

Scott Thomas

From: Scott Thomas <administrator@townoflaconner.org>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 11:00 AM
To: Jackie B
Cc: Maria DeGoede (financedirector@townoflaconner.org); Ajah Eills (planning@townoflaconner.org); Michael Davolio (planner@townoflaconner.org); Mayor Hanneman (mayor@townoflaconner.org)
Subject: RE: Letter to Planning Commission and Town Council

Good morning, Linda.

La Conner's policy is that we do not post anonymous letters to council. To be clear, the town's web site is not a public forum. We will post letters and other communications except, for example, when we have a reasonable belief that a letter contains defamatory material. As you know, defenses in defamation cases are frequently complex. Anonymity complicates the town's ability to mount these defenses effectively, as it hinders credibility.

If you wish to sign the letter and resubmit it, then we will review the letter and post it if it meets relevant criteria.

Scott Thomas

From: Maria DeGoede - La Conner Finance Director <financedirector@townoflaconner.org>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 6:57 AM
To: Scott Thomas <administrator@townoflaconner.org>; Ajah Eills (planning@townoflaconner.org) <planning@townoflaconner.org>; Michael Davolio (planner@townoflaconner.org) <planner@townoflaconner.org>
Subject: FW: Letter to Planning Commission and Town Council

You all get these. I just noticed it was sent to the Mayor and myself.

Maria De Goede
Finance Director

Town of La Conner
PO Box 400
La Conner, WA 98257
Phone: 360.466.3125
E-mail: financedirector@townoflaconner.org
Web Site: <http://www.laconner.net>

From: Jackie B <My3GirlzinNV@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 11:56 AM
To: financedirector@townoflaconner.org; mayor@townoflaconner.org
Subject: Letter to Planning Commission and Town Council

Dear Town of La Conner:

Attached is a letter dropped through the Town Hall mail slot on or about March 16, 2025.

I wrote the bulk of the letter, but didn't have time to finish it and didn't want my name on it without perfecting it so I passed it around to a few people in town curious to see what would happen with it.

One of the people I forwarded it to made some changes and asked me to drop it off to Town Hall, since she wanted it to be anonymous and didn't know if Town Hall had cameras outside - which I did. She has seen what has happened to me because of my active voice and although she does care about this town, she doesn't have the thick skin that I have to endure public scrutiny and crucifixion.

She just told me she has looked on your website to ensure that the letter was date stamped and posted, but she still doesn't see it. Nor do I.

Thus, I am attaching it here. ***The date stamp should reflect March 17, 2025 (the first day of business after it was dropped through the mail slot).***

Please ensure all Planning Commission and Town Council members receive a copy; **as well as the Planning Department concerning the "big unattractive home" currently under construction at 613 Whatcom Street.**

Lastly, please ensure that this email is also posted with the letter. She said she will check your website again on Tuesday to ensure it is posted before the Town Council meeting.

Best regards,

Linda Clark

Linda Clark (and friend)
La Conner, Washington 98257



11 March 2025

VIA HAND DELIVERY

La Conner Planning Commission Members
La Conner Town Council Members
204 Douglas Street
La Conner, Washington 98257

Re: Moore-Clark Building and Surrounding Area

Dear Planning Commission and Town Council Members:

These are my additions to a letter recently shared with me concerning the Moore-Clark building and surrounding area. Since the survey results provided by residents are anonymous, I am providing this as a anonymous reply as well expecting it will be added to the record. **My edits to the original letter are in bold and underline type. However, I submit it all as my perspective as well.**

First, please visit and make sure the new home being built at 613 Whatcom Street complies with all codes in La Conner, most specifically height and design style. How can you expect us to look at this unattractive building for the rest of our lives? THIS IS TIME URGENT.

Second, there is new graffiti on the old tree by the skate park. Please have it carefully removed without harming the tree and install a barrier around the tree so it cannot happen again.

