

JUNE 2025

COUNCIL COMMITTEE PROPOSES REDUCED SIZE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

By Catherine Bailey, vice president

Do you find zoning laws boring? Me, too, but it's time to pay attention to them since big changes are still on the table – changes that will affect the Fauntleroy area.

In response to state law, Mayor Bruce Harrell put forward his One Seattle Plan that proposes numerous zoning changes. A version of those changes will become part of the Comprehensive Plan that the City Council will vote on in later this year.

Without doubt, our city has a housing shortage and,



with 120,000 more residents expected by 2045, it will be even more acute. The One

Seattle Plan proposes to expand the types of housing that could be built on an existing single-family lot to include accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, and so-called “stacked housing.”

The Fauntleroy Community Association, along with other Seattle neighborhood and advocacy groups, has been working hard over the past several months to influence modifications to the proposed changes.

In March, three members of the FCA Board hosted District 1 Councilmember Rob Saka and two of his staff members on a tour of portions of the neighborhood, pointing out environmentally sensitive areas (such as Fauntleroy Creek and its immediate watershed) that should be exempted from any changes in current zoning.

We also expressed concerns about how adopting the proposed changes would reduce tree canopy, reduce property setbacks, and increase demand on the city’s aging infrastructure, especially water and sewer lines

Any change in single-family neighborhoods is almost always met with anxiety and resistance, and Fauntleroy is no exception. The FCA Board’s monthly *(continued p. 2)*



WHAT’S HAPPENING TO US?

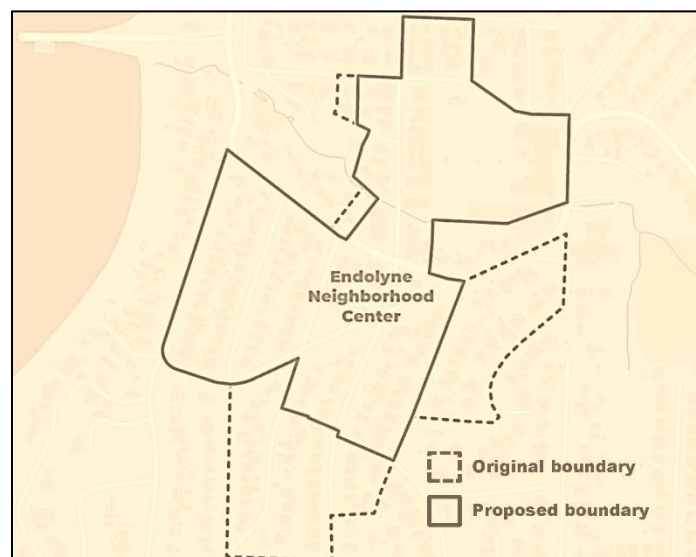
The two coho fry peering out from this cup were no doubt wondering where they were going and why small hands were holding their cup tightly.

Those hands were about to ease them into Fauntleroy Creek to join 123 others released May 16 by first graders from Roxhill Elementary.

Their field trip was among 22 hosted this spring by Fauntleroy Watershed Council volunteers. While most fish reared through the Salmon in the Schools program entered moving water in Fauntleroy Park, two special-education groups released their fry into the lower creek.

By next spring, those that survive will head to saltwater as 4”-5”-long smolts. To know how many fry survive to grow into smolts, volunteers monitor traps in the upper and lower creek. This year, they checked the traps two or three times daily from March 15 to May 15.

Of the 21 smolts they counted and sent on their way, 13 would have been fish released in the park by students a year ago. Most of the rest would have been “home hatch” from fall 2024 spawning in the lower creek. *(Photo by Dave Gershgor)*



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ZONING (continued)

business meetings have provided a venue for residents to voice concerns. At our May meeting, Erin House from King County Councilwoman Theresa Mosqueda's office emphasized the city's lack of alternatives to traditional single-family housing and how a history of red lining and other exclusionary practices is still impacting Seattleites.

Creating more opportunities for homeownership and generational wealth would mitigate past inequities, she said, and put a healthy and livable future within the reach for all residents.

The City Council's select committee on the comprehensive plan recently passed interim legislation on to the full council. As FCA requested, it proposed a reduced size for the "Endolyne neighborhood center" (see map). It still, however, allows up to four units on a single-family lot.

By the time you read this article, the full council would have voted on the interim legislation. It is scheduled to start deliberations in June, with a final vote on an updated Comprehensive Plan by year's end.


Visit seattle.gov/council/issues/2025-comprehensive-plan to keep in touch with this process and take advantage of additional opportunities to comment.

SEPT. 10 IS DEADLINE TO APPLY TO BE IN FAUNTLEROY ART SHOW

If you've been thinking about participating in this year's Fauntleroy Art Show on Nov. 14-16, you have until Sept. 10 to apply.

Hosted by Fauntleroy Church since 2008, the event has earned a reputation for showcasing the creativity and craftsmanship of local artists and artistic crafters.

Applicants in any medium must reside in or have studio space in West Seattle, Burien, South Park, Georgetown, or Vashon Island. Details and the application form are at fauntleroyucc.org/art-show.



