

The Community Education Campus at North Creek Village: A Narrative Account

Situated along a segment of the North Creek in Bothell, Washington lies a special piece of property with a special destiny. An 8-acre parcel has been assembled for the purpose of demonstrating sustainable ways of living – how Humanity may live in harmony with Nature. This is the basis of the Community Education Campus at North Creek Village.

Generally speaking, the land throughout this corridor has been seriously disturbed over the years – cleared, grazed, dozed, marred and mistreated; yet here and there pockets of Nature have held on. Strengthening these pockets and linking them together will serve to rehabilitate the North Creek corridor, providing an active riparian zone from which native flora and fauna – including salmon – may be restored.

This rehabilitation and restoration is one of the functions of the Community Education Campus. Parts of the 8-acre parcel, especially those lining the creek, will be used to demonstrate the re-introduction of native plant species to create contiguous habitat. Since the Campus is an education center, members of the community may then come to learn how it's done, and so recreate the process on their own properties. In this way, the meaningful work of the Campus will have an amplifying effect, and the Campus itself will be a living example of the human enterprise integrated into Nature.

The Community Education Campus concept was born out of the vision of "Sustainable Community." The Campus is a setting where participants from the general population can come to learn about living a healthful life in creative co-evolution with the greater life of which they are a part – Nature – and including the greater social life – Community. As such, the curriculum revolves around topics such as:

- Health and Wellness
- Holistic Healing Modalities
- Organic Gardening and Horticulture
- Permaculture
- Environmental Restoration and Preservation
- Reconnecting With Nature
- Arts and Crafts

- Creativity and Celebration
- Appropriate Technology
- Community-Based Economics
- Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, and Eco-consciousness
- Non-Violent Communication, Conflict Resolution, and Consensus Decision Making
- Ecovillage Design, Process Metaphysics, Feng Shui, etc., etc., etc.
- *and* including Montessori education

A survey of existing educational resources in the area reveals a real niche for curricula focused on these sustainable living skills and competencies. The Community Education Campus at North Creek Village will cultivate partnerships with existing educational and associated institutions so as to effectively propagate these skills and competencies throughout the interested general population.¹ The Community Education Campus will be the Demonstration Site in which holistic integrated systems – ecological, social, economic, and spiritual – can be observed in their well-balanced, functioning entirety.

A special feature of the Community Education Campus is a pedagogy in which instructing and facilitating are not reserved only for professional-ized educators. The Community Education Campus is conceived as a place where any member of the community can come to share their own special gifts or talents by offering a class or workshop of their own design.

Perusing the vicinity map will show that the North Creek Village property is strategically situated between the two large industrial parks of the city, suggesting that the Community Education Campus facility could become a resource for corporate clients. To fully realize this potential, future development (beyond this Conditional Use Permit) would include accommodating a full-featured Retreat Center on acreage furthest away from North Creek and more toward 228th Street. Until such time as the full Retreat Center is phased in, a temporary and more petite version will be located in the Main House overlooking the pond.

The fully expanded vision includes an ecovillage type environment, using the cohousing model, in which would dwell staff and principals for the Community Education Campus, the Retreat Center, and an additional Healing Center. This ecovillage would be a living example of humans beneficially and

¹ An early partner is the Whole Earth Montessori School, situated adjacent to this property. Since the Montessori school currently has a waiting list of some 100 kids, the plan is to open up some classroom space within the Community Education Campus. This may include the addition of a Montessori High School.

sensitively integrated into Nature – as evidenced both in the built construct and in the attitude and bearing of the residents.

Supporting the entire Community Education Campus, including the ecovillage and its various centers, would be a denser and more sophisticated New Urbanist type development of mixed-use condos/office/commercial – this whole complex bordering 228th Street.

While the fully expanded vision is quite imaginative and far-sighted, and responds directly to the needs of the planet during these profound times by setting up a living, whole systems example of sustainable human habitat, the first step is quite simple – even prosaic: The Conditional Use Permit will allow the establishment of a Community Education Campus in the north end of Bothell. The Campus will fill a real need in the community by providing an educational focus on topics and themes not found in the prevailing curricula of existing institutions. More poignantly, the Campus will serve as a Demonstration Site where sustainable solutions can be observed and learned from in all their intricate multi-disciplinary inter-connectivity.

Please assist us in this worthwhile endeavor by granting the Conditional Use Permit, thus fulfilling the special destiny of this special location.