

# Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting #2

Port of Coupeville Comprehensive Scheme and Strategy



---

## Meeting Summary

August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017  
3:00pm – 4:30pm

*Overview:* Community Attributes, Inc. and the Port of Coupeville convened the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) on August 1<sup>st</sup>. The CAC is tasked with supporting development of the Port's updated Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements and Strategic Plan. This second meeting was focused on establishing a vision, goals and projects for the Port to include in the Scheme and Plan.

### *Participants:*

Bruce Bottolfson	Citizen
Chris Burns	Whidbey Telecom
Chris Michalopoulos	Port of Coupeville
Jason Joiner	Windermere Real Estate
John Mishasek	Port of Coupeville
Lynda Eccles	Coupeville Chamber of Commerce
Molly Hughes	Town of Coupeville
Pat Powell	Whidbey Camano Land Trust
Pat Robinson	Friends of Greenbank Farm
Sami Postma	Island County Economic Development Council
Vickie Chambers	Coupeville Waterfront Association

## Introductions and Background

The Meeting began with introductions and presentation on the project scope and role of Ports in Washington. This included the following:

- > Recap and distribution of the June 28<sup>th</sup> meeting summary
- > Discussion of the Port's existing Comprehensive Scheme of Improvements
- > A recap of the role of the CAC and the intent to the CAC meetings

## Draft Vision and Goals Discussion– Summary Notes

Each stakeholder was given the opportunity to review draft vision statements and goals developed for the meeting (see June 28<sup>th</sup> CAC Meeting Handout). The vision statements and goals reflected the content and discussions that took place at the June 28<sup>th</sup> CAC Meeting.

*NOTE: The following notes represent the varying ideas and opinions of the CAC members, organized by major topics. They do not represent consensus ideas or findings, rather, they represent the wide variety of interests, expertise and goals of each individual CAC member.*

*Key: Red text indicates items that were flagged as high priority for the Port to consider and/or address*

## Visions & Long-Term Goals

*The CAC briefly discuss long term goals for the Port.*

- Port can work outside district boundaries, how can it strategize around this idea?
  - Depending on where water, sewer, and land are available
  - Case study: Oak Harbor feels the influence of military base
- Value the areas sense of place: specific to Whidbey, knowing where you are
- In vision statement: include self-sustaining
- Agreed that there should be a vision for each location

## Actionable Ideas

*The following content is organized by major topic: Port Administration, the Coupeville Wharf and Greenbank Farm. The discussion was centered around the draft vision statements and goals for each topic.*

### Port Administration – Defined as overall operations and sustainability

- Vision statement Content - *The CAC discussed the draft vision statements for the Port and its administration*
  - Ask: Are these current vision statement items important? (see June 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting Packet)
    - CAC responded YES emphatically
      - Vision statement needs to explicitly talk about **tourism**
      - Some are true but not complete
      - These do not feel forward thinking, they feel like current, frame these as a VISION and be very clear
      - Clarification: Port can provide infrastructure, not put on events
      - **Port needs to start the culture & hand pick tenants**

- Encourage tenants to start activity
  - Shakespeare festival could become year round
- Vision statement Language:
  - Wordsmithing, economic in two places in last bullet point
  - BECOME self-sustaining
  - Missing the word historic
- Actionable for all of the Port:
  - Focus on heritage tourism:
    - These tourists have more spending power, stay longer, they want a hands-on experience, desire to take home a new experience and wish to learn something new
    - Examples given included: Write calligraphy, do pottery, milk a cow

## Coupeville Wharf

- Vision statement content - *The CAC discussed the draft vision statements for the Coupeville Wharf*
  - Wharf already attracts tourists and residents
    - This goal does not seem big enough
    - Should communicate the desire for people to stay longer when they visit
    - Ask: How do the people support the wharf when they visit/spend the day?
  - Want:
    - Increase demand for the spaces, double the # of people, foot traffic
    - Maintain the existing structure
    - Open space: pay the port to use the facility
    - Venue for selling food & art
    - Small marina, power on the dock
- Revenue sources of the wharf – *The CAC discussed the Coupeville Wharf and its revenue sources*
  - Current
    - Donations
    - Only revenue source is fuel sales, boaters (Pen cove bad year)
    - Moorage rates are in line with other entities
    - At low tide, the spaces for moorage go down
    - Commerce is happening, but unsustainable and not strategic
  - Does it say a story about the history of the wharf?
    - NO, story is not engaging enough currently
  - Future

