



## Open House

A Real Estate Blog

Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

### For-sale, open house signs taken to the dump

Posted by **Devona Wells** @ 06:16:46 am

Real estate agents, already feeling the brunt of a slowing market, are now facing the brunt of a Pierce County sign law.

Last month, county road crews began removing and throwing away signs found to be illegally installed on the county right of way. Among many of them: ones used to market homes for sale and open houses.

The sign roundup is part of a county-wide effort to enforce long-time sign laws that was tested last summer with a two-month pilot program intended to declutter roadways.

Since Feb. 15, county workers have collected and taken to the dump 1,320 signs, said Bruce Wagner, the county's road operations division manager. Nearly half were real-estate related, he said.

Agents who've lost signs are lamenting the cost of replacement, inconsistently applied rules and the harm the removals are causing their business.

"The county's never been this aggressive in doing it," said Jo Jensen, an owner of the Re/Max Partners office in Gig Harbor. "It's impacting our business, it's damaging, it's very costly. It's not just the agents that are upset, it's the sellers. In a market where there's lots of inventory, signs are one of the things that make their phones ring."

County staff and real estate agents are meeting today to discuss the sign removal efforts.

A typical yard sign, Jensen said, costs about \$25 plus another \$50 for the wood post. Ordering replacements can take two to three weeks, she said.

During the pilot program, Wagner said county workers stored the signs so they could be retrieved. But, he said, it became difficult and time-consuming to determine who owned which signs, and so now they go to the landfill, he said.

Recycling those with recyclable materials would cost \$56 per ton and is an option, he said.

When workers are in the field, the rule of thumb they use to determine the right of way is to look for utility poles and boxes, because they're typically on the edge of the right of way, Wagner said.

"If it's questionable, my staff has been told to leave it," he said. "Anything clearly inside it is taken."


Windermere real estate John Gregory said he's had 14 sandwich board-type signs taken and a larger sign sawed off its post in the last three weeks. Gregory is selling homes at Linden Tree, a small subdivision in Spanaway, and said he tries to keep signs out of the right of way by making sure they don't block drivers' sight lines.

But Gregory said he's particularly frustrated, because there's no sure way of telling where the right of way starts and ends.

"It's hard to determine where they mean in every situation," he said.

**Categories: Misc. • 39 comments**

**COMMENTS:**

Comment by **pepperrealty1** @ 08:13 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008 

25.00 for a sign? WOW. I just reordered yesterday our signs. 100 for 354.00 including tax!

They will not feel the pressure of lost revenue if they just shop at Signs Now in Tacoma!

As for lost posts, just 1 in front of every home for sale and 1 or 2 as you enter a development. Where the heck are they placing all these signs that they have to meet county officials to discuss.

JUST TAKE THEM DOWN! The COUNTY has spoken! We took all ours down. Well.....most.


Ray Pepper  
www.500Realty.net

Comment by **gigharborundressed** @ 08:51 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008  
<http://gigharborundressed.com>

If the signs were where they shouldn't have been, then I have no issue with the county wanting them removed. What bothers me is that there was no warning, and tax payer money and county man hours were wasted doing something we gladly would have done ourselves. One phone call, one letter, one email to ANY real estate office in our area and we would have spread the word and taken them down ourselves, saving tax dollars and man hours. And dumping them in the landfill? Terribly irresponsible. Literally 1000's of pounds of re-usable, recyclable materials were buried before we ever had a chance to retrieve them.


I'm all for the county cleaning things up. Signs were littering our community. But a one week warning would have saved money, waste, and hard feelings.

I sure am glad we won't have to be bombarded by election signs this year though...wait, what's that? Political campaign signs are exempt and you can place as many as you want wherever you want? Oh...got it.

Comment by **broker** @ 09:13 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008 

gigharborundressed; Political signs are protected by the First Amendment according to a certain Pirece County council member. I guess a seller announcing to the world their home is for sale is not a form of free speech. Can anyone out there make sense of government in today's world?

Ray, it's nice to see you operate your business by leading with revenue. However, I've seen your signs, and no offense, but I'll continue to have mine printed with a little class.

Comment by **pepperrealty1** @ 09:44 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008 

Broker have you ever disclosed who you are? Are you hiding behind your VEIL as a blogger. Care to tell us? Me?