Please incorporate any other letters concerning the Moore-Clark building and subarea into this letter.

12-23-24 letter Lec

This letter concerns the current focus on re-utilizing the Moore-Clark Building and its surrounding area for the benefit of the Town of La Conner and its residents. In addition to reviewing the documentation provided by the Town concerning this project, I have done considerable research of my own for a different project. These two intertwine perfectly and thus I provide my comments below.

The history of La Conner and Skagit County is not honorable in the utilization of its resources. The white settlers came to this area and consumed everything in sight to their own benefit and survival. The land was logged, diked and utilized for agriculture. The originally present nutrients in the soil have been severely depleted over the past 150 years (without properly resting or rejuvenating it), the fish were taken out in extremely large numbers. These were canned, or

turned into fish food without proper replenishment. Diked land affected the estuary habitat and salmon access to the rivers it needs to properly repopulate.

In order to survive in 1890, without any hope for a railroad spur from Mount Vernon, La Conner was dependent on water transportation. This led to petitioning the government under their requirement to protect waterways for the dredging of Sullivan Slough which, was approved in 1892 and completed in 1893.

The completion of the dredging project by the Army Corp of Engineers in or about 1937 led to the construction of a "jetty" out by Hole-in-the-Wall to prevent silt from the Skagit River re-inserting itself in the newly dredged Swinomish Channel. Unfortunately, a design flaw in the jetty also prevented access by salmon from Skagit River through the Swinomish Channel. This problem went unresolved until at least 1972. [Rebuilding Salmon Runs.pdf](#). **I encourage the Town to have a discussion with the Tribe concerning this if the wheels of government have not fixed the problem.** The decline of the salmon population has been a significant problem for all fishermen since, but especially the tribe. The Swinomish Tribe with funding from at least Ducks Unlimited: 2004 to 2010 (approximately \$500,000) and with funding from NOAA in 2024 have spent millions to rebuild fish estuaries and habitat. Most recently, in 2024 they objected to the complex replacement of tide gates on No Name Slough which affect the salmon rehabilitation. [Swinomish Seeks Legal Intervention to Mitigate Salmon-Harming Tidegates | Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, WA](#)

For 150 years the business owners and leaders of La Conner have pretty much thought about only themselves. In addition to the dredging of Sullivan/Swinomish Slough, this includes the swing bridge completed in 1916 and the Rainbow Bridge completed in 1957. Despite having shared this area with the Swinomish Tribe since at or before 1869, the Town has done little to incorporate the Tribe into its activities and decisions and vice versa. The recent building of the new library would likely not have come about without a dual partnership. There needs to be more cooperation if these areas are going to continue to survive.

I sorted through quite a few of the records at the Skagit County Historical Museum concerning the Tulip Show which was held in La Conner from 1947 until 1971. I saw little, if anything, about celebrating the Tribe in those articles or advertisements. After a cursory review, I also don't see much of anything in the five most recent Skagit Valley Tulip Festival brochures. I do see a few on the 101+ things to do on the LoveLaConner.com website.

Since at or near the 1970s, the Town of La Conner has relied on tourism (and retirees) for its survival. And if you look at the demographics of most of La Conner's citizens it makes sense. According to census information, the 2021 median income for La Conner was \$53,819; 2023 median income for La Conner is \$75,804 (According to online resources). Most people drive to work with an average 29.6 minute drive.

This makes it clear the houses built by Landed Gentry and Snapdragon Hill were generally not intended for La Conner residents or their children; with their price points ranging from \$750,000 to \$1.25 million or higher. The reclaiming of the Moore-Clark building and surrounding area must not repeat these oversights.

Everything is getting more expensive for those who live in La Conner and around the world. Fuel costs have not gone down. With the increase of electric vehicles, the cost for electricity will go up too. Water in La Conner is expensive just for its base fee. Prices for food continue to increase, despite La Conner's close proximity to land, that despite 150 years of agriculture, are still some of the most fertile in the world. The number of students at the La Conner schools continues to decrease because families generally either cannot afford to live here or they choose to live somewhere else so as to not subject themselves to the 30 mile drive to employment. This means more implants of people will be moving to La Conner which threatens the atmosphere it relies on for its tourism revenue.

