

Advisory Group Application

Step 1

Application for Appointment to Whatcom County Advisory Groups

Public Statement

THIS IS A PUBLIC DOCUMENT: As a candidate for a public advisory group, the information provided will be available to the County Council, County Executive, and the public. All advisory group members are expected to be fair, impartial, and respectful of the public, County staff, and each other. Failure to abide by these expectations may result in revocation of appointment and removal from the appointive position.

Title	Ms.
First Name	Selena
Last Name	Knoblauch
Today's Date	2/5/2026
Do you live in Whatcom County?	Yes
Do you have a different mailing address?	Field not completed.

Step 2

1. Name of Advisory	Planning Commission
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Group

2. Do you meet the residency, employment, and/or affiliation requirements of the position for which you're applying?	Yes
3. Which Council district do you live in?	District 1
4. Have you ever been a member of this Advisory Group	No
5. Do you or your spouse have a financial interest in or are you an employee or officer of any business or agency that does business with Whatcom County?	No
6. Have you declared candidacy (as defined by RCW 42.17A.055) for a paid elected office in any jurisdiction within the county?	No
You may attach a resume or detailed summary of experience, qualifications, & interest in response to the following questions	Attached
7. Please describe your occupation (or former occupation if retired), qualifications, professional and/or community activities, and education	I am a senior organizer with Community First Whatcom, running issue campaigns at the city and county level, often with a focus on housing equity. I am intimately familiar with many of the issues facing our communities as I spend a lot of time speaking with community members about their issues, door to door canvassing, and attending and running listening sessions. I have also personally experienced housing insecurity in Whatcom County as a young queer person. I have a strong background in organized labor, having worked for SEIU 1199nw at PeaceHealth

St. Joseph's Medical Center, and serving as a bargaining committee member for Western Academic Workers United.

My educational background is in history. I received my Bachelor's Degree in History from Washington State University in 2021, and have completed all the classwork for a Master's Degree in History from Western Washington University.

8. Please describe why you're interested in serving on this Advisory Group.

As a historian, a housing advocate, and an ally of organized labor, I know that the way we carve up spaces has deep impacts on people's lives, the local environment, and the way our community functions. Having a planning commission that integrates the expertise of builders, developers, environmental, and agricultural advocates is a crucial part of getting expert recommendations, but the commission should also have a member whose expertise lies in how those changes affect everyday people. I spend much of my time advocating for people who are being left behind by current housing and land use policy developments. Those people should have a representative on the planning commission who evaluates how comprehensive plan amendments will impact their access to housing on the ground level, the manner in which the way we carve up land for development affects their ability to access their workplaces, and who advocates for an ample natural environment that keeps people healthy.

In addition, I want to advocate for the needs of younger residents and students. I have strong connections with on-campus organizations, and I have a lot of younger residents in my circle who are struggling to meet their everyday needs, through no fault of their own. Younger residents don't have much of a voice in Whatcom, since they have had less time to get grounded in the community, and are largely not yet a part of the county's business landscape. They deserve someone advocating for their spatial, housing, and economic needs on one of the most important commissions in the county.

References (please include daytime telephone number):

Cleveland Harris II - [REDACTED]
Jace Cotton [REDACTED]

Appointment Requirements

I understand and agree

Signature of applicant:

Bjorn (Selena) Knoblauch

Place Signed / Submitted

[REDACTED]

(Section Break)

Education

- Western Washington University (September 2022 - Present)
 - Expected graduation with Master's of Arts in History Fall 2027 (completed all class work)
- Washington State University Honors College (September 2017 - May 2021)
 - Bachelor's of Arts in History, Magna Cum Laude

Work Experience

- Community First Whatcom
 - Senior Organizer (September 2025 - Present)
 - Campaign manager for initiative campaigns in Ferndale and Bellingham
 - Managed 2 part-time campaign employees
 - Worked to develop and pass new legislation to support Whatcom County renters and healthcare workers
- SEIU 1199NW
 - Staff Organizer (December 2024 - June 2025)
 - Worked with 950 union members at PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center to address workplace concerns
 - Represented members in disciplinary and grievance meetings
 - Worked to develop strike campaign which culminated in a 5-day strike in May 2025
- Western Washington University (September 2022 - June 2024)
 - Teaching Assistant - History
 - Conducted lectures for up to 50 students
 - Provided one-on-one mentorship to students to develop writing and professional speaking skills
- Method Homes (April 2023 - June 2024)
 - Preliminary Consultant
 - Managed incoming communications for a luxury homebuilder. Engaged with clients via phone and email
- Bakery Künkel (January 2022 - July 2022)
 - Barista at a bakery in Bad Nauheim, Germany
 - Conducted end of day cash-outs (\$2,000+/day)

- ADS System GMBH (November 2021 - January 2022)
 - Traveling IT system installer. Based in Bad Homburg, Germany
- Walmart (October 2020 - June 2021)
 - Cashier/service desk attendant
- WSU Cougvision (Ongoing Gig Work, November 2015 - January 2020)
 - Videoboard production
 - Evolving role, included directing, producing, graphics, replay, and camerawork for live television sports broadcasts
- Pac-12 Networks & Root Sports (Ongoing Gig Work, October 2018 - May 2021)
 - Freelance cameraperson and production assistant
- WSU Auxiliary Facilities Services (May 2018 - September 2018, May 2019 - September 2019)
 - Flooring maintenance at Washington State University housing facilities.
Installation of new floors on multi-unit remodeling projects

Volunteer Work

- Pullman Parks & Recreation (2019-2021)
 - Volunteer Youth Soccer Coach for grade levels 3-5 and 6-8
- Western Academic Workers United (September 2022 - August 2024)
 - Interim treasurer
 - Worked to set up financial processes for newly formed UAW local 4929.
 - Bargaining Committee Member
 - Researched and drafted articles for a contract affecting 1,200 workers.
Negotiated opposite WWU administrators and labor attorneys.

Skills

- Professional research, data analysis, policy writing, and editing
- Customer service - sales, retail, food service, baristaing
 - Familiar with many POS systems
- Fluent in English and German
 - Proficient in Spanish

Professional Associations

- Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society (Lifetime Membership, 2021 Onward)