Lisa Clausen

From: Public Council Inbox
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2011 4:35 PM
To: 'John Poitras'
Subject: RE: Annexation of White Center

Thank you for writing to the Burien City Council. Your message will be included in the Correspondence for the Record for a future City Council meeting.

Lisa Clausen
Burien City Manager's Office

From: John Poitras [mailto:John.Poitras@omax.com]
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2011 11:28 AM
To: Public Council Inbox
Cc: winonamary@msn.com
Subject: Annexation of White Center

To the Burien City Council:

The latest Berk (2011) report, commissioned by the City, shows that if City were to annex North Highline, there would be no long-term benefit.
However it is certain that the increased crime statistics will negatively affect property values in Burien as a whole as the overall crime rate will go up

Impartial analysis indicates there would be somewhere from between a $46 to $77 million dollar infrastructure deficit from the White Center area that Burien would inherit with the area.
. The discussed/rumored sales tax credits cannot be used to pay off this deficit.

A 2007 Berk report, also commissioned by the City to evaluate the financial feasibility of annexing both North Highline (Area Y) and Boulevard Park (Area X), recommended that the City only annex the Boulevard Park area because the North Highline area would cost $2.5 million dollars more to run than the revenues the City of Burien would get from the area (and that was when the economy was in a "better" condition than it is now).

Since the 2007 report, property tax revenues have dropped because property values have dropped and sales tax revenues are significantly down.

I and many other residents will be contributing money and time to a PAC with the primary goal of educating Burien residents of the negative impact to Burien of this ill conceived venture and to replace any city council members that vote at this time to support the annexation of white center.

Fyi

Kind Regards,

John Poitras
1248 SW 149th St
Burien WA 98166

CFTR: 09/26/11

I've been following the blog on annexation and wanted to share some information with the readers and commenters I thought they might find interesting.

In comparing the Berk and Seattle's analysis of costs of annexation it is clear to me there are a number of very high dollar costs either missing from the Berk report or not carried over into final analysis. Street lighting is $300,000. I don't see any mention of this in Berk. Just SWM at $5 million alone would eat up the entire tax incentive. Repairs needed for the fire-station are $3.9 million. A new medic response center is needed, another $13 million there. Berk says the reason the street repairs, sidewalks, curb, gutter improvements are so much lower for Burien compared to Seattle's estimates ($32 million less) is because Burien does asphalt overlay. And when was the last time someone saw asphalt overlay turn into sidewalks? This $45 (low Berk) to $77 (high Seattle) million dollars is not carried over into any years totals so either Berk assumes it disappears when ignored, it's a mistake, it somehow fixes itself or Berk assumes someone else besides Burien is going to pay for it when nobody else will be responsible for it after annexation. King County looked at the trees in White Center and commented many of them were in very bad shape. The cost of this is not mentioned in Berk. Seattle noted the human services needs of the area are very large and far surpass their ability to service with their own needs already being cut. Berk assumes this multi-million dollar issue is one that can be sustained by the cities present paltry portion, potentially a very unsustainable situation. Seattle estimates legal fees, court costs, public defense and jail at $1,225,228 while Berk cuts this figure way down with no adequate explanation as to why. Low income housing costs at over a half million dollars is unclear to me in Berk since some things are re-named or possibly lumped in somewhere else. This housing situation may be a much greater need area than either reports have noted. So far, King County has not shared their historical recordkeeping on this issue. Berk notes 3 parks needing minor improvements, Seattle found 5 parks needing $900,000. Additionally, Berk estimates property will continue to appreciate at 3% which they carry over into positive revenue increases in the future but this is contrary to the past couple of years, contrary to current assessments and may further deteriorate in the future.

The differences between the reports is tens of millions of dollars, not something that 5 million of tax incentive will even start to cover. There are also rules and conditions for applying for that state tax incentive. It is not meant for capital improvements. Items have to qualify and there is a time lag between applying and receiving that can take up to a year. It is strange that Burien expects a surplus since the tax incentive can only be used for the annexation area, only for expenses realized and not to defray a Burien deficit. Worst case is we spend it out of Burien funds, apply for reimbursement from the incentive fund, our paperwork is not right, it takes a year and then the state decides to eliminate the program which Seattle saw as a possibility since the State has a 5 billion dollar deficit. Then what? It seems to me to be a foolish mistake not to question this report's assumptions. But even as it stands, Berk still predicts a deficit for Burien. I think the hole is a lot bigger than Berk is plainly portraying. Burien's only option will be to raise taxes to cover their shortfall. While the state does the same and while recession still looms on the horizon, this is not an option that residents can afford. Nor is it good for the people of White Center who will be further deprived of having their infrastructure, service and basic human needs properly met while having their taxes increase also.

The current discussion of crime rates reported recently in the Burien City Newsletter seem to indicate crime levels are fairly even between the present Burien and White Center. But where are the population differences figured in? If there are 3 times more people in present Burien, shouldn't those figures for White Center be 1/3 of the total rather than almost equal or just a little lower? What about assault that is higher? Unless the numbers are already adjusted for per-capita, but I don't see that on the page, either someone was trying to make it look good or not give enough information to make a conclusion. Both scenarios are bad.

Citizens need to show up at the next council meeting on September 12th and let their representatives know how they feel.

Debi Wagner

CFTR: 09/26/11