The number of acres planted for the Tulip Festival has dropped below 350 acres total among the 5 "growers" in 2025 (Based on the online information found – inquiries to the participants in this regard have not been forthcoming). According to a WSU extension in 2018, there were 1000 acres of tulips and daffodils planted at that time in the Skagit Valley. 500 of those acres were tulips. Even this number is significantly less than it has been in years past. Only Washington Bulb Co. really even fits the descriptor of "grower" as the remaining are merely "display gardens" or "attractions" to capitalize off of the Tulip Festival's history.

People used to bring their families to the tulip festival because viewing the tulips in the fields was free (other than perhaps paying for parking) – an inexpensive form of entertainment. That is no longer the case. Festival tickets range from \$10 to \$20 per person, including the cost to get here. The "free" tulip fields have decreased dramatically in size. **This means fewer dollars are likely spent in La Conner by families.**

Skagit Valley Tulip Festival

<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres of tulips planted</u>	<u>Acres of daffodils planted</u>	<u>Growers</u>	<u>Child Ticket</u>	<u>Adult Ticket</u>
2018	500	500	2	\$7 over age 5	\$7
2019	350		2	\$5 over age 5 \$7-\$10 over age 5	\$7 - \$10
2020	350	500			
2021	350	450		Roozengarde: 3 and older \$15 Tulip Town: 6 to 11 \$7	Roozengarde: \$15 Tulip Town \$15
2025	250			Compilation 3 and older \$10	Compilation \$16 to \$20

Skagit Valley Tulip Festival Gardens

<u>Garden Farm</u>	Roozengarde	Tulip Town	Tulip Valley Farms	Garden Rosalyn	Skagit Acres
	250 (approx.)				

<u>Acres Planted</u>					
<u>Display garden Acres</u>	55	6	20	7	3
<u>Bulb varieties Planted</u>	200	55	140	Several	18
<u>Child Ticket</u>	Mon – Thur \$16 Fri-Sun \$20		Ages 3 -15 \$10	\$17	6 – 11 \$18
<u>Adult Ticket</u>	Mon – Thur \$16 Fri-Sun \$20	12 and over \$20	16 and over Mon-Thur \$16 Fri-Sun \$18	\$17	12 and over \$18

Competing Tulip Festivals:

<u>Festival</u>	Thanksgiving Point Lehi, Utah	Tulip Time Holland, Michigan ¹ www.tuliptime.com	Holland Ridge Farms Spring Spectacular Cream Ridge, New Jersey www.hollandridgefarms.com	Canadian Tulip Festival Ottawa, Canada
<u>Acres Planted</u>	50		300	
<u>Bulbs Planted</u>	400,000 tulips 550,000 other spring flowers	4,000,000	8,000,000 u-pick farm	300,000
<u># of growers</u>		1	1	
<u>Display gardens</u>	1	Windmill Island Gardens – 140,000+ Neighborhood curbside – 250,000+		Commissioner's Park

¹ In order to draw visitors, Holland, Michigan plants bulbs in town to beautify their city, including throughout the neighborhoods.

		Dutch Village – 30,000+ Waterfront park - 100,000+ Downtown – 38,000+ Park – 48,000+		
<u>Child Ticket</u>	2 and under free 3-12 \$17-22 13-17 \$19-24	2 and under free \$7	2 and under free \$17-20	Free
<u>Adult Ticket</u>	\$24-\$29 (non-peak v. peak)	\$17 - 19	\$17-\$20	
<u>Days</u>	April 10 th – May 18 th	May 2 nd – 11 th	April - May	May 9 th – 19 th

Since the 1970s, tourists have visited La Conner as a sort of “escape” from the craziness of their lives. They come here because it’s quiet, simple, and beautiful. La Conner’s role in the lives of people in the State of Washington and around the world in this regard will only become more important as population density continues to explode. It is our duty...YOUR duty to ensure La Conner is capable of fulfilling this role by safeguarding its “historical charm.”