Our new signs I ordered you will find much more classy. The old signs resulted in too many people calling us stating ..."HEY...is that home 500.00?" So now they will no longer get confused...

What we choose to save on signs we pass onto the consumer...What a concept!. We can get \$25.00 or 50.00 signs but why..It will not facilitate the sale any quicker! Education will!

Broker it appears you are somewhat saavy. If you were looking to relocate somewhere out of state and were going to buy a home listed on the MLS I know you would seek out a 500 Realty type company to get all the money back at close. Do you know why you would?-----

Because you have knowledge! You know the "dirty little secret" That's all it is Broker....Education...I would love to discuss real Estate with you or any other Real Estate Professional in an Open Forum. Maybe all of Devonna's bloggers.

There is a lot to talk about...Isn't there Broker? the Buffet is coming to an end! And that's where you will be feeling it.....

See..thats what you get for taking a jab at our OLD 500 Realty sign...me on a soap box...Keep buying your 50.00 classy signs. I assure you they will not be seen by many in coming years!

Ray Pepper  
www.500Realty.net

Comment by **c4polar** @ 10:02 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

Don't get too hot under the collar Pepper. You wouldn't want to chase any potential costumers away, me being one of them.

Comment by **broker** @ 10:37 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

Ray, I'll give a hint of my identity. I work with the most education based real estate company in the country. we are also the FASTEST growing real estate company in the country. Why? We have a business model that works for everyone and an education system that no othe real estate company offers. This is why I will survive the shift we are now in. The mainstream news media is one of the real reasons people are crying the blues about the RE market at this time. The northwest is still a good market compared to some other parts of the country. However, I do know very successful agents across the U S , in poor markets, and their success is tied entirely to our companies education and business model. We will survive and discount brokerages are still on the downturn. That is a statistical fact!

Comment by **pepperrealty1** @ 11:37 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

C4polar I'm sorry if you get chased away but if you choose to use someone else plzzzzzzzzzz if your selling choose MLS 4 Owners and Buying choose Red Fin. Both outstanding companies with powerful messages.

Discount Brokerages in downturn? Are you kidding me? Statistical fact? My oh My. I think you need to do some DD and read about the Demise of the Brick and Mortar Real Estate Profession that appeared in Barrons and the WSJ.

What are you hiding from? Me? If you are a fellow Realtor I will welcome you with open arms but I'm not sure you are.

Anyway Good Day...Get to work!

Ray Pepper  
www.500Realty.net

Comment by **goddesslunacy** @ 13:18 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

Who needs that many signs? Just one in the yard should suffice. After all, just drive down any street you want to live on, and there's a good possibility one or more are on the market.

Comment by **againstthetide** @ 18:34 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

Blaming the Media for reporting the facts about the current condition of the real estate market is akin to blaming alcohol for the behavior of the alcoholic. The Media had nothing to do with the demise of bear stearn, or the fluctuations of the equity markets. These are all components of an Economy that is in recession. The Media is not orginating these statements, Billionaire Investors like warren buffett are the source, Should the Media stop reporting because the news is bad? Sticking your head in the sand and name calling will not change the reality of the situation.

Comment by **ldozy1** @ 18:36 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

This was discussed at the PC Dev. meeting on the 10th. I know there was a representative from the MBA who was aware that there were significant violations going on. The Committee told her they were going to take action. Why

she didn't spread the word was anyone's guess.

Sadly, this was another meeting the TNT didn't cover so you all were left in the dark from this source also.

Maybe you should be also asking the TNT where their reporting was?

PS- For \$25 a sign and \$50 for a stake.....I think you all need to be more aware of code before placing signs.....

Comment by **boomer7** @ 19:10 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

Broker, what is the deal with statements like these from the RE industry people?

"The mainstream news media is one of the real reasons people are crying the blues about the RE market at this time"

Shooting the messenger isn't going to reverse the subprime mortgage collapse.

Comment by **irrationalexuberance** @ 20:05 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

I think Robert Kiyosaki and others said it best and this applies to the RE market. When investment banks and markets are flourishing, no one better interfere with free markets, but when they are plummeting like Bear Sterns they cry for help from the government. Kiyosaki called it a corporate welfare in the bailouts. I don't think I have ever went to a house based on a sign except those pamphlets in the yard. But if they are talking about that than that would be a big blow but then again I already know the general area I am going to look at from the internet and its just a since were already down here to start looking at yard signs and picking up the pamphlet with the house on it

Comment by **pepperrealty1** @ 20:26 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

"I work with the most education based real-estate company in the nation..we are the fastest growing and an educational system that no other real estate company offers."

