organized "All Candidate Meetings" both for the Provincial and Civic elections. These meetings were well attended and provided the West Panorama Ridge Residents with information to make well informed choices.

To help reduce crime that many of us have experienced on the Ridge, **Susan Williams, Tammy Ritchie, Joan Mayhew and Bob Campbell** are working with the "Block Watch" program. Further information will be communicated to the area residents as to when and where this program will be further implemented.

A meeting with the RCMP was held to get their input on what we as residents on the Ridge can do to reduce crime. One of their suggestions is to quote the following number to the police when reporting an incident: "**2005-2864**". The police will then be able to track the type and amount of problems we experience in our area. The police can be reached by phone number: 604-599-0502 for any non-emergency calls. For emergencies please dial: "911".

Thursday, April 27, 2005, we will have our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Colebrook Church. A new Board of Directors will be elected, therefore if you have an interest in representing our community and becoming a Director, please write an e-mail to: [panoramaridge@shaw.ca](mailto:panoramaridge@shaw.ca) so that your name can be added as a candidate. We will also accept nominations for Directors at the Annual General Meeting itself.

If you have any comments or suggestion that will help improve "Life on the Ridge", please contact the WPRRA with any comments or suggestions through the following e-mail address: [panoramaridge@shaw.ca](mailto:panoramaridge@shaw.ca) or fax number 604-628-0173.

In our fall newsletter we will announce the "Yard of the Year". If you notice a particularly well maintained yard that is worthy of such an award please e-mail: [panoramaridge@shaw.ca](mailto:panoramaridge@shaw.ca) with the

noted address. The yard with the most votes will receive the award.

I hope to see you all April 27 at our Annual General meeting at Colebrook Church!

Regards,

Arnie van Hattem, President, West Panorama Ridge Rate Payer's Association



Standing room only for Ridge residents at the Civic election All Candidates Meeting



Almost standing room only for the many candidates who participated!

**When reporting a crime to the Police please quote the following #:**

**2005-2864**

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## DEVELOPMENT ON THE RIDGE

Development on the Ridge continues! While we do not want to stop it, nor can we, we are actively involved in trying to ensure that development meets current zoning and by-law regulations. Currently there are three major development issues that the WPRRA is involved with; some positive and others not.

In our view, the most important proposed development involves the land between 128<sup>th</sup> & 132<sup>nd</sup> and Hwy 10 & 56<sup>th</sup> as it affects the largest remaining undeveloped section on the Ridge. A developer has obtained control of approximately one third of this section of land and is attempting to get a concept plan approved for the complete parcel. The initial stages of the development have been positive, with the developer proactively approaching the WPRRA to solicit our input. Two key objectives of his concept plan are to maximize tree preservation and maintain the estate appearance along 56<sup>th</sup> Ave. In addition, this parcel contains one of the last, large groves of coniferous trees and the developer would like to see them preserved through the creation of a city park. The WPRRA agrees with the developer's current concept plan including the creation of a new park. This developer is also looking to put together a smaller four parcel lot, the progress of which we will be following closely.

The second development issue is one in progress by BFW (a developer) that was reported on in a previous newsletter. This development has a long history and involves three parcels all zoned one acre, which the developer was seeking to have rezoned to half-acre. The previous Council approved the sub-division of one parcel, but rejected the re-zoning of the other two. The developer brought the re-zoning application for one of the rejected parcels back to Council and it was approved! Council did not provide any reason why an application that was rejected six months earlier, comes back unchanged and is now approved. The developer has now subdivided the first parcel along New McClellan near 124<sup>th</sup> Street and we are told all four lots are sold.

The final issue is also long-standing and involves the enforcement of covenants. The original issue around covenants arose regarding a property

at 56 Ave. and 136 St. and was reported on in a previous newsletter. Covenants are used as a vehicle to ensure appropriate development and both the City and the homeowners are parties to the covenant. The WPRRA considers proposed covenants when we evaluate the appropriateness of new developments. Despite years of effort, the WPRRA has had minimal success getting existing covenants enforced. The most recent response from the City stated that although they are party to development covenants they are not willing to enforce them. Their position is that it is the responsibility of the homeowners who are party to a covenant to take action against those neighbours who are in contravention. For a variety of reasons, most neighbours are not going to take action against each other, resulting in covenants becoming an unreliable tool to ensure appropriate development. From our point of view, if the City will not enforce a covenant, then they become virtually useless and should not be considered when new developments are proposed.