After looking at the very distinct survey questions, you aren’t asking the correct questions concerning this area and the Town of La Conner. The questions you should be asking are: **H**ow do we utilize this area to enhance the lives of those who currently live in La Conner and the reservation ***and then***, how can it enhance the experience of those who visit? As has been indicated in previous correspondence to this body of members, the Town of La Conner has a history of ignoring the viewpoints of its residents – instead worrying about developers, increases in sales tax (which do benefit residents to a certain degree), and business owners. This project provides the Town with an opportunity to for once consider the residents before these other entities. The survey results should not be considered in this instance. They provided little incentive for “free thinking”.

Everyone wants to talk about “affordable housing” (according to government: housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities) and “workforce housing” (according to Pennsylvania Housing Alliance: homes affordable to the typical worker. According to reasonable minds in La Conner: housing for La Conner’s workforce, e.g. hotel employees, restaurant employees, town employees, retail employees).

But what does that even mean and what value do they bring to the Town of La Conner? Someone who used to be in Town politics made me consider this last week². Take a walk around town and

² Many won’t ever agree that the way the Landed Gentry transfer of Hedlin Field was handled was honorable or how many homes squeezed into that acreage was appropriate; and affordable housing may not have been the answer. However, affordable housing should not have been “dangled” as incentive for the transfer in order to get it to go

I think it is evident that we have plenty of “affordable housing” and “workforce housing” on most of the flats. All or nearly all of the homes on Caledonia Street, Fourth Street, Third Street, Channel Cove, Myrtle Street, Rainier Street, Whatcom Street, Laurel Street, Talbott Street are not high-end homes. The problem that is occurring is that since the installation of the Landed Gentry homes and the Snapdragon Hill homes, the property taxes for these homes and the value at the time of sale have both increased significantly. (One way to reverse some of this effect is to petition the Skagit County Assessors Office to assess these two developments independently from the homes which pre-dated them.) Below is some data from the Assessors Office concerning assessed home values and taxes, as well as the significant increase in home sale values since 2021 and the approval of the Landed Gentry development - highlighting the recent sales of homes on First Street and Road Street.

404 Caledonia Street

2009	\$242,800.00	\$2,396.75	2022	\$348,200.00	\$3,385.13
2015	\$180,000.00	\$2,521.17	2025	\$448,200.00	\$3,619.94
2019	\$240,000.00	\$2,637.72			

751 Maple Avenue

2009	\$199,900.00	\$1,973.27	2022	\$359,400.00	\$3,019.13
2015	\$150,800.00	\$2,112.19	2025	\$412,400.00	\$3,331.20
2019	\$219,600.00	\$2,411.50			

513 Myrtle Street

2009	\$197,000.00	\$1,944.65	2022	\$548,600.00	\$5,330.53
2015	\$278,000.00	\$3,893.81	2025	\$728,900.00	\$5,883.92
2019	\$414,900.00	\$4,566.16			

501 Rainier Street

2009	\$248,000.00	\$2,450.06	2022	\$360,300.00	\$3,502.60
2015	\$184,100.00	\$2,578.60	2025	\$450,700.00	\$3,640.09
2019	\$250,800.00	\$2,754.13			

514 Rainier Street

2009	\$283,700.00	\$2,955.53	2022	\$331,100.00	\$3,219.14
2015	\$221,500.00	\$3,102.43	2025	\$407,800.00	\$3,294.09
2019	\$225,300.00	\$2,474.10			

520 Laurel Street

2009	\$214,000.00	\$2,112.46	2022	\$355,600.00	\$3,456.99
2015	\$179,300.00	\$2,511.37	2025	\$456,000.00	\$3,682.84
2019	\$246,700.00	\$2,709.08			

523 Laurel Street

2009	\$222,700.00	\$2,198.34	2022	\$324,600.00	\$3,156.00
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through. And yes, this project will be continually revisited because it serves an important example of how Town government should not behave.

