

Newsletter Fall 2003

Elections

For the past few years during election season the PTC has queried politicians who will be making decisions on the Olympic Discovery Trail. Our intent is to give our members some useful information that will help them with their voting.

County Commissioners

Questions for the Jefferson County commissioner candidates:

The concept of an Olympic Discovery Trail stretching across the Olympic Peninsula from Port Townsend to La Push is embodied in the plans of Clallam and Jefferson Counties.

1. What role do you envision for yourself as an elected official working toward the trail's completion?
2. As an elected official will you encourage the county to aggressively pursue state and federal grant dollars for the trail?
3. What economic value will the trail have for Jefferson County/Clallam County?

Pat Rogers

What a wonderful asset for the Olympic Peninsula both for residents and visitors. When I served in Washington DC we lived in Foggy Bottom and loved to walk the B&O Canal Towpath. This trail goes from Georgetown to West Virginia.

1. Advocate
2. Yes
3. The trail is a means for people to engage themselves in our beautiful county. It transforms them from spectator to participant. This experience has economic value. Participants stay longer and require more goods and services. Bonnie, my wife, and I experienced this in New Zealand where we often visit. "Trekking" is very popular and draws people from around the world.

Mark Rose

Mark Rose did not respond.

Questions for Clallam County commissioner candidates;

1. The concept of an Olympic Discovery Trail stretching across the Olympic Peninsula from Port Townsend to La Push is embodied in the plans of Clallam and Jefferson Counties and the cities of Sequim and Port Angeles. Do you support Clallam County's plan to complete the Olympic Discovery Trail through Clallam County within the next 8 years?
2. What role do you envision for yourself as an elected official working toward the trail's completion?
3. As an elected official will you encourage the county to aggressively pursue state and federal grant dollars for the trail?
4. What economic value will the trail have for Clallam County?

Steve Tharinger

1. Yes. The economic value to the citizens of Clallam County is increased with every mile we are able to complete of the ODT. The vision of being able to take the trail from Puget Sound to the Pacific Ocean through the beautiful and varied landscapes of Clallam County will make the trail an international destination.

2. The county commissioner has a vital role to play in voicing support to the various decision makers who will determine funding for the ODT. Possible funders want to know there is public support for projects of this magnitude and a local elected official's positive voice assures them of that support. I have provided that voice over the last four years and we have been very successful in obtaining over \$2.5m in funding for the ODT.

3. Yes, as I have done over the last four years. As many of you know, for every county dollar we have spent on the ODT we have gotten three back from Washington DC. I think that is a good investment.

4. I think the economic potential of the trail is enormous by attracting travelers from around the planet, to being the center of special events like the Olympic Discovery Marathon. There is also an economic benefit to be realized by creating wellness in the community by giving folks a healthy, safe place to exercise close to their neighborhoods out of traffic.

Sue Forde

Sue Forde did not respond. We have half of an article from the Sequim Gazette. There has been no public repudiation by Sue Forde of her comments printed in this article.

From the Sequim Gazette, June 11, 2003

Forde, R-Sequim, said if elected she would not seek county, state or federal funds for Olympic Discovery Trail Construction.

"I believe it is a boondoggle," Forde said June 10 while speaking to Port Angeles Business Association Members. "It really seems to be a lot money spent for a very few people."

Forde said she has never seen more than six people using the Sequim-to-Port Angeles section of the trail.

Although she said she supports the idea of a trail, she stated she sees no need to have a connection from Port Townsend at the east to Forks and the Pacific Ocean at the west.

Any funds for trail construction, Forde said, should come from donations and trail work should be provided by volunteers.

"It should be something people in our county do and raise money for," said Forde. "I don't think tax money is appropriately used for this."

Clallam County Community Development Director

The questions for the Department of Community Development director candidates were the same as questions 1 and 2 for the Clallam County commissioner candidates.

Bob Martin

1. Yes, I am in complete support of the Olympic Discovery trail. I agree with Commissioner Tharinger who has said, the concept of the Trail is visionary on three levels. First, it is a facility that offers safe and healthy recreation. The portion of the trail that is complete offers citizens a convenient opportunity to walk, jog, ride, bike and, for some, commute. Secondly, the trail contributes to the economy of the region. As we saw with the recent marathon, it can draw people to the area, benefiting the local economy. The Olympic Discovery Trail, once completed, may rival some of the great trails in the world, such as the Pennine Way in England, Hadrian's Wall in Scotland, the Appalachian Trail, and the Cascade Crest Trail in scenic value, accessibility, and interpretive importance. Thirdly, the trail enhances property values. Like the great trail systems of Anchorage, Alaska and Boise, Idaho, the trail can become an asset benefiting the community as a whole and increasing the value of properties having access to it. The naysayers who describe the trail as a "boondoggle" and worry about non-existent crime and violence are out of step with the opportunity that the concept offers.