I wasn't going to say it but since other have eluded to it..here goes.....

Blaming the media shows your distinct incompetence and now I realize we will never know who you are. You will make a different name for yourself on this blog but it just shows how out of touch you are with reality of what is going on in the Nation. I suggest you attend my lecture at Boeing in May. Its free! You will learn more in 45 minutes with me then you have in all your educational "training" at your Magical Real Estate Company.....

Want to know what we are in for? Do you know why prices will continue to come down? Want to know why the mkt will not see any stabilization until 2010-12? Want to know why you should watch MER very closely over the next 2 weeks? Why you should listen to C, WMT, LEN, HOV, KBH, WM, BA, and AXP. When you LISTEN to what is happening around you the obvious will be apparent.

When I graduated with my RN they started all the education with Anatomy and Physiology. Right outta the gates you had to learn how the body is SUPPOSED to work correctly. When the disease process takes over it will not make any sense if you don't.

The country is bleeding profusely. Bernanke is doing a stellar job at placing bandages over wounds and I'm very impressed. In fact, its been out right GENIUS.

But as a GREAT CEO said 30 days ago" If the masses realize the costs to stay in the home is not worth the effort due to depreciating values, higher taxes, higher insurance, higher upkeep, and the generalized feeling of a home being a noose around your neck weighing you down then our economy will forsee unprecedented declines in the Capital Mkts resulting in a collapsed economy.

WE MUST SUSTAIN HOME VALUES AND OFFER INCENTIVES FOR THE MASSES TO STAY IN THEIR HOMES IN COMING YEARS!!..REMEMBER THIS BROKER. ITS A POWERFUL STATEMENT. The Fed will be pulling out all the stops over the next 12 months and will also get OIL under control. I know this.

Broker--WE HAVE SEVERE PROBLEMS GOING FORWARD. Comments about the Media being a cause are incompetent. All recessions start with a trigger. The trigger was 911. If your lucky one day you will here the rest of the story from ME.

Ray Pepper  
www.500Realty.net

Comment by **zab179bc** @ 22:39 - Wednesday, March 19th, 2008

Wake me up, come on, who needs their ego stroked here? There were too many signs and they gotta come down, thank goodness.

Comment by **Idozy123** @ 00:27 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008

A last note: If there had been some coverage at the Dev. Meeting, you all would have also been aware that there was an estimated >\$10,000 in code violation fines related to these signs..... don't know if the county will be billing you all or just giving you another chance but.....maybe just having your signs removed and destroyed is a cheap final warning for future code violators.  
Even cheap signs can end up costing a bunch if their not within code.

Comment by **gigharborundressed** @ 09:02 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008 <http://gigharborundressed.com>

Is anybody bothered that the county spent \$168,000 to date to remove those signs, when a phone call to a real estate company would have solved the problem?  
Those \$168,000 are tax payers' dollars. I'm not arguing that the code should have been followed in the first place, but if you read the code on the county website it is VERY vague (as evidenced by Pepper's remarks that he just puts one at the house and one at the entrance to the development...that's illegal Ray. You can ONLY have one on the property).  
A simpler, clearer code, one that gets enforced rather than ignored for years, and communication from the county would have saved us \$168k!  
Idozy1, I'm not sure what that meeting was you referred to, but sounds like you're right and somebody should have passed some info along.

Comment by **gigatt** @ 09:22 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008

Campaign signs are political speech and are therefore viewed as protected speech.

Real Estate signs are commercial speech and fall under an entirely different set of rules just like signs in front of your businesses or billboards are regulated.

Comment by **pepperrealty1** @ 10:23 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008

Oh Gig Harbor you too are truly a piece of work. Did I ever say "I" put 1 at the house and 1 at the entrance to a development.

We have a development that we signed around in Everett. They have a different sign ordinance policy. Before we have our delivery service deliver any signs we check! We have none in Pierce County as of yet. So we just continue with 1 sign in front of each home.