- More visitors, without strategic planning will lead to only higher rate of donation (unsustainable)
- Want: utilize the space at end of dock
  - Not just a restaurant or tourist shop
  - Must get a % of sales of whatever goes in
- “Experience” there is more important
- History: could be supplemented with screens & tech
- Priorities
  - Fix the wharf to a safe level
  - Add to it: develop a more specific plan for revenue generating uses like a marina
- Address overall operations and sustainability
- Desired vision: attract tourists and residents alike
- Key descriptors for wharf (current, and goals)
  - Iconic structure, not many like it left
  - “If you took away the wharf, it would be like any other historic city”
  - Value, Irreplaceable treasure
  - Long-lasting
  - Durable
  - Supporting future potential
  - Sustainable
  - Self-sustaining
- Desired vision: wharf filled with people & economic activity
- Vision statement terminology:
  - Ask: Wharf “manner that is true” what does this mean?
  - “While supporting local economy”
  - Restore & preserve, improve facility, upgrade
  - Did NOT like words modern, update
  - Be sure to clarify statement about Coupeville’s modern identity versus a modern identity for the Wharf

## Greenbank Farm

- Key descriptors (current, and goals)
  - Currently:
    - Most **beautiful** place on the island
    - Feels too **fragmented**, needs to follow a pattern
    - “Driving by” only works in summer
    - Dog walking place
- 2009 master plan
  - Goals focused on farming and how to maintain and bring agriculture to the Farm
- Vision statement content:
  - Gateway to Coupeville: only true from the South end of the island
  - Want: Pay \$ to walk in with a dog, currently no money is coming in from dog walkers and there are many, improve viability of dog-walking
- Vision statement language:
  - Add language: “restore and preserve”
  - **“Duty to maintain”**
  - Authenticity, stabilize, rehabilitate for efficient & contemporary use
- Ask: Do we want to return this to agriculture?
  - Water supply and bad soil
  - Much of the area is a cleared forest
  - Malting facility, farmers bring their product grown elsewhere
    - Water and sewer is a problem
  - Organic farm
    - Not a money maker and put a lot of energy into improving soil
    - Can’t even grow hay there
  - Logan berry
    - High intensive plant
    - Conservation district did not recommend
  - Facility that provides ag services and education
    - Case study: [Skagit valley technical school](#)
    - If we do this, lose events, galleries
    - Become a business center
      - Better to have that diversity, what about during lunch & after work?
  - Commercial kitchen
  - Multi-purpose space
  - Event venue
    - Ask: Do events make \$

- Wedding bookings, growing but not significant
- Close at 10-11 pm for any event? (neighbors don't want noise)
- **Make it a destination, just like the wharf**
- Small businesses/artisans,
  - Case study: [Twisp Works](#)
  - Artist in residence
  - Could be replaced by people that make more \$ easily
  - Artist studios: pottery kilns, education in off season and tourism in the summer, helps an artist justify living there
  - Case Study: La Quinta [Old Town Artisan Studios](#)
    - Pottery and glassblowing
    - Cheesemaking
    - Would not lose events
  - Case study: [Cidery in Chimacum](#): rural agricultural area, scenic views

## Top Priorities

*CAC members were asked to name their top short term and long term priorities.*

*Short term:*

- **Rehabilitate properties, fix them up and address maintenance and safety concerns, repair Wharf roof**
- Internal, financial support, improve communications and **public relations**
- Ask: Is maintenance in the short term likely?
- Develop the value proposition of the properties & perception

*Long term:*

- Enhance visitor experience to generate buzz: people go home and talk about it
- Determine what will make the most revenue but still feel authentic
- **Expand moorage, best way for Wharf to generate more revenues**
  - boating is seasonable but can generate more revenue
- Need to determine goals/vision for each location
- One vision for Greenbank farm: event center & commercial kitchen
- **Secure funding: bonds and grants**
- **Leverage the Port's upcoming cashflow flexibility**