2015	\$179,600.00	\$2,515.57	2025	\$409,000.00	\$3,303.76
2019	\$222,600.00	\$2,444.45			

306 Morris Street

9/6/23	\$530,000.00	10/15/19	\$265,035.00		
2009	\$369,500.00	\$3,849.38	2022	\$375,900.00	\$3,654.07
2015	\$215,200.00	\$3,014.18	2025	\$443,700	\$3,583.63
2019	\$279,700.00	\$3,071.48			

313 Center Street

7/5/23	\$590,000.00	7/18/21	\$542,500.00	12/10/14	\$225,000.00
2009	\$238,500.00	\$2,3454.31	2022	\$349,600.00	\$3,398.73
2015	\$170,000.00	\$2,381.11	2025	\$472,900.00	\$3,819.15
2019	\$252,300.00	\$2,770.58			

616 S Fourth Street

2/17/23	\$556,000.00	12/20/2010	\$230,500.00		
2009	\$365,500.00	\$818.15	2022	\$494,300.00	\$4,803.41
2015	\$240,500.00	\$3,368.58	2025	\$638,600.00	\$5,155.60
2019	\$372,900.00	\$4,094.94			

409 Center Street

3/8/22	\$781,000.00	10/17/16	\$415,000.00		
2009	\$325,500.00	\$3,020.05	2022	\$537,100.00	\$5,218.89
2015	\$255,000.00	\$3,571.68	2025	\$739,000.00	\$5,966.30
2019	\$410,300.00	\$4,505.66			

522 Center Street

9/11/24	\$489,000.00	9/16/19	\$260,000.00		
2009	\$228,000.00	\$2,250.66	2022	\$333,400.00	\$3,241.45
2015	\$181,500.00	\$511.91	2025	\$472,100.00	\$3,812.70
2019	\$238,100	\$2,614.66			

413 Maple Avenue

5/17/18	\$286,000.00	7/16/15	\$169,500.00		
2009	\$212,900.00	\$2,101.60	2022	\$256,400.00	\$2,493.99
2015	\$143,300.00	\$2,007.12	2025	\$328,700.00	\$2,656.13
2019	\$176,200.00	\$1,934.91			

514 Road Street

5/1/24	\$650,000.00	7/10/14	\$119,300.00		
2009	\$187,300.00	\$1,848.89	2022	\$301,700.00	\$2,933.74
2015	\$130,500.00	\$1,827.86	2025	\$384,500.00	\$3,106.18
2019	\$199,700.00	\$2,192.97			

327 N First Street

9/6/24	\$1,154,500.00	8/17/2018	\$450,000.00		
2009	\$310,200.00	\$3,062.08	2022	\$406,100.00	\$3,947.23
2015	\$263,500.00	\$3,690.72	2025	\$582,600.00	\$4,703.93
2019	\$343,600.00	\$3,773.19			

502 High Street

8/12/24	\$1,250,000.00				
2025	\$1,186,500.00	\$9,569.66			

Landed Gentry Homes – beginning around 2/2022

315 Maple Avenue	\$759,900.00
319 Maple Avenue	\$784,900.00
327 Maple Avenue	\$719,900.00
333 Maple Avenue	\$649,500.00
335 Maple Avenue	\$725,000.00
401 Maple Avenue	\$764,000.00
407 Maple Avenue	\$599,900.00
409 Maple Avenue	\$760,000.00

*based on Zillow

If the Town of La Conner builds more “affordable housing” or “workforce housing” HOW DO THEY BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY? How do the residents currently living in the Channel Cove housing area benefit the community? How will the residents in the homes planned by Habitat for Humanity benefit the community? It is highly unlikely the residents of Channel Cove patronize the stores on First Street or any of the town’s restaurants at all or very often. And if a homeowner is reliant on a non-profit organization and their “sweat equity” for home ownership, it is doubtful they will either. According to the survey results, few if any, of these homeowners responded to the survey.