## SECONDARY SUITES

The problem of secondary suites in Panorama Ridge has not disappeared. At the last All Candidates meeting in conjunction with the most recent municipal elections, it was stated that there was an estimated 20,000 illegal secondary suites in Surrey alone,. Each of these suites adds to the cost of administering service to the City in the form of increased garbage collection, water and sewer usage, more street parking, more neighbourhood traffic, and other strains on the system. The City does not collect any more property taxes from the residents who have secondary suites since property taxes are calculated as a percentage of home value. Thus the people who obey the zoning laws are subsidizing those who don't. This practice must be brought under control.

Most people in Panorama Ridge are responsible and reasonable and thus would not be unduly upset if a direct relative were using an extra bedroom. However, there are those who build huge mega houses with many bed

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## Secondary Suites (continued from Page 3)

rooms for the sole purpose of renting out sections of their houses through classified ads. This flies in the face of the Single Family Dwelling zoning by-laws. It is this latter type of Secondary Suite owner we are most concerned about.

The most effective way to bring secondary suites of this type to the attention of the By-Law Enforcement people is to do so IN WRITTING, in conjunction with phone calls to the appropriate City Staff.

To initiate action against secondary suite proliferation please use the following contacts:

**Phone:** Muriel (604-591-4370)  
City of Surrey  
By-Law & Licencing Division

**Mail:** City of Surrey  
Legal Services Division  
By-Law & Licencing Division  
14245-56th Ave.  
Surrey, B.C., V3X 3A2

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## RIDGE HISTORY - THE JOSEPH THOMPSON BROWN HOUSE Circa 1908

Joe Brown was one of Surrey's early pioneers. His father, Chris Brown was one of the first settlers in the Panorama Ridge area and owned most of the land south of Highway 10 all the way to Mud Bay. Chris Brown's original home still stands on what is now Coulthard Place and is probably the oldest building on Panorama Ridge. Joe Brown was the most notable of Chris' sons, becoming the Mayor of Surrey in 1936. Joe Brown also donated the land to create Joe Brown Park and the parcel Colebrook Church sits on.

Joe Brown's original home, a beautiful 1908 white "Colonial Revival" style, is now 12745 Southridge Drive. Joe passed his home on to his son Lloyd Brown, who lived in the home for over 65 years. The city of Surrey included this house in the 2002 Surrey Historic Register because of its architectural and historic significance. Lloyd revisited his former home in October, 1995, as he celebrated his 80th. Birthday, and shared some memories including the story of the near destruction of the home when a homemade cedar and candle Christmas decoration caught fire.



1935



Today

The house had a 32 volt generator/battery which provided power and was heated by wood/gas furnaces. The kitchen had a garbage burner attached to the chimney. The farm extended almost to Mud Bay. The Ridge was heavily treed and Japanese workers, who had been hired to clear the land, lived in abandoned lumber camps. Farm buildings were demolished over the years; the last barn, a traditional "pole" barn, was burned to the ground by vandals in 2001.

The house has been lovingly restored in recent years and an addition was added in 1996. Bob and Denise Campbell and their family currently enjoy living in the house and are pleased to share several photos of the original homestead. If you have any stories about life on The Ridge in years past, please call Joan Mayhew @ 597-5002 and educate your neighbors.

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## HIGHWAY 10 UPDATE

On February 21, 2006, Mr. Alex Izett, Project Manager for the Border Infrastructure Program, held a meeting at the Colebrook United Church. Mr. Izett, assisted by Project Assistants, Lea Anne Sexton and Helen Lester presented a Power-point presentation to the residents of Panorama Ridge whose properties abut Highway #10.

It has been proposed that between 122 Street and 136 Street on properties already developed, a heavy-duty wood fence with tongue-in-groove construction, will be erected. In areas, where practical, a combination of a berm and a wood fence, up to three metres high will be constructed. For an aesthetic visual effect all reasonable efforts will be made to create a uniform top-line fence. At the intersection of 132A, 133, 133A 134 and 135 Streets, where an earth berm will be created to close the entrances to Highway #10, the wood fence will be erected behind the berm on the side of the highway.