2. As Community Development Director the past eight years, I have helped obtain grants for trail maintenance and for acquisition of right of way through the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act, that I help administer. I will continue to be aggressive and supportive of future funding opportunities. Additionally, as the County updates its Comprehensive Plan, I will make sure that the Olympic Discovery Trail is accorded appropriate recognition in the plan. This will further enhance our ability to access state and federal assistance in completing the trail.

Rob Robertsen

1. There is a special place in my heart for the Olympic Discovery Trail. My wife Betty and I have walked and explored many portions of the trail and we find it to be one of the treasures of our county. Visitors from out of county and out of state have been impressed and in awe of our trail and our daughter, an avid walker, was amazed that a sparsely populated, rural county would have such a wonderful trail system. Yes, I do support the completion of the Olympic Discovery Trail. My reasons are simple; My family and I use it and enjoy it.

2. I'm not sure what role the elected Director of Community Development would have in completion of the trail, but I am personally committed to the trail and I would lend my support as both a spokesperson and a volunteer to see that the trail is completed. My campaign has focused on balance and I believe the trail is a project that will enhance both the environmental and the economic vision of Clallam County.

Port Angeles City Council

Questions for the city council candidates.

1. The concept of an Olympic Discovery Trail stretching across the Olympic Peninsula from Port Townsend to La Push is embodied in the plans of Clallam and Jefferson Counties and the cities of Sequim and Port Angeles. Do you support the completion of the Olympic Discovery Trail within the next 8 years?

2. What role do you envision for yourself as an elected official working toward the trail's completion?

3. Do you think a completed trail will have an economic value for Port Angeles?

Position 1

Peter Ripley

1. While I support the concept of the Olympic Discovery Trail, it would be unwise to commit to its completion within a given time period, because of the uncertainty of future revenues. We should aggressively pursue federal, state, and private grant funds to secure adequate funding for the trail. We should also consider maintenance costs to keep the trail in good condition

2. I would be supportive of a collaborative approach with local governments and interested parties working together as partners in the effort to assure funding. I would be a strong advocate for assuring equal access for all users, including those with disabilities.

3. I believe the Olympic Discovery Trail is an opportunity to showcase the natural beauty of our community. The trail can be an economic asset that promotes recreation and tourism for our citizens and visitors, alike. It can also help attract potential new businesses to our area.

Lauren Erickson

1. I think that it would be wonderful if the trail from Port Townsend to La Push could be completed within the next eight years.

2. As an elected official I will make every effort to ensure that the City Staff understands that the completion of the trail is a priority. The City, at the direction of the Council, has already provided assistance in getting the temporary trail through the Mill completed.

3. A completed trail should have economic value for Port Angeles and the entire region. The trail has already shown its economic potential with the marathon and hydroplane races. Even without specific events or promotions, a trail of this length is a unique feature and cannot help but attract both tourism dollars and new residents.

Position 2

Jack Pittis

1. I wholeheartedly support the TRAIL and desire its completion as soon as possible. The Olympic Discovery Trail or Waterfront Trail in Port Angeles is a concept that I have been professionally and personally been involved in since arriving in Port Angeles in 1980. The planning documents developed through Port Angeles saw a trail that competed with the railroad that existed along the waterfront and when the railroad went away, I was involved in negotiations to keep the wood bridges within the city and the seeking of grants for the project. The initial estimated cost in Port Angeles was over \$10 million, but with a lot of help from volunteers, Soroptimists Club and Kiwanis Club members the first segment of trail was started (and now no longer used) and the energy grew for the ultimate completion within the city. It was one of the most rewarding projects that I have been involved with in my 34 years of being a volunteer, manager and engineer.

2. As an elected official I can assist the coalition in providing political support for the completion of the project and some perspective on how much of it started in Port Angeles. I do have some public works contacts within the agencies involved and can talk their language about designs, grants and political issues. I stand willing to help whether elected or not.

3. I have always thought that a completed trail from Port Townsend to Port Angeles and even Forks would be an economic stimulus to the area. I have friends from the Everett area that ran in the first marathon held earlier this summer. That and other events that will most likely occur in the future will add to our tourism market and benefit all of us.

