



# WEDGWOOD VISION PROJECT

## NEWS & UPDATES

September 2009

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*An effort led by the Wedgwood Community Council to engage the entire Wedgwood Community to identify shared values and a community vision related to future growth and development within the boundaries of the Wedgwood Neighborhood.*

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Greetings! We hope you had a wonderful summer. Many of you have been receiving updates about the Wedgwood Vision Project. For others the project may be entirely new. For several years, members of our community have been working hard to make this project a reality, and now it is officially under-way!

### **City of Seattle Approves Project Grant Proposal**

August 2009: As a result of diligent work by members of the Wedgwood community including David Atcheson, Jeanne Carpenter, Brian Swanson and many others, the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods awarded a grant of \$15,000 for the Vision Project. The duration of the grant (thus deadline to complete the project) is one year. The primary use of funds will be to employ a community affairs/community building consultant to help create the Project. The effort will be led by the Wedgwood Community Council. Randy Barnett (trustee) will represent WCC in this endeavor.

### **What's Next?**

- Solicit-Contract an outside consultant
- Create a Steering Committee - Drawing from residents, school representatives, religious organizations, service, and businesses, a group of individuals with a desire to lead the effort in creating a vision for the future of Wedgwood.
- Engage the entire Wedgwood Community - Promote participation by hosting community meetings and neighborhood-wide questionnaire distribution.

### **The Wedgwood Vision Project:**

#### **History:**

Matthew's Red Apple Market, which was a popular grocery store for many in our community, lost its lease, and QFC was to move in its place. A flurry of concerned people weighed-in on what they wanted to see in a new grocery store. As a result, several changes were made to the size and scope of the construction project.

More recent is the proposed condominium project at 35<sup>th</sup> NE and NE 86<sup>th</sup> (the vacant Jewish Community Center building, which is on-hold for now). Many Wedgwood residents, especially those directly impacted by the proposed development quickly organized, voiced their concerns, and took action to alter the project, forming themselves as the Wedgwood Action Group. Concerns included scope and scale of the building (44 foot height zoning, 88 units), traffic and street parking, privacy and blockage of sunlight, negatively changing the neighborhood feel of the area, a change in the Wedgwood business district, and the possibility for this project to be the first wave of many future developments? Meetings followed with the developer Murray Franklyn, City of Seattle Land Use Planning, and other organizations in an attempt to get a better plan suited for what the Wedgwood community wanted and needed.

### **Results:**

Such events forged the decision to move forward with the Wedgwood Vision Project. Instead of being only reactionary to potential changes in our neighborhood landscape and lifestyle, why not create a true community statement of what we want for Wedgwood?

Many Seattle neighborhoods have city-funded community plans already in place. They are based on defining the “Urban Village”, where commerce and residential living coincide in high-density areas. Ballard, Greenlake, Wallingford, and the University District are examples of Urban Villages. Wedgwood does not have the population density and infrastructure needs to qualify under the description of an Urban Village (which may be one of the reasons why we love Wedgwood). Nevertheless, we would like to have a say in what happens to our neighborhood. What better way to do this than to create a future vision of Wedgwood? The City, developers, and businesses interested in work within our neighborhood boundaries will have a documented statement created by the people of Wedgwood available to study, and guide them in how to proceed in order to achieve a desirable outcome for everyone involved.

The Wedgwood Vision Project proposes to engage local residents, businesses, schools, service, and religious organizations in civic conversation to identify shared values and community vision related to future growth and development within the geographic boundaries of Wedgwood. It will address wide-ranging topics which we feel define Wedgwood, and issues important to us. Specific content will be up to our community to decide in the months ahead.

### **Benefits:**

There are many benefits of having a neighborhood vision. People interested in moving to Wedgwood, land developers, and potential businesses can learn what we are all about (or not about). It will also provide an understanding of the parameters to establish a good relationship with the community. For example, a developer proposing a project in our neighborhood which defies much of the Wedgwood Vision will likely realize that much resistance will follow. On the other hand, if they are interested in promoting the values of our neighborhood, they will have a path to establish a good working relationship with our community. Being pro-active and going on-record by creating the Wedgwood Vision will make a loud and clear statement in favor of Wedgwood.

We encourage you to participate in shaping the future of our neighborhood. More updates and information about Vision Project volunteer opportunities to follow. Please visit the Wedgwood Community Council online at [www.wedgwoodcc.org](http://www.wedgwoodcc.org).