On undeveloped parcels of land BIP are presently pursuing opportunities to construct berms, and are presently in active discussion with property owners and The City of Surrey in this regard. Developers, however, will continue to be responsible for the development of their properties according to planning and development regulations imposed by The City of Surrey.

Property Agents, employed by the Border Infrastructure Program, will at a future date call on all the residents between 122 to 136 Streets, who will be receiving noise mitigation, to discuss construction plans.

Drainage along Highway #10 is generally governed by The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act: one of the obligations under this act is to maintain "as much open drainage as possible." In this regard The Border Infrastructure planners are endeavouring to meet the requirements.

The completion of 57 Avenue to join 132 Street, will be completed this summer and thereafter the ends of 132A, 133, 133A, 134 and 135 Streets will be closed with berms.

It is anticipated that construction between 122 and 136 Street, will commence in the Spring of 2007. "Construction on the approaches to the intersection of Highway 10 and King George Highway has been slowed due to very wet weather this winter, but completion is presently still targeted for later this year."

The information provided in this article is based on particulars obtained from the February 21, 2006 meeting provided by BIP. The City of Surrey might, however, propose further amendments.

For further additional information on the highway project please visit [www.bip.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bip.gov.bc.ca) or call (604) 719-4636. There is also a Project Office at 17651 57 Avenue, Cloverdale, where Helen Lester will be pleased to answer any questions dealing with the Highway Project.

### The WPRRA now has a web site!

Set your browsers to [www.panoramaridge.org](http://www.panoramaridge.org) and get all the current information about the ridge off the web! After years of discussing the creation of a site, we now have one up and running. Be a bit patient with us, it takes quite a bit of effort to create a site from scratch and to populate it with useful information and all we have is volunteer labour! Check out the new site, but make sure to try it again in a few months to view the new material. All comments are welcome!

The site will attempt to provide residents with four major features. Up to date information on the latest issues on the ridge, on-going status of our major projects such as trains, highway 10, parks etc, a resource section where you can find useful information and links, and finally, how to contact the WPRRA.

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## TRAINS

There are currently two crossing below Panorama Ridge where trains still whistle. The first is the controlled crossing to Mud Bay Park at 127A Street, and the second provides access to a private home on the north side of the rail tracks at about 138<sup>th</sup> Street. Having only two crossing left where trains whistle is an amazing reduction from the original 13 crossings. Considering every train whistles four times at each crossing, we've gone from 1,300 whistles per day to a mere 200!

The City of Surrey is currently evaluating their ability to pass an anti-whistling ban for the 127A Street crossing. This process is moving at a glacial pace, as it has now been two years since \$375,000 was spent to upgrade this crossing to a standard that would allow an anti-whistling by-law to be put in place. In fact, the process has taken so long that it now appears that the rules that define the minimum standard required to obtain anti-whistling status have changed! The City has hired a safety consultant who has prepared a report that has been submitted to the Province, the railways and the Transportation Safety Board. The WPRRA will continue to urge the City to enactment the by-law as quickly as possible. The second crossing provides access to private land the City of Surrey has indicated they may be interesting in purchasing and making part of Colebrook Park.

As mentioned in previous newsletters, the Vancouver Port Authority (VPA) is seeking approval to construct a third berth at their Roberts Bank terminal. This third berth will result in a 50% increase in container traffic and a respective increase in truck and train traffic. In short, more trains and longer trains below Panorama Ridge. In addition, the VPA would like to follow the Third Berth Application with another proposal to build a second complete terminal! Even more trains!

The WPRRA has been working with the VPA, the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) of the B.C. Government, and the City of Surrey to demand noise mitigation for Panorama Ridge. We have pointed out not only how loud existing sound levels are, but also that from Roberts Bank to Langley, we are the largest residential area in close proximity to the rail line. One of the WPRRA suggestions is that

Slow moving trains generate far less engine and wheel noise and vibration than fast moving trains. We estimate it would take each train an extra three minutes to traverse the track below the ridge at these slower speeds, not a large operational price to pay for some peace and quiet on the ridge. We are pleased to report that the VPA is taking our issues very seriously. In addition, in the last few months, the City of Surrey, from our new Mayor on down, has dramatically stepped up their support of our position.

The WPRRA has been working on the train issue for about 10 years. We've made amazing progress and the current situation is dramatically better than when we started. That being said, as per the above, our work is not finished yet!