Do NOT place words in my mouth. There is a long line of people who do that anyway.

Ray Pepper  
www.500Realty.net

Comment by **John L. from the woods at Titlow Park** @ 10:25 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008

1. There WAS a warning sent out 2. All the agents complaining wouldn't have been in 2005 when the market was going good. This is just an issue of people who aren't selling homes trying to find someone to point fingers at because they're not making money. Being in busines means being flexible in today's economy. Doesnt' matter what kind of business you're in. Do your homework ahead of time people!

Comment by **Idozy123** @ 10:34 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008

gigharborunderdressed.

It was March 10th PC Development Committee. The lady from MBA ( Tammy? Tina?) was there.. the TNT was not... between the two both had the chance to get information out.

And the reason I mentioned the fines ( which I probably low balled) is because the County has spent so much so far in cleaning up violations. I have no doubt that either this time or next you all will be getting fines to to start paying for this.

I understand its dependent on property lines but.. aren't you all selling this property? Isn't that information on property line part of the package? And on the street signs... you all know as well as I that too many have totally ignored any attempt at following code. A simple drive down almost any road verifies this ( well.. maybe not this week.. :))

Comment by **gigharborundressed** @ 14:29 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008 <http://gigharborundressed.com>

Cut and paste from your post Ray:

"As for lost posts, just 1 in front of every home for sale and 1 or 2 as you enter a development. Where the heck are they placing all these signs that they have to meet county officials to discuss."

Did you forget saying that?

Comment by **gigharborundressed** @ 14:33 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008 <http://gigharborundressed.com>

Johnny, I'm afraid you're wrong. No warning was sent; at least not one that made it to the agents. Nor to the small businesses that were affected--this isn't just an issue with real estate signs.

None of what you're saying overrides the fact that the county dumped 1000's of pounds of re-usable, recyclable materials in a landfill. Charge the agents, fine us, fine the small businesses that put the signs where they shouldn't be, but don't waste tax payers' money and load a landfill when you don't have to.

Comment by **irrationalexuberance** @ 17:46 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008 

Ray,

The fed has pulled out all the stops. You could put interest to .5, does that change the over extended amount of debt that each individual American is suffering from. Debt is the problem so making debt cheaper doesnt help anyone but corporations that have the ability to raise millions. Monetary policy tells us that in order to hedge inflation or a weakened dollar, you have to raise interest rate to discourage spending and which takes out the abundance of dollars making our dollar weaker and worth less. If your hoping and waiting on the fed to turn things around you will be waiting for a long time, the only thing the fed and the stimulus package is going to do is boost peoples optimism until reality hits again and they realize that they are in the same amount of debt and the same wage category there were before all this stimulus packages and rate cuts. I assure you the government, after the package is released has done 99% of what they can do to help. Unfortunately to let markets correct themselves would spill all throughout the economy and severely cripple our financial markets and banking system. Real Catch 22 but it goes to show that spend, spend, spend doesnt help the the economy in the longr un just as the long believed tax cuts dont

Comment by **arnoldjm** @ 19:29 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008 


Well, now that we are competely off topic; I guess I will chime in... 1) agents do your work and place the sign within the property lines; shockingly you might sell a house and prevent wasting some of your commisions on replacing signs or sandwich boards.

2) please sell a few houses in South Tacoma... this glut of inventory at a reasonable price. I am tired of seeing the same empty houses for sale on my way home from work.

3) Stop ranting back and forth at each other; insults are no way to make a better name for yourselves... if you haven't noticed actual potential buyers and sellers read this blog daily.

I am a normal "Jane" not realated to real estate but rather highly intersted in building knowledge.

~ Devona... I read RE Blogs all over the nation... don't stop this is one of te best!! Thank you TNT!!

Comment by **Mike\_T** @ 20:59 - Thursday, March 20th, 2008 

Ldozy123- The MBA is not the Assoc of Realtors, I'm not surprised the word didn't get to us.

However saying that I'm going to go against the tide here and say we did it to ourselves, collectively that is. I know of one neighborhood that at one of it's entrances had 11 full size "for sale" signs. It looked like a cemetery! There's one agent in GH who had her directional arrows set out a mile or more from a home, and in some cases at high volume intersections leading to nowhere.

