This Whatcom city is the next target of white supremacist ideology

By Robert Mittendorf, August 22, 2019, Bellingham Herald

A white supremacist group’s poster was reported this week in Bellingham, about three weeks after similar leaflets appeared in Ferndale.

Phil Wolff said he was walking in the Fairhaven shopping district on Sunday when he saw a poster for the white nationalist group Patriot Front outside a building south of the Haggen supermarket.

He said he immediately tore it down.

“We have a history in Bellingham of huge racist problems. When I see this stuff still persists after all this time, it still bugs me,” Wolff said in an interview with The Bellingham Herald.

Wolff reported the poster to Bellingham Police, who took the matter seriously, he said.

Similar posters were placed on Ferndale utility poles in late July, and the Ferndale Police said they were investigating.

Both the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Anti-Defamation League — organizations that track hate groups, bigotry and anti-Semitism — have the Patriot Front on their watch lists.

“Patriot Front is a white supremacist group whose members maintain that their ancestors conquered America and bequeathed it solely to them,” the Anti-Defamation League said at its website.

Patriot Front has been active in Washington state, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

It formed as “rebranded” offshoot of Vanguard America after the deadly 2017 white supremacist march in Charlottesville, Virginia, the Anti-Defamation League said.

Miri Cypers, executive director of the Anti-Defamation League’s Pacific Northwest region in Seattle, said racist organizations like Patriot Front often use coded or subdued language when they start to organize in a new area.

Wolff said that although the language in the Patriot Front poster wasn’t overtly racist, the group’s motives were clear.

“We fought a whole world war to end this stuff. It’s disturbing,” he said.