### Garage Sale

Colebrook United Church and  
Colebrook Elementary School  
Saturday, April 22  
9 - 3

Everyone is welcome!

Sales table rental is available for \$20 at  
the school.

The school is also accepting donations of  
good re-useable household articles and  
toys, books etc, which will be sold  
at the sale. All garage sale proceeds  
benefiting the children of Colebrook  
Elementary.

## STORM SEWERS

The 2nd Phase of the storm sewer installation on Panorama Ridge will commence in the middle of April. It was previously scheduled for the middle of June. Construction will be from 134 Street East; including 135 Street and the remainder of 57th Avenue.

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## RESIDENT SURVEY

Residents! We need your opinion! Please respond to the following questions and let us know your thoughts! Comments welcome!

### 1. New Home Design Guidelines:

At this time, anytime a single lot is developed outside of a subdivision application, (or a home is torn down to create an empty lot); zoning constraints such as building size and set-backs apply, but there is no control of the style, finish, colours, retaining walls, security fences etc that can be built. Should the ridge have some basic design guidelines that control these types of factors for single lots, similar to what now occurs with new subdivisions?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Concrete Fences and Metal Gate:

Large concrete and brick fences with metal gratings and large sliding security gates that completely encircle front yards and go right to the front property lines are becoming more popular in new subdivisions. These types of structures create a "gated" community look vs. open, contiguous front lawns. Should the WPRRA work to prevent this type of fencing in new development?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Joe Brown Park:

The filling operation in Joe Brown Park has been on-going for at least 20 years. Dumping fill in the park provides the City with an inexpensive disposal option. Over the years, our community has been told a number of times that the dumping will soon end, but the fill kept coming. The WPRRA's current position is that the City should propose a plan for park usage and a final set of fill contours to the community, obtain community agreement, fill to those contours, and then permanently stop the filling operation. The community would be left to enjoy an expanded park without the constant rumble, dust and noise of dump trucks. Do you agree with this plan?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please either mail the completed survey along with this years membership form ( overleaf)  
to the Annual General Meeting on April 27th , or mail it to  
5781-125A Street  
Surrey, BC, V3X 3G8



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## Join the WPRRA

Use this form to become a member or to renew your membership.

The WPRRA represents the citizens of Panorama Ridge and provides a strong community representation to City Council on a wide variety of issues. Our voice is only as strong as our membership. Please support the WPRRA and those citizens who volunteer their time to represent the association on the Board by becoming a member now. Only \$10 per family of \$5 per individual. All funds are used for newsletters, web site, the Annual General Meeting or other community activities.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is \$5 for individual / \$10 for household

Nomination for next year's "Resident of the Year"

Name of nominee: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Service: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to become a member, complete this form and bring to the AGM, drop it off at or mail it to:

WPRRA  
5781-125A Street Surrey, BC,  
V3X 3G8  
or give it to any Board Member.

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## JOE BROWN PARK

Joe Brown Park has experienced a number of issues in the last year. These issues include not having the gate closed at dusk, drug dealing and alcohol consumption in the park, and the on-going fill operation in the "lower" park area.

Having the gate closed at dusk prevents much of the dumping of garbage and the drug dealing and alcohol consumption in the park. In the past, the gates were often left open long after dusk, the City has assured us that they now have a reliable organization to close the gates promptly. If you see anyone dumping garbage or organic waste in the park, please write down a license number and take a description of the people and their vehicle. Report it to the City or the WPRRA! Drug dealing has proven to be a more difficult problem to deal with. The police do occasionally take a drive through the park, but catching these low level drug dealers is not only difficult, but appears to not be a priority.

I guess it is hard to get excited about someone buying a small quantity of marijuana in Joe Brown Park when there's a drive by shooting in Newton!

After at least 20 years of operation, the filling operation continues in Joe Brown Park. In short, dumping fill in the park is an inexpensive, convenient option for City crews, especially since Stokes Pit was closed a couple of years ago. Unfortunately it is the local residents that have to put up with the dust and noise of a constant stream of dump trucks trundling through our community. In addition, the fill they dump is turning an interesting and scenic area into a level plain, sometimes covering trees in its path. The WPRRA has approached the City and asked that a definitive time line be provided to end the filling operation, a plan be created as to the eventual contours of this area, and that no more filling occurs in the very bottom of the pit area. We are currently awaiting their response.