

'Council to View Westpark Sub-Area Plan'

By Steven Gardner



Feb.06.2007 | Bremerton, WA

What may be one of Bremerton's most ambitious transformations will likely pass one of its planning milestones Wednesday.

The City Council will consider adoption of the Sub-Area Plan for Westpark, an 82-acre development that would turn 1940s-era public housing into a mixed-income complex with about 760 new homes and retail. The plan received a unanimously positive recommendation from the Planning Commission in November.

The Bremerton Housing Authority owns the Westpark property. The authority plans to use its sale to private property owners to fund the redevelopment, said Kurt Wiest, the housing authority's executive director. Wiest said public housing as old as Westpark is rare. "If Westpark were a human being, it would Social Security now," he said.

Some development has begun with construction on the east end of the site. The Bay Vista Commons have 72 units: 12 for Alzheimer's disease patients and the rest for Medicaid recipients.

In November, Ted Johnson of Marathon Development, the company leading construction efforts said work could begin in late summer or early fall of this year. Wiest said that was the most optimistic estimate.

The current plan for the complex was shaped largely by a design charette in May of last year in members of the public were invited to participate with the site's designers to come up with a mix housing, open space and retail.

That process resulted in a neighborhood that will offer views of about 500 single-family homes, 260 multi-family units and 28 acres of open space, parks and trails.

About five acres will be set aside for smaller retailers such as coffee shops and dry cleaners. In addition to allocating homes throughout the 82 acres, the plan addresses parking, landscaping, and building design standards, including a maximum height of 55 feet for residential units and retail.

About 190 units will be set aside for public housing. That's down from the about 570 public units Westpark has. One element of the redevelopment is to reverse the former national trend of concentrating public housing for low-income residents area.

Residents have been preparing for the move, taking part in what was expected to be Westpark National Night Out last August. In the fall, some residents were given notices of relocation, the notification that the homes they lived in would have to be vacated to make room for new homes.

Residents have since sat in on meetings to discuss the resources available to them to help them move.