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10 AM worship in person and on YouTube; see website for details

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HUNT FEVER EGGS CHILDREN ON

Small hands reached for eggs filled with goodies (other than candy) all over the Fauntleroy Children's Center playground during FCA's annual egg hunt on April 13. Candace Blue and Scott Wiesemann led a team of volunteers in stuffing and hiding 600 eggs for the 63 children who took part.

Photo courtesy West Seattle Blog

ON THE CALENDAR

FCA BUSINESS MEETINGS: Any resident is welcome to attend FCA business meetings on **Tuesday, June 10, July 8, and Sept. 9**, starting at **6 pm** in person at the Fauntleroy Schoolhouse or on Zoom. To propose a topic, email frankimmel62@gmail.com. For the link, email FCA Business Meetings.

WEST SEATTLE GARDEN TOUR: The 29th annual tour of gardens on the Duwamish peninsula will be **Sunday, June 22**. Ten distinctive gardens will be open **9 am-5 pm** to ticket holders. Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit the tour's grant program. Find all the details at westseattlegardentour.org/.

2ND TIME SALE: Planning is already under way for this huge annual community sale hosted by Fauntleroy Church since 1994. Date are **Saturday, Sept. 13, and Sunday, Sept. 14**. For details about how to donate quality items anytime, visit fauntleroyucc.org/2nd-time-sale.

FAUNTLEROY FALL FESTIVAL: Be sure this popular community bash for all residents is on your calendar for **Sunday afternoon, Oct. 20**. Free activities, plus food and beverage vendors.



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Duncan Sharp with The Unsweetened Tooth dished treats with a side of information about the no-sugar-added bakery. Photo by Jameson Johnson



Charlie Torres with Washington State Ferries and Donna Sandstrom, director of The Whale Trail, talked Orca activity in the Sound. Photo by Gail Ann Wodzin

SPECIALTY DENTIST OPENS OFFICE IN SCHOOLHOUSE

Neighborhood residents now have specialty dentistry close at hand in the Fauntleroy Schoolhouse.

After practicing general dentistry for 30 years, Lyly Fisher, DDS, has established an office there to treat patients of all ages for disorders of jaw muscles, joints, and nerves; sleep apnea; and underlying causes for crooked teeth.



Reach her at 425-271-5705 phone/text or info@lylyfiserdds.com.

CITY ADDS EMERGENCY BYPASS, PUBLIC ART TO CULVERT-REPLACEMENT PROJECTS

By Jonathan Brown, Seattle Public Utilities

Seattle Public Utilities has been making progress on three culvert projects associated with Fauntleroy Creek.

45th culvert replacement: This project has reached the final design phase for a new fish-passable culvert under 45th Ave. SW, with construction expected to begin in spring 2026 and last up to two years. The project team is finalizing design and seeking permit approvals, as well as planning another round of community engagement for later this spring and summer.

A project update is on the agenda for the FCA Board's monthly business meeting on June 10, which will be open to the public (see On the Calendar, p. 6, for details).

The team will also host a neighborhood tabling event in July or August to provide more updates and also what construction impacts on the neighborhood are expected to be. Details will be posted on the project website (seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/fauntleroy-creek-culverts) and sent to those on the project's email list. See the website for how to join that list.

California/church culvert replacement: Installing a fish-passable culvert under California Ave. SW and the Fauntleroy Church parking lot is also on the move. The team is finalizing consultant support for the design phase, which is tentatively expected to extend through 2027.

Planners have been working with the city's Office of Arts & Culture and a community panel to select an artist

for the art component of the project. Search for "Fauntleroy" at artbeat.seattle.gov/ for information about the chosen artist and this 1% for Art project.

Culvert bypass: SPU is working through design and permitting for emergency repair and bypass construction to redirect creek flow in the event of a blockage in the California/church culvert. That work is expected to start as early as this summer.

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FROM PAST TO PRESENT

THISTLE STAIRWAY LINKED EARLY FAUNTLEROY RESIDENTS WITH TROLLEY SERVICE

By Judy Pickens

Like most of Seattle, Fauntleroy has hills, and for nearly a century, residents have relied on stairways to navigate those hills. Thanks to a reader's suggestion, here's how our neighborhood's stairways came to be and details about the granddaddy of them all.

Fauntleroy came to life as a residential neighborhood with the arrival of electric trolley service. It operated on a single line, however, and people up the hill from that line needed stairways to get to the trolley and back.

The historical record points to convenience as the sole motivator for these stairways. While treaty rights enable tribal fishing in Fauntleroy Cove, they do not extend to upland habitat.

According to Jake and Cathy Jaramillo, authors of *Seattle Stairway Walks*, most of Seattle's 650 stairways were built between 1930 and 1950. Only Pittsburgh and San Francisco have more. Some link one street to another and some link lanes of the same street.

Street stairways in this neighborhood range from 20 steps linking upper and lower Fauntleroy Way SW at SW

Director to 367 steps on the SW Thistle Street stairway between 46th Ave. SW and Northrop Place SW.