We didn't police ourselves and here we are. Yeah, the county could have better spent that money elsewhere, but they enforced the law. Hopefully we'll learn from it. Sign calls are much more effective in generating calls than newspaper ads, sorry Devona. Therefore we need to preserve our rights to place signs and arrows as best we can before gov't clamps down even harder.

Comment by **S\_Emerson** @ 09:46 - Friday, March 21st, 2008  <http://www.lifeinpiercecounty.com>

Catherine Rudolph (Government Affairs person) of the Tacoma-Pierce County Association of Realtors has been very involved in the issue from the get-go. She has testified at many a committee and council meeting, and attended at least one of the 4 sign adhoc committee meetings. Perhaps the majority of the area's realtors aren't members of the TPCAR. Perhaps those who are members weren't given this important information, including the legislative change of this past Hune 19th. The TPCAR was/is VERY aware of every aspect of this. One would assume they would have helped to educate those working in their industry.

And then there's that old bugger of "Ignorance of the law excuses no man; not that all men know the law; but because 'tis an excuse every man will plead, and no man can tell how to confute him." - John Selden, 1689.

If a defendant were allowed to escape legal responsibility for his acts, merely by saying "I didn't know it was wrong/illegal", the system of using law to regulate human conduct would collapse. So the doctrine is a practical necessity.

And I close with this:

Everyone is feeling the strain of this oncoming recession. Does that mean that every business owner, be it a dog groomer, grocery providers, tire repair shops, etc., should all be permitted to post their signs wherever they want? Nooooooooooooo.

Comment by **ldozy123** @ 10:58 - Friday, March 21st, 2008 

Well said Mike\_T.... I think that was the point many were missing.


Comment by **John L. from the woods at Titlow Park** @ 13:55 - Friday, March 21st, 2008

gigharborundressed: I happen to know from my connections in the real estate industry and from my connections in the county (and they are intimate connections) that warnings were sent out. If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen. Or get a different job. Wah wah wah....

Comment by **gigharborundressed** @ 18:53 - Friday, March 21st, 2008 <http://gigharborundressed.com>

And, one more time...I AM NOT UPSET THAT THE SIGNS WERE TAKEN. I AM UPSET THAT 1000'S OF POUNDS OF REUSABLE, RECYCLABLE MATERIALS WERE THROWN INTO A LANDFILL. I HAD 0 SIGNS, TOTALLING \$0, REMOVED, SO THIS ISN'T CRYING. SIMPLY STATING THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO SPEND \$168K OF YOUR MONEY THAN THROWING AWAY SIGNS. THIS ISN'T JUST REAL ESTATE EITHER...OVER 2000 SIGNS WERE REMOVED FROM OTHER BUSINESSES.

Is my position clear, or do I need to state it again?

Comment by **pepperrealty1** @ 19:32 - Saturday, March 22nd, 2008 

hmmmmmm. So let me get this straight. Your upset that the signs were taken right? .....

just kidding ....

So what do we learn from all this?????????

Less signage!.....more internet advertising! .....Imagine that? What a concept! Tell people to use the internet more to find their home and not clutter the county with signs. We at 500 Realty are in full support.....

Ray Pepper  
Broker  
www.500Realty.net

Comment by **S\_Emerson** @ 10:12 - Sunday, March 23rd, 2008  <http://www.lifeinpiercecounty.com>

In case those who post signs are not aware....

There are also strict laws on posting ANY/ALL off-site signage in unincorporated Pierce County.

This means you cannot simply move your signs a few feet back onto private property and call it good. It is against the law.

Even if you obtain the property owner's permission, it is still against the law, and in fact, if you solicit approval from a private property owner to post your sign, you could be charged with solicitation [to commit a crime].

Take the time to listen to the following audio excerpt from the Sign adhoc committee by pasting the following link into your browser - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AS79jL9bwfo>.

You will hear questions from members of the real-estate and development industries, and answers from County employees, disputing the irresponsible assumption that off-site signage is allowed.

Stacy Emerson  
Pierce County Street Spam Eradication Campaign

Comment by **ARationalMind** @ 22:10 - Sunday, March 23rd, 2008 

Hi my name is Rex. I'm nothing more than a potential buyer in the pierce county area. I just want to give my opinion on a few things.