Don’t get me wrong. I am a firm believer in providing people who make an effort to “lift up their lives” with a “hand”. But I don’t believe that benefit should come at the expense of others. More importantly, government should not encourage, plan, or fund such a detriment to others.

The employees who work in our restaurants and retail establishments provide a bigger benefit to town in that they allow these businesses to remain operational for the residents and tourists who do patronize them. This does benefit the community with sales tax increase and continued sustainability to the community. These employees DO NOT need a lot of living space. They are ordinarily young and single or newly married. But **they also have not earned the place in life where they deserve waterfront living – nor have those who would benefit from affordable housing.** If people want to buy a house in La Conner, they need to learn about money and what it takes to improve their financial status. Generally, people who do not work for what they have do not take care of it or garner the skills to maintain and hold onto it. That is a significant implication of life. I hesitate to utilize the tribal homes as an example, but it serves as an undeniable visual reminder.

Federal Governmental requirements for “affordable housing” need to be considered in their entirety and instead of blindly obeying, the Town of La Conner needs to determine on its own

what is in its best interest and advocate for that. If they need to petition for a waiver for “overreaching” governmental regulations, then they should do so.

This Town has survived just fine for 150 years at its current population rate. Its population does not need to increase. **Indeed, it could easily be argued that population increase severely threatens the survival of La Conner as increased population and housing density degrades the “small town” atmosphere the majority of visitors come to enjoy.** Many have jumped on the “affordable housing” bandwagon because of tender hearts, generous spirits, “political correctness”, and because it is ordinarily a popular discontentment against government, but the recent information provided by the local who has participated in Town government gives a different perspective that warrants consideration.

If the Moore-Clark building and its surrounding areas are turned into a public project then it should benefit everyone. If someone has contributed enough value to humanity that they can support their deservingness of waterfront living then it can be considered. For example, workforce participants who are more mature and single HAVE earned the right for waterfront living and have ordinarily downsized considerably from earlier periods in their lives that they don’t need a lot of space and can likely afford the rental rates that are associated with waterfront living. Otherwise, the waterfront should be something enjoyed by the entire community.

Thus, this is a proposal for the Moore-Clark building subarea.

1. Rebuild the Moore-Clark building as a beacon to its heritage. DO NOT TEAR IT DOWN. It is NOT the building’s fault the Town or property owners have allowed it to deteriorate to such a degree that it is an incredible eyesore and safety hazard. Its history demands that it be rebuilt and saved. Will this be more expensive? Yes. But it shouldn’t even be a question of whether or not to do it. La Conner is touted as a “historical waterfront”. So SAVE ITS HISTORY and grandfather in the height of the building so that it can be rebuilt to its exact height. It would also be wonderful to incorporate the original design with the “scalloped” roofline rather than the more streamlined design as it has most recently been.
 - a. There are people in Europe who are spending LOTS of money to save historic buildings that need A LOT more work than the Moore-Clark building. These are a few examples. [Château de Purnon - Monument Historique](#). [The Chateaux That Built France \(Documentary\)](#)
 - b. With regard to flooding, there is technology called “Flood Lift” which may help with this. [Floodlift - Failsafe House Lifting](#). There are also self-closing flood barriers [Self Closing Flood Barrier - SCFB™](#). And flood walls, which would be a great idea for along the entire boardwalk so those ugly orange sandbags aren’t needed every year. [Glass Flood Barriers, Glass Wall | Flood Control International](#) Please research them.
2. Concerning the bottom floor of the Moore-Clark building, ***the Town needs another grocery store***. In the past, there have been two or three and there needs to be another one to offer (1) competition to Pioneer Market and (2) to utilize the products made and grown in Skagit County or the surrounding communities in Washington state. More specifically, organic, heirloom, hand-made, good quality items which take into consideration the mindset of those who want items made with care, quality, and love. [Shop homegrown and](#)

