



PLIC: Gooseberry Future Dock Location Options by Stuart Rich- PLIC President

PLIC's 4th white paper regarding the three options for the Gooseberry dock location is intended to promote discussion at our **April 12th, Town Hall Meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Beach School**. PLIC's first three white papers on: Historical Background, Future Population Growth Rate and Ferry Demand, and the Replacement Boat Size can be viewed at: plicferry.org

Background:

On March 14th, 2018, the Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee (LIFAC) hosted a public meeting for KPFF-Group and Whatcom County to present several LOS (Level of Service) options for ferry system improvements. At that meeting they provided information about the future location of the Gooseberry Dock. The current Gooseberry dock lease expires in October 27, 2046 and costs \$200,000 per year with a balloon payment of \$2 million due in 2026 (both payments are adjusted upwards for annual inflation). The Lummi Nation has informed Whatcom County that they will not renew the current lease as the property is needed for their future marina development. Whatcom County and Lummi Nation are working together on coordinated projects to build a marina, relocate the Gooseberry dock, and to secure a replacement boat for the Whatcom Chief. The County has decided that the location of the future mainland dock will be at Gooseberry Village.

In accordance with the current lease agreement, the Lummi Nation, in writing, has served the County with notice of their intention to move forward with the marina development. This means that the County could have three years before being required to move the current dock ramp orientation by pivoting it northward in order to accommodate the proposed marina design.

Lastly, the existing Gooseberry dock is in need of substantial repairs and maintenance which is presently being scheduled and implemented during monthly ferry stoppages and during dry dock periods. Moving the dock's location could reduce County costs related to long-term dock repairs, ramp relocation, and possible re-design requirements for a boat replacement.

The photo/diagram below depicts the three options being reviewed by the ferry consultant (KPF-Group) and Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee (LIFAC).



Option One:

Although not viable past the expired lease date of 2046, option one is to keep the Gooseberry dock at the present location and revisit the issue at a later time. The triggers for County action will be Lummi Nation's marina development plans and that Gooseberry Dock will need repairs before the lease expires.

Option Two:

Option two is to relocate the dock north to the convenience store location (see blue shaded area) which is Lummi Nation land. This would require the County to continue to lease uplands as well as a possible tideland lease from the Lummi Nation.

The expense of such lease(s) would impact operational costs and fares. The relocation of the dock under option two or three could provide for a wider dock for double loading along with exit and pedestrian lanes.

Option Three:

Option three is to relocate the dock northward to an area where *up to eight* privately owned parcels currently stand (see orange shaded area). This would require the County to acquire the parcels from the owners voluntarily or as a last resort by employing the County's power of eminent domain. The amount of land needed for the dock, a queuing lane(s) and parking will not be determined until the upcoming design phase. In December 2017, the County notified the owners of these parcels of the proposed plan to relocate the dock within the next ten years.

The County also made a financial offer to the private owners for a right-of-first refusal option to possibly purchase these parcels in the future.

The purchase of private parcels in fee simple would permanently end the need for an upland lease and lease payments to the Lummi Nation. The Tribe is also interested in the relocation of Lummi View Road (a county owned right-of-way) in order to consolidate their marina development. In exchange for the county road relocation, the Tribe in turn, would support a federal right-of-way across their tidal lands for the new dock. This would also permanently eliminate any need for a tidal lease and lease payments. According to Roland Middleton, Whatcom County Public Works Special Programs Manager, these lease costs savings to the County would recoup the cost of purchasing the private properties in four years. Mr. Middleton also indicated that only option three allows for the possibility of additional ferry parking spaces on the mainland.

On **June 19, 2018** the County Council will receive KPFF's and LIFAC's recommendations and decide what ferry alternatives to develop.

Making your transportation needs and opinions known at this critical junction will greatly help to insure Lummi Island's future. Please join us at the **Town Hall meeting on April 12th at 6:30 p.m. at the Beach School.**

Let Your Voice be Heard!

