

Samish Island Open House Results

There was plenty of good conversation and ideas shared at the Samish Island Open House on January 29th at the community center. The following are results of feasible ideas and will be the basis for an anonymous survey that will be sent to islanders. From the survey islanders can choose which ideas they would like developed into community programs. If you are not on an island email group and did not sign up at the open house please send us your email address if you want to participate in the survey.

Favorite Location - From the information collected it was evident that those who came to the open house love this place we all call home. Based on the map activity which asked islanders to place dots on their favorite island locations many placed dots on their properties. Beyond personal property the top three locations in order were:

1. The walk along the lake at the Community of Christ Camp
2. The Samish Island Public beach
3. Camp Kirby

Favorite Activities

People were asked to name their favorite activity on the island. Hands down favorite activities reflected the natural environment in which we live. The main categories identified in order were:

1. Birding and watching wildlife
2. Looking at views from beach to water to mountain to sky
3. Intertidal recreation from crabbing and oystering, to swimming and kayaking
4. Walking, running and bicycling on roads and paths
5. Gardening in our yards and at the Community Garden
6. Attending the 4th of July Parade and Holiday Party

Challenges

Visitors were asked to identify challenges they see we face as a community. The following were the most mentioned and several had multiple checks and/or exclamation marks next to them.

1. Lack of public access to a beach
2. Deforestation
3. Walkers lack visibility
4. Dog poop on roads and walkways
5. Cars Speeding
6. Preserving water quality
7. Understanding the county's role in helping with drainage, dikes and zoning
8. Light Pollution
9. Lack of a shelter at the public park
10. Need for better play equipment at the public park
11. No walking paths on the dikes
12. No public postal box
13. Invasive species /protecting native species

Ideas for Improvement

It was clear with the ideas shared for improvement people want more community events and a broader use of the community center. Here are ideas for how to make our island a stronger community.

1. Community Events at the Community Center
 - a. offer weekly coffee get-togethers
 - b. offer history sharing events celebrating pioneer families and the Samish Tribe
 - c. offer a lecture series with Samish Island guest lecturers
 - d. offer folk singing and dancing
 - e. offer game nights

- f. bring back the chili cook off
 - g. offer art workshops
 - h. offer events that celebrate Samish Island/create a flag, music
 - i. offer out door movies
2. Deliver a welcome packet to all new island residents
 3. Create programs and play dates for families with children
 4. Create a volunteer programs to help the elderly
 5. Create more public beach access and easier access at the public beach for kayakers
 6. Offer weekly walking and/or bicycling groups
 7. Offer education about the natural environment of Samish Island and how to protect trees and property
 8. Offer education about gardening and native plants
 9. Revisit re-opening the original water connection between Padilla Bay and Samish Bay

As a community we all want our island to be a pleasant place to live. With that in mind we asked people what common courtesies we should consider as neighbors. They suggested:

Samish Island Manners

1. Pick up your dog poop.
2. Walk facing traffic.
3. Wear a reflective vest
4. Yield to pedestrians and bikers.
5. Obey speed limits.
6. Stop at stop signs.

7. Don't speed.
8. Don't burn garbage.
9. Don't steal crab from your neighbor's crab pot.
10. Understand that view is not a property right but be aware of blocking your neighbor's view.
11. Don't contribute to light pollution.
12. Be aware of how your lights may affect your neighbors.
13. Check on neighbors during a power outage.
14. Wave to your neighbors.

Thank you to all the islanders who took time to participate in the open house and share their opinions.