handmade - Genuine Skagit Valley. These items consolidated in one area would be a draw to town themselves. ***And no alcoholic beverages or tobacco products.*** With healthier “take away” food items. Pioneer Market does not offer these and they do not honor its customers with its prices, quality, product rotation, or retention of employees. In addition, it would be closer and more convenient for the Tribe.

- a. You could also offer a small area with an attached building for an independent drugstore. The feasibility of this has **not** been researched. It is just a thought. [Community Pharmacy Foundation What CPF Funds]
 - b. A historical display about the building would also be great and you could incorporate fish food somehow, either in “gum ball” machines or pre-portioned packages that kids or people could throw into the channel to feed the fish. Perhaps this could be done in conjunction with the tribe to ensure the fish are benefitting and it enhances the tribe’s efforts to rebuild the salmon and other fish populations.
 - i. A small handwashing station in this area would be a good implementation.
 - c. It would also be worth investigating whether the restaurants in town could benefit from consolidating their raw product orders to filter through an “organically” or “farm-to-table” minded grocery store enabling them to save costs and return to offering their guests with high-quality ingredients with higher value for their money.
 - d. It may also serve to reduce traffic flow on Maple Avenue whereas “affordable housing” would likely serve to increase it as the residents will most likely be required to seek living wages outside of the La Conner area.
 - e. It may also serve as a “feeder” to the stores and restaurants on First Street for people who otherwise might not patronize them due to the close proximity.
 - f. Individual cottages like the ones installed at Roche Harbor a few years ago could be added to flank the two longest sides of the building to allow for smaller vendors in a sort of “farmer’s market” atmosphere without the transiency and aesthetic disruption of tents and tables. One or more of these would be ideal to allow tribal members to sell their creations.
3. On the top of the Moore-Clark building, you could do a few things, e.g.:
- a. An indoor walking track with lots of windows **or skylights**. La Conner’s walkability continues to be compromised by the development projects approved by the Town. Indoor Track | Issaquah, WA - Official Website. Indoor walking tracks in the Phoenix area to beat the heat - YouTube. In addition, La Conner used to have a location, “Auto View” where the historical museum now sits, where residents could go to take in the views. There is no longer anything like that in town.
 - b. A less expensive way to eat away from home, e.g. an open-air cafeteria like the one on top of the Moran Eye Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. This need not be direct competition to the restaurants in town. However, perhaps it would encourage the restaurants in town to return to the high-quality ingredients and value pre-COVID. Large windows included, of course.
 - c. If you want to build “workforce housing” for the more mature employees who work in Town, then you could do so on the top level of the Moore-Clark building. Apartments of 400 square feet (or even less) would allow for a nice studio apartment for someone later in life who is working for extra income or just to