In 1945, the city approved building the Thistle stairway in two sections so residents could get to the trolley line on 45th Ave. SW. The stairway went into service three years later with 364 steps (three were added later).

At 700 feet (0.13 miles) top to bottom, it was the longest in the city until extension of the Howe St. stairway under Interstate 5 in 2005 made that one Seattle's longest continuous hill climb.

Components salvaged after trolley service ended here in 1940 were given new life to create the Thistle stairway. Concrete slabs that had supported the track were cut into pieces for steps and steel track was repurposed as handrail supports. *(continued next page)*



The steepness of the Thistle stairway was easy to comprehend before slope vegetation filled in.



Sections of trolley track made sturdy handrail supports. Photos courtesy Seattle Department of Transportation



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STAIRWAY (continued)

Builders stacked slab on slab to give 16"-wide steps in the lower section a 4" rise. They stacked slabs on brick to give 11"-wide steps in the upper portion a 7" rise.

The grade along the current 367 steps changes significantly between the two sections. The first 235 steps (mostly at a 25% grade) are relatively easy. The grade steepens to 67% for the 125 steps between 44th Ave. SW and the top, for a total elevation gain of about 170 feet.

For many, the climb is well worth the effort because the steps thread through lush residential vegetation, with scenic views along the way.

The roadway structures crew at the Seattle Department of Transportation inspects stairways every seven years and continually responds to concerns about safety or condition.

When a sewer main burst at the top of the Thistle stairway in 2006, the crew made emergency, then long-term repairs. In 2014, the crew was back to repair grout in the lower section.

At that time, civil engineer Greg Funk (who oversees all of Seattle's street stairways) surveyed the Thistle stairway with an eye toward replacing it. An online questionnaire in 2017 captured user comments and ideas.

"The upper section is in design at this time and I am hoping to replace it in stages within the next three years," he said. "We'll probably do half one year and half the next as it is heavily used. It will be a little wider and will meet our current standards."

Except for grout repairs this summer, Greg thinks that, for historical reasons, the lower section is likely to be left as is, though replacement is not completely off the table.

Sources: *Seattle Stairway Walks*; Seattle Department of Transportation, *West Seattle Blog*

OTHER LOCAL STAIRWAYS MAINTAINED BY SDOT

California Dr. SW stairway

100 steps linking California Dr. SW & California Ave. SW

SW Cloverdale stairway

76 steps linking SW Cloverdale & 39th Ave. SW

SW Director stairway

20 steps linking upper & lower Fauntleroy Way SW

SW Roxbury stairway

41 steps linking homes & 46th Ave. SW

Linking 44th Ave. SW & California Ave. SW

- SW Webster stairway (31 steps)
- SW Holden stairway (28 steps)
- SW Ida stairway (24 steps); also links to Solstice Park

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EXPECT NEW PRESIDENT TO DEMONSTRATE STRONG CONVICTION TO JOB

By Frank Immel, president

Mike Dey's passing on April 17 was a shock. In addition to being my cousin, he was a dear friend and neighbor. Since he and Susan returned to Fauntleroy 15 years ago, Mike was an overt part of this community. He loved Fauntleroy - both the place and the feeling - and chose to get involved where he was planted.

Mike became president of our community association in March 2014 and stepped down this past January. In typical Mike fashion, he contributed 11 years of leadership and stability, then moved from center stage so that his face would not be seen as the face of this organization.

As was summarized in March's newsletter, exciting and impactful events and programs started during his tenure, many of which continue today. He was out in front when the character of our neighborhood was at stake, including when the city entertained the idea of having a zip line, pickleball courts, and off-leash dog area in Lincoln Park. And he never took his eye off the ferry dock.

Whether you agreed or disagreed with Mike, he always brought a level head and even hand to both sides of the issue. As with many of us, he let emotions get the better of him a time or two, but he always came back to a perspective grounded in fact and experience to guide both sides to an amiable conclusion.

As your new president, I will strive to carry on this approach and look forward to working on several initiatives that he and I had discussed.

A large one you will hear more about in coming months is increasing FCA membership. Currently, paid membership is approximately 2% of residents within Fauntleroy's official boundary; from 35th Ave. SW west to

the water and SW Myrtle south to Marine View Drive SW.

The desire to increase membership is not financially based (though a few extra dollars would make doing what we do a bit easier). The main goal of increasing membership is to have more residents aware of and involved in the amazing things happening in their neighborhood.

As your president, I do not expect to fill Mike's shoes but I promise to bring the same conviction to the job that he did - that this is a great community worthy of effort and involvement. Please join me and everyone else on the FCA Board as we fine-tune what has worked for Fauntleroy and reach for fresh opportunities.



FCA LEADERSHIP

Frank Immel, president; 206-Catherine Bailey, vice president

Kris Ilgenfritz, secretary

Alan Grainger, treasurer

Meredith Sciarrio, residential membership

Amber Heinemann, business membership

Bill Wellington, webmaster

Bruce Butterfield ■ Susan Lantz-Dey ■ David Follis

David Haggerty ■ Martin Westerman

Judy Pickens, writer/editor

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