

News Flash from Lagoon Point

September 11, 2007

Dredging progress

Possible modest northward extension of footprint Grette, our environmental permitting firm, has asked Jim Johannessen, our geologist and now theirs too, to estimate the cubic yards added to the dredge design if we ease the slopes of the dredging in the area north of Steelhead. Jim Johannessen computes this design change could add up to 2000 cubic yards to the dredge.

Why do this? Easing the now-relatively steep slopes at the perimeter of the dredge area would reduce the amount of nearby silt and eelgrass that might slide downward from the higher undredged areas into the lower newly-dredged area. The proposed footprint is narrow at that location and the slopes were set fairly steep because we wanted to minimize disturbing the considerable eelgrass in the surrounding area, especially to the north. Grette suggests that permitters may prefer eased slopes, and that the protection afforded eelgrass by easing the slopes may compensate for the additional damaged eelgrass.

At Grette's request Bob VonDrachek used his boat and underwater viewer to recheck the amount of eelgrass in the subject area. Bob reports seeing almost as much eelgrass as was seen in the 2005 survey.

Survey to estimate sediment volume that might be put on south beach. Up to 21-22,000 cubic yards is a whole lot of sediment, and disposing of it poses a major challenge. The most likely option, but it involves expensive double transport, is to load the dredged sediment on barges, then barging the sediment and dumping it at an approved open-water area out in Admiralty Inlet. Although the alternative is a long shot, we need to explore the possibility of piping the sediment to the south beach area at Lagoon Point.

But could the south beach take enough sediment to make this method worth discussing further? At our request Jim Johannessen in June surveyed the south beach and with his data is estimating the volume of sediment that might be put there. This disposal method, called 'beach nourishment,' is far less costly and, as it is ecologically beneficial, may be preferred by permit agencies because it replenishes eroded beaches and recovers biologically necessary environment.

However we propose to dispose of the dredge spoils we will first need to sample the sediment in the targeted areas and send the samples to a lab to determine the type and size of the sediment and to check for contaminants. (Given the history of the area we don't expect to find any contaminants.) If the sediment is found to be suitable for beach nourishment and if the economic and ecological advantages are as attractive as they now appear to be, we will certainly consult all beachfront lot owners.

Rough estimate of cost to do the entire dredging project Grette is working with their engineering subcontractor, Dalton, Olmsted & Fuglevand (DOF), to identify for us all the cost elements we would incur in doing the entire dredging project and to give us an initial rough estimate of what are likely to be the two costliest elements, namely, dredging set-up and per-yard charges. (We have obtained other estimates of these as well.) The board needs these estimates to develop the cost-sharing arrangement it intends to propose to the community.

Dredging around private docks Several owners of canal-front docks have asked whether they could be included in the dredging project. They would like to have sediment dredged out around their own docks, and the cost of permitting and doing this dredging on their own would be prohibitive. Grette checked out this possibility with authoritative permitters. The permitters initial response to Grette was that dredging around docks might be allowed as part of our community dredging project provided the owners could make the case that their dock work was needed to restore previous navigational capability. But adding the dock work would considerably complicate and slow the permitting and raise costs, and even then it is not

clear whether the dock work would be permitted, especially for docks toward the south ends of the canals.

As the private docks are located entirely in Divisions 2, 3 and 4, a decision on whether to include this work will be made by the Architectural Committee. Bill Brown reported that on September 11 two Architectural Committee members had met with the Area 5 and 6 Reps and other interested persons, to discuss dredging around docks and other matters. To avoid further delay we are hoping this matter will be decided by the end of September.