Cherie Kidd

1. YES.

2. As a member of the Port Angeles City Council, I look forward to continuing my support of the Olympic Discovery Trail and my advocacy for the Trail. As a citizen, I have been a real supporter of the Trail. I enjoy using it personally and am very proud to have this as addition to our beautiful community for our citizens to enjoy.

3. YES. We have so much beauty to offer and this trail does emphasize the beauty of our area. Tourists enjoy the trail when they visit and it helps enhance their Port Angeles experience.

Position 3

Grant Munro

1. I support the completion of the Olympic Discovery Trail, but do not have enough information yet to know if the 8 year time frame is realistic. There are, as you and your group know, many issues to be resolved for each mile of new and existing trail. Cost is a significant issue, with funding a serious question. Obtaining rights of way through private and public ownership takes much time, effort, and of course, funding. Then, who maintains the trail as it is completed, is responsible for policing it, and picks up the litter. We also must have cooperation from the adjacent landowners, especially where the trail passes through an industrial timberland area or areas of homes. These are only a few of the issues that must be resolved each time the trail is extended.

2. My role would be to work on the above issues with city staff and council to work toward completion. It will be only one of many = important issues coming before the council.

3. A completed trail, and even a partially completed trail as we now have, will have economic value for the City of Port Angeles. The current trail running through Port Angeles toward Sequim has certainly proven this point.

In summary, I support the trail and will work to see it improved, lengthened, and maintained. Please remember that cost is important and an 8 year time frame may or may not be realistic.

Fred Norton

1. If it is practical to complete the trail within the next eight years it is a good idea.

2. Participating in the City's involvement in the trail.

3. Yes

Sequim City Council

Questions for Sequim City Council

1. The concept of an Olympic Discovery Trail stretching across the Olympic Peninsula from Port Townsend to La Push is embodied in the plans of Clallam and 20 Jefferson Counties and the cities of Sequim and Port Angeles. Do you support the completion of the Olympic Discovery Trail through Sequim within the next year?

2. What role do you envision for yourself as an elected official working toward the trail's completion?

3. Do you think a completed trail will have an economic value for Sequim?

Position 2

Patricia Kasovia-Schmitt

1. Yes, I do support the completion of the Olympic Discovery Trail through Sequim within the next year.
2. As an elected official, I will work with the neighborhood opposed to the trail to see if we can reach a viable compromise.
3. Yes, I do think that a completed trail will have economic value for Sequim. The completed trail has already reaped economic benefits: requests for property adjacent to the trail and the recent marathon from Sequim to Port Angeles.

Scott Moore

1. As an employee of the Clallam county road department I have spent many hours in the construction of the Olympic Discovery Trail. When you've spent that much time with a project it's only natural to want to see its completion. At the same time I realize that the time frame of next year may not be a possibility. Our most important concern should be to ensure that it is done right and that we have a plan that everyone can live with.
2. Our city council has recently made its decision in regard to the trail and its passage through Sequim. At this point in time, without the benefit of the council's knowledge and experience, that is a question that I can not answer.
3. There maybe some economic gains but I think the true value of the trail lies as a resource for the use of the residents that live here.

Position 4

Don Hall

1. I support the completion of the trail through Sequim but not down Fir street.
2. I use the trail daily since I live near the Park and Reuse area and I pick up trash etc.all the time. I support its maintenance in the city budget.
3. Yes. The completion of the trail will have an impact, in fact it already has had an impact in lots of ways.

Dick Foster

Dick Foster did not respond.

Other Urgent Business

\$246,000

If Jefferson County can come up with \$123,000 the state will match it with an IAC grant of \$123,000. So far the county has about half \$123K (in land and money) and the PTC is working to come up with other half. We have pledged \$12K in labor and \$20 in cash and are working on grants from private foundations for \$34K. So far we have raised \$12.5K and are asking for your help in raising the rest-every dollar you

donate will actually turn into \$2! Please send donations to PTC, P.O. Box 113, Port Townsend, WA 98368. We are also looking for grant writers to help shepherd us through the grant writing process.

Waterfront Trail

Paving on the Waterfront/ODT east of Rayonier will begin this week (10/20). The city has plans to change some culverts, install some rock retaining walls and asphalt the trail from the east Rayonier gate down to the storm bypass. The trail will be closed while this work is in progress which, because working is weather dependant, may last until the beginning of December.

Website

We are developing a new page on our website for artwork. Things like trail related drawings, photos, poems and such. If you have something you can send us by email we'd like to put it on our page. We are also going to change the trail photo on our website's entry page occasionally so if you have a photo of the trail and would like to go public with it email it to our webmaster Selinda Barkhuis at Selinda@PAToday.com.