

San Juan Island Update



Land Bank Opens Historic Driggs Park in Friday Harbor

The Land Bank has partnered with property owners Pete and Becky Kilpatrick to allow public access to the lot at the corner of Caines Street and Argyle Avenue. The lot is adjacent to the Land Bank's office space in the historic Driggs house.



The Town's newest park

“We wanted to provide people with a little bit of public green space in town and the Kilpatrick’s were incredibly generous to help us do it,” said Lincoln Bormann, Land Bank Director. The Kilpatrick’s donated a recreational license agreement for public use. The lot is private property and the owners retain the right to revoke the agreement after one year if their plans for the property change. “Though this isn’t permanent, we’re hoping it will remain as a public resource for at least the next few years, and possibly beyond,” Bormann added.

The house was built around 1895 for G.B. Driggs, a local merchant and fruit grower. “Originally, the house would have looked down on the Driggs’ orchards and strawberry

fields,” stated Sandy Strehlou, Historic Preservation Coordinator for the town. There is an apple and pear tree on the lot, possibly dating back to the time when the Driggs owned the property. “We’re so lucky to have owners who have restored and maintained the house and are willing let people enjoy the adjacent lot as well. It really helps keep the historic character of the neighborhood intact,” Strehlou concluded.

The lot also features an heirloom rose bed which the Land Bank and WSU Master Gardeners have restored. “We wanted to recreate the flower beds that once lined Argyle and probably Caines as well,” said Judy Cumming, Land Bank office manager and Master Gardner. “It’s been a big project so far, removing the invasive ivy and starting to get some new plantings in. Pete and Becky and other volunteers have been really helpful,” she continued. “It’s amazing how the lot has changed in a few months time.”

“We’re so happy to be a part of this,” commented owner Pete Kilpatrick. “It’ll be really satisfying to see the lot kind of brought back to life and people enjoying it. It’s great to give back a little to the community.”

Driggs Historic Park is open during daylight hours, seven days a week.

About the San Juan County Land Bank

The San Juan County Land Bank is a local land conservation program, created by voters in 1990, and funded by a 1% real estate excise tax paid by purchasers of property in San Juan County. Through conservation easements or outright purchases, the Land Bank protects special places in the Islands including coastlines, farmland, forests and wetlands. For more information, contact the Land Bank at 378-4402 or visit <http://www.sjclandbank.org>.

Posted on August 31, 2011 at 1:34 am by [Ian Byington](#)