

Public to weigh in on open space

▼ OPG's Jon Rose seeks input on trail network.

By **ANNIE TIETJE**
Staff Writer

Having dubbed the North End communities the "String of Pearls," Olympic Property Group president Jon Rose is now looking to polish and thread them together with a trail network stretching from Indianola to Kingston and Port Gamble north to Hansville.

The first step, before design or planning, is to determine whether the "pearls" wish to be made into a proverbial necklace or remain sparkling on their own.

With this in mind, Rose will host a public forum from 6:15-7:15 p.m. June 27 at Kingston Junior High to present the idea and gain input. If residents express interest, OPG will proceed.

"People today have to be able to look and be visionaries down the road, to sustain quality of life beyond our lifetimes," Rose said. "Occasion-

ally, it's difficult to articulate a long-term vision here and have people buy in to it. The last chance to do it in North Kitsap is now."

This could all be made possible due to legislation 10 years in the making. Kitsap County is now putting into practice. The Rural Wooded Incentive, adopted in 2006, is functioning under a pilot program now to determine if it will work. The incentive essentially provides rural landowners the option of constructing either one dwelling unit per 20 acres, or dedicating 75 percent of the land to open space and clustering housing on the remaining 25 percent. The county is requiring that, under such an agreement, the open space must remain as such for 40 years, but Rose said if this project is adopted by OPG, it will make the open space permanent.

"One in 20 is the easiest and least expensive for us," said OPG project manager Sue Schroader. If the public does not endorse the plan, the company would most likely break up the wooded areas into 20-acre plots and sell them. She and Rose, however, feel the trail project is another way to approach how to utilize the land and create something lasting.

OPG meeting

6:15-7:15 p.m.


June 27

Kingston Junior High,
West Kingston Road

Another aspect to the project ties in Transfer of Development Rights, the ability to transfer property by way of "sending sites" and "receiving sites." In essence, a developer like OPG can preserve land by moving a cluster of homes to another area more suited to urban construction.

"This would work with the Miller (Bay) Road piece," Schroader said, speaking of land OPG owns to the northwest of Heritage Park that could be perfect for a wildlife corridor if left untouched. "Say we have 32 or 35 homes, with the development rights we can take them elsewhere, which will be better for the wildlife. It's like moving things around, like checkers."

Rose and Schroader will be among the OPG officials at a June 27 meeting to explain the few details of the still vague plan and gauge the public's reaction. From there, they will work on how to unite the "String of Pearls."



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