Ray Pepper - So far you are one of the few people within the real estate arena that are people-centered. On your encouraging I have gone to 500realty and do plan to use them when I buy a house.

With that said please try to keep things civil. This is the only blog in our area that even offers the kind of information that interests buyers like me. Buyers that are looking for more than interest rate changes, or what agents choose to disclose.

You've converted one, and now I tell everyone that I know is interested in purchasing a home. In a time of depreciating values, it is important to save as much as you can. I'll be asking for you by name when I come.

Gig Harbor Undressed - As a fellow Gig Harbor citizen it angers me too, but in reality something had to be done. The signs were EVERYWHERE. If you thought the news was bad, driving home every day past sign after sign of homes for sale....that did more to reassert my fears of a recession more than anything else. Look at the bright side though, sales will pick up in spring and summer, they always do, but if you think it will be anything like the last few years you're kidding yourself. I for one will be holding off.

SGT Lutcavich, Rex  
Currently in the Sand Box

Comment by **goddesslunacy** @ 13:48 - Monday, March 24th, 2008 

Rex! Hey this is Karen, Ray has converted me as well. It didn't take much, he is very civil compared to some of the other RE ranters on here. Heck I'm not even as civil! Are you coming back to civilian work? I'm looking to buy as well, and single income at that! The only areas within the (SINK) price range happen to be Central, East, and

South Tacoma, unless you are willing to go further out. A guy in R/C just got a new townhome for 218k in Fife. And another got a new home in Yelm for 210k or so. Both are DINKs. This is definitely one of my favorite blogs.

Comment by **pepperrealty1** @ 15:07 - Monday, March 24th, 2008 

I'm very happy you both have taken the time to Educate Yourself. Now you owe it to your friends, family, and everyone you know to educate them as well. The hardest part is people just don't take the time. They have to think "outside the box."

I got my real estate license over 10 years ago for only 1 reason. That was to get the commission when I bought. That commission helped me buy many more homes. Its alot of money. Utilizing the funds of sellers I was able to accumulate many more homes then I otherwise could have.

There will be many more companies over the next decade performing real estate to the benefit of the consumer but for now there is one head and shoulders above the rest! I look very forward to more coming to help us in the education! As hard as we try people still get mixed messages and are not told the TRUTH.

Always look! Always!! But, Never.... EVER..... call the name on the Sign. EDUCATE YOURSELF WASHINGTON!


Ray Pepper  
www.500Realty.net

Comment by **gigharborundressed** @ 16:11 - Monday, March 24th, 2008 <http://gigharborundressed.com>

Rex, couldn't agree more. Maybe you read my letter to the editor in last Wednesday's Gateway. I made sure to start it and end it by thanking the County--sincerely--for cleaning things up.

The signs not only looked trashy, but as you mentioned stirred an unnecessary fear in buyers.

Thanks for your input.

Comment by **ARationalMind** @ 14:36 - Wednesday, March 26th, 2008 

Goddess - Yes I will be coming back to the civilian world very soon here, my tour is winding down to its last days. You are very brave buying a house on a single income. I've always had the outlook that that was one of the casualties of the recent housing boom. Single income households, median income anyway, just seemed to be priced out of the market. I also have an underlying suspicion that dual income households helped spur the housing boom, though real wages were stagnant, each family had two incomes to draw on thus increasing the amount of money they were willing to spend on a house. That is why it is my viewpoint that single income homes are a thing of the past. Good luck though, sorry kind of gloomy :-)

Ray - Keep preaching. Just remember all agents aren't bad, they are just refusing to acknowledge the interdependence that will/has reshaped the RE world. Plus they are protecting their livelihood, something we can all understand in economically troubled times.

Also wanted to say something about your internet advertising point. Extremely valid. Increasing internet advertising, making the search experience interesting and the interface easy should keep traffic up and get you hits. As a buyer I search the internet first, map out my route, then it's me, mapquest, and the open road. Signs don't have an impact. Plus gas is costly don't have enough cash to drive from sign to sign.

Gig Harbor - No I didn't read your letter, wish I had. Sounds like your views are sound. Glad there are still those, even at the municipal level, who still want to know where thier tax money is going, and willing to speak out when it seems fiscal responsibility is being abused.

Just wanted to conclude with I love this blog. The facilitator needs to give herself a nice little pat on the back.