- have a productive way to use their time. Window openings in the bottom and top of the structure would still honor its history. **As would skylights.**
4. Concerning the rest of the waterfront subarea, do a waterfront park like they have in Friday Harbor. There is no green space in town for someone to enjoy a picnic. While Conner park is nice, it's a long walk from town – even if the boardwalk is extended that far – and the grass is always dead in the summer. The one in Friday Harbor hosts small music groups and it has covered picnic areas.
 - a. Plant grass, trees, flowers, and bushes. You could also incorporate a small fountain or “wishing” pond. As the number of tulip acres continues to decline and display gardens become more of the “norm” for tulip festival activities, it is reasonable to assert that the Town will need to look to places like Holland, Michigan for ideas of how to draw people back to town for this seasonal income. A waterfront park with extensive spring plantings would be one excellent way to do this. Especially if there is a covered area where people can seek shelter on inclement weather days. **The wharf area could be used to compliment this also.**
 - b. Get rid of the parking in this area (**to be more specific from Maple Hall refrigerator building** toward the Moore-Clark building). Everyone other than seniors/handicapped can park in the lot on Third Street for their shopping needs.
 - i. If the building is turned into a grocery store, all you need to do is allow for a few senior/handicapped parking spaces near the building and some kind of loading area. These could also serve any waterfront park area.
 - c. It would also hopefully give the tribal members an opportunity to interact with the town members on a more regular basis in a serene setting.
 5. If you want to build some kind of housing behind the park and the Moore-Clark building then look into building “pocket neighborhoods”. **Pocket Neighborhoods | Ross Chapin Architects** The homes can be small, they can share a common grassy area, and the residents might actually get to know their neighbors. The Flood-Lift technology can be used for these as well.
 - a. The dwellings could comprise back-to-back studios with excellent sound proofing.
 - b. No parking. People working AND living in town do not need vehicles. Especially if another grocery store is close to their housing. If they need to go into Burlington, Mount Vernon or elsewhere they can use an Uber or public transportation.
 - c. Historical accuracy
 - i. Not modern, boring and out-of-place in La Conner
 6. You could also start looking at the possibility of bringing the long delayed railroad spur to La Conner from Mount Vernon. **State rail grant and loan programs | WSDOT**
 - a. It is a common practice to lay rail in asphalt, which would allow for utilizing the exiting road way from Mount Vernon down McLean Road or Calhoun. It would also give people the opportunity to view our beautiful farm land.
 - b. The spur could end at the Moore-Clark building (renamed something else, of course). This would enable for easier transport of items to the grocery store and other stores in town; as well as pedestrians.
 - c. It would also reduce the number of cars flowing into town
 - d. It may also increase the number of over-night guests, but there are plenty of places for people to stay who have planned ahead.

7. Considering alternative workforce housing, perhaps it's time to bring people to town to live instead of just a place for them to exist and die and transition some of the rooms at the Retirement Inn for employees. This may take rooms away from seniors, but would likely enhance the quality of life of those who do live there by giving them the opportunity to interact with younger residents. It would also give younger residents the opportunity to experience the wisdom and amazing life stories of the senior residents – something they cannot get from staring at a phone. This, of course, would need to be subsidized to ensure the Retirement Inn is made whole with rental income. However, it is not unreasonable to expect there is a foundation in existence which would support the beautiful impact this would have on our youth and seniors.

Lastly, please address the property at 706-708 First Street, e.g. the old “fish shacks”.

In addition, a traffic analysis now needs to be conducted on Road Street. Since October of 2024 with the introduction of “one-way” travel, Road Street has turned from a quiet local road to a thoroughfare for school traffic and those trying to avoid turning left at the stop sign at the intersection of Maple Avenue and Morris Street to reinsert themselves for the one-way street on First Street. The traffic ordinarily does NOT obey the speed limit (no surprise there) or the fact that people live on that street. Motorists can just as easily take a right at the stop sign at the Maple/Morris intersection and drive down to the roundabout and circle back into town so they don't have to make a left-hand turn. They just need incentive like signage indicating “no left turn from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. or 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. – Road Street residents excluded” or something like that.

Lastly, information has spread through people in town that there is a specific person who has purchased multiple buildings in town, is asking for cost-prohibitive rental rates, and fails to properly maintain the buildings he owns. Please ensure there are codes in place to protect business owners and any tenants who may live in the upper portions of the buildings in town – as well as future sales tax revenue. This not only protect these individuals, but the tourism industry the Town relies upon for its continued survival. Independent research in this regard has not been completed. The Town will need to undergo such research on its own.

Best regards,

P.S. Please STOP approving modern buildings like the ones in Snapdragon Hill, on Third Street, and now on Whatcom Street. They DO NOT belong in HISTORICAL La Conner.

