

## Public Comments for the Port of Port Townsend Commission Meeting on 2/10/2021

*Follow-up on public comments spoken at meeting:*

**From:** Al L <[alelatham@gmail.com](mailto:alelatham@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 10, 2021 1:32 PM

**To:** Eron Berg <[Eron@portofpt.com](mailto:Eron@portofpt.com)>; PPT Info <[info@portofpt.com](mailto:info@portofpt.com)>

**Subject:** Nomura Bldg.

Hi - regarding the Carl Nomura (skookum) building.

The bulk of the building's construction was financed by a \$500,000 state Community Development Block Grant specifically for the Skookum programs for the Intellectual/developmentally disabled (I/DD) community. I'm not sure if the restrictions on use that were part of that block grant are still in effect. I do know that many years ago there was a proposal to rent space in the building to the City for offices. This proposal was dropped due to restrictions on the use of the building that were part of the grant agreement. I'm sure the Port is aware of that grant and any continuing implications but just wanted to make sure.

Thanks, Al Latham 360-821-1323

**From:** David King <[dkingpt@gmail.com](mailto:dkingpt@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 12:19 PM

**To:** Pam Petranek <[Pam@portofpt.com](mailto:Pam@portofpt.com)>; Eron Berg <[Eron@portofpt.com](mailto:Eron@portofpt.com)>; Eric Toews <[eric@portofpt.com](mailto:eric@portofpt.com)>

**Cc:** Jeff Randall <[jrandall@jeffpud.org](mailto:jrandall@jeffpud.org)>; Jake Beattie <[jake@nwmaritime.org](mailto:jake@nwmaritime.org)>

**Subject:** Marohn's Presentation

Hi Eron and Pam,

Finally got to see Charles Marohn's strong towns presentation. Wanted to observe something you've probably already realized - that the Port of Port Townsend IS the community's thriving "complex adaptive system". I'm not just theorizing. I LIVED this - arrived in a pickup truck full of tools in 1978, eventually helped build and run the largest business in the port, and retired leaving improved facilities for the next generation. NONE of that would have been possible but for the Port's flexibility and low barriers to entry - largely in policies with respect to tailgaters and ground leases (and the stormwater permit!) AND the marine trades community's strategic investment in the heavy lift. In that same period the Port's anchor tenants organically transitioned from manufacturers of fiberglass boats, to mega yacht builders, to commercial and fishing vessel builders and refitters.

Though I realize running our complex Port is a huge challenge, and that climate change and replacing failing 20th century infrastructure are just parts of a daunting future, it's still what success looks like. It's too bad that "Complex Adaptive System" is not catchier. It should be on brightly colored banners flying all around the Boat Haven and Point Hudson.

Best,

David King

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**From:** peter west <[peter-west@hotmail.com](mailto:peter-west@hotmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 4:59 PM

**To:** Pam Petranek <[Pam@portofpt.com](mailto:Pam@portofpt.com)>

**Subject:** RE: Chuck Marohn

Like so many citizens I listened in to your recent session with Chuck Marohn. I was absolutely thrilled to see you all engaging with him with such openness and thoughtful respect. I am a member of Strong Towns and have followed Chuck for over a decade. This is the 9<sup>th</sup> presentation I have seen him give and I learn something new every time. I find him to be a remarkable leader – particularly remarkable for his openness, honesty, integrity and his thought leadership. But mostly I'm just writing to let you know that watching you all listening so intently and respectfully and throwing out some great questions to him really was inspiring to me. At least three of my close friends also commented very positively about seeing the city leadership engaging openly with Chuck.

I think Chuck is more than a planning thought leader. I think he is one of those people that can help us think differently about all kinds of systemic challenges.

I hope that you will be engaging more with Chuck and his team at Strong Towns and if not, then I am at least extremely happy that you were willing to spend this time with him and share the experience with all of us. I am encouraging any of my friends who missed it to see it.

I think being a city councilor can sometimes be a thankless task so I want to extend my thanks. For me it was two of the most valuable and inspiring hours that I have spent this year (so far, I know it's only early).

A small group of my friends and acquaintances are starting a discussion group around his book and ideas. I'm guessing many others folks will too. I think by your leadership you may have unleashed a greater level of thoughtful discussion – and what a time in history to have thoughtful and civil discussion about anything?

Best wishes,

Peter West

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Port Townsend

**From:** Bertram Levy <[bertramlevymusic@gmail.com](mailto:bertramlevymusic@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Sunday, February 7, 2021 3:37 PM

Port Townsend West - a strong town annex

Listening to Strong Towns lecturer Charles Marohn last week on KPTZ, I was reminded of the following story. A boy was stopped every week at the Tijuana border by the officer who made him get off his bicycle to be searched. The officer knew he was smuggling something but could never find anything and had to let him pass. Years later he learned that the boy was smuggling bicycles. Perhaps our community's answer lies just beneath our nose as well.

Mr Marohn had 3 takeaway messages. Firstly, a community cannot afford the long term infrastructure maintenance costs of supporting large commercial developments (e.g. Walmart is a loser, a local pizza shop is a winner). Secondly, increasing urban density by small scale development within existing infrastructure is the key to sustainable communities (he calls it "adaptive complexity"). Thirdly, relaxing zoning and building code restrictions allows young people with limited resources to enter the community, establish a business, and build a life.

Can we imagine an annex to Port Townsend within the city limits that allows small complex growth built on well-designed existing infrastructure? Picture an annex with affordable starter homes under 1000 square feet built on small lots; small shops servicing the needs of the surrounding community within walking or bicycling distance; rows of starter shops for new entrepreneurs and 5G business centers for close-to-home workers; light industrial sites, central bus stations and community gardens.

Howard Street development could be the unseen bicycle in the story. The SEPA report used by the city to plan the Howard Street Industrial Sector envisioned a commercial development that would bring 1400 jobs to town. The infrastructure for that development is now in place between the two roundabouts. Given the Strong Towns perspective, this area could also be a perfect place for a new town area integrating businesses and homes, called Port Townsend West. It would be a better use of space and financially sounder than developing more businesses requiring huge parking lots, like that in front of our wonderful Goodwill store. Imagine a family that could get by on one car.

What would it take to make this transition? Easing of building codes and rezoning of lot size are essential and within the reach of the city government. Facilitating the purchase of adjacent private lots and even guaranteeing starter loans would make this idea a reality. While it might sound expensive and difficult, perhaps it is not when held up to the mirror of an eventual infrastructural maintenance insolvency. Compare that to an investment in a massive new Hadlock sewer system designed to ease the affordable housing crisis but which according to Strong Towns creates the unsustainable sin of suburban sprawl.

Bertram Levy

7 Feb 2021