

CITY OF BELLEVUE
EAST MAIN STATION AREA PLANNING
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

September 23, 2014
4:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-113

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Breiland, John D'Agnone, Christie Hammond,
John King, Scott Lampe, Jim Long, Erin Powell,
Alexander Strunkin, Bill Thurston, Pamela Unger

MEMBERS ABSENT: Danny Rogers

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Kattermann, Chris Salomone, Janet Lewine,
Department of Planning and Community
Development; Kate March, Dave Berg, Phil Harris,
John Murphy, Department of Transportation; Kyle
Stannert, City Clerk's Office; Matthews Jackson,
Department of Development Services; Mayor
Balducci

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. WELCOME

Senior Planner Mike Kattermann called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Department of Planning and Community Development director Chris Salomone welcomed the Committee members and thanked them for their willingness to take on such an important duty on behalf of the city. He said the impact of the Committee's planning around the East Main station area will be felt by the neighborhood and the nearby commercial properties for years to come. There are significant planning issues to be dealt with and the expectation is that the outcome will be positive.

Department of Transportation director Dave Berg said the city conducts an annual budget survey, and every year public safety and transportation are the top two issues. The station area planning effort will involve both land use and transportation elements. As the alignment comes through 112th Avenue SE, access in and out of the Surrey Downs and Bellecrest neighborhoods will change, and the Committee will be asked to weigh in on that issue. The East Main station will create the opportunity for local residents to walk to and from light rail transportation, but how to do that safely and efficiently is something the Committee will also deal with.

2. COMMITTEE INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Kattermann explained that he would be serving as the project manager for the East Main station area planning process and would be the Committee's main point of contact. He introduced Phil Harris, senior transportation planner, and Kate March, the community outreach lead for the East Link project, and said the three of them would make up the core group the Committee will be dealing with. Other staff introduced were John Murphy

with the neighborhood traffic services section; Janet Lewine with Planning and Community Development; Comprehensive Planning Manager Paul Inghram; Matthews Jackson with Development Services.

Mr. Kattermann said meeting materials will be sent to the Committee members electronically unless otherwise requested. He briefly reviewed the materials included in the member notebooks.

The Committee members introduced themselves and shared a little about their backgrounds.

Bill Thurston with the Bellevue Club noted that since the East Link alignment came into play he has been active in the process.

Alexander Strunkin said he had no prior involvement in light rail. He said he has lived in Bellevue for the past five years and recently started his own company.

Pam Unger said her home is located directly behind the East Main station. She said she purchased the house with a full knowledge of the coming light rail. She said she has made a point of attending all meetings having to do with the East Link project. A regular bus rider, she said she works in Seattle.

Chris Breiland said he lives near SE 4th Street and 109th Avenue SE in the Surrey Downs neighborhood. He said by profession he is a transportation engineer and planner and works for a consulting firm.

Erin Powell said she has lived in the Bellecrest neighborhood of Bellevue for 12 years. She said she most recently served as a member of the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC and also is a member of the Parks and Community Services Board.

Mr. Jim Long said he has worked in downtown Bellevue for nine of the 13 years he has lived in Bellevue. He said he works as a commercial property manager and one of his buildings is at 110th Avenue NE and NE 2nd Street near the East Main station. Light rail will benefit the region in a variety of ways.

Christie Hammond, a resident of Surrey Downs, said she attended all of the Light Rail Best Practices Committee meetings and has represented her neighborhood and herself in all of the development proceedings. She said the Surrey Downs neighborhood is committed to being involved in a positive and impactful way.

Scott Lampe, a 14-year resident of Surrey Downs, said he initially got involved in the alignment discussions and chaired the neighborhood committee for a couple of years. He said he also serves as a member of the Transportation Commission.

John King, also a resident of Surrey Downs, said he has only recently become involved in some of the issues. He said he lives fairly close to where the East Main station will be.

John D'Agnone said he lives in Seattle but works at Baylis Architects in Bellevue. He said he is a cyclist and is always looking for alternative means of transportation. He said he has not previously served on a city committee. Experience has shown that those

coming out of school would rather live in Seattle and are not overly interested in working for Bellevue or Eastside firms because of the commute. Light rail will be a good solution.

Mr. Kattermann asked the Committee members what they thought a successful East Main station area planning outcome will look like.

Ms. Unger said success will involve coming up with real solutions by listening to the opinions of all. She said she would like to see a sidewalk on at least one side of the streets in Surrey Downs to allow the residents to safely walk to and from the East Main station.

Mr. Lampe said he wanted to see the Committee balance all the needs, interests and concerns of the various parties involved. Zoning changes can certainly have a big impact. The neighborhood has discussed the need for having good access to and from the station, but there are other challenges, including spillover parking.

Ms. Hammond said success will involve having a station that is useful and positive for the city. Success will include balancing the desire to have the station be part of the neighborhood yet not part of the neighborhood. Surrey Downs enjoys not being in the downtown but having all the benefits of the downtown, and that should be preserved as part of what makes the community vibrant and livable.

Mr. Long said success will require good input from both residential and business interests and an honest balancing of the various issues. He said he had no preconceived notion of what the final outcome will be.

Ms. Powell said success will be achieved by having the best station in the system. She suggested it would be beneficial for the Committee members to be given a tour of Sound Transit stations in Seattle and Tukwila. The nearby neighborhoods certainly are concerned about safety and want to curtail home burglaries, panhandling, and drunk and disorderly persons hanging around. She agreed Surrey Downs needs sidewalks. The appearance of the station should be warm, friendly and welcoming, and it should include good signage.

Mr. Kattermann stressed that the Committee is not charged with looking at the station itself, only the area around the station.

Mr. Breiland said light rail represents a big investment for the city and the region and will involve both change and opportunity for the local neighborhoods and businesses. Success will involve recognizing that change is coming and capitalizing on it.

Mr. Thurston suggested that success will involve hearing each and every concern voiced and doing something about them with an open mind and open attitude. Success will also be evident in Committee members being proud of the results.

Mr. D'Agnone said success will involve integrating bicycles, pedestrian and vehicles with the station, and it will involve inspiring the public to alter their transportation habits. A successful process will involve research and reaching out to different individuals and organizations to gain input.

Mr. King agreed that success will be reflected in the fact that everyone with an opinion felt they got a fair hearing and in an outcome that balances all interests. Success will also involve careful consideration of the parking needs and the concerns of local residents during the construction period.

Mr. Kattermann noted that construction issues fall outside the jurisdiction of the Committee and inside the jurisdiction of the East Link permitting CAC.

Mr. Strunkin concurred that success will be characterized by having all parties heard and a seamless integration of pedestrian and bicycles, and the integration of light rail into the city that results in people not having to use cars to get around.

Ms. March said as community outreach lead for the East Link project she would gladly forward comments and ideas regarding issues not within the Committee's purview to any of the other processes.

Mr. Strunkin commented that there are many sharing services in operation and coming online. The services allow people to share everything from cars to bicycles. Because light rail in Bellevue will not be operational for some time to come, the Committee should remember to keep the future in mind in making planning decisions so that things will not need to be changed later.

3. COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

A. Open Meetings and Public Records Requirements

Mr. Kattermann pointed out that as an officially appointed body of the city, there are certain rules and regulations that must be followed. He invited Kyle Stannert, assistant director of the City Clerk's Office, to educate the members.

Mr. Stannert explained that the Committee meets the definition of a governing body in that it is a group of appointed individuals charged with making a recommendation to the City Council. As such, the meetings fall under the Open Public Meetings Act. Certain things will be done by the staff to make sure all requirements of the Act are met, but the Committee members also need to take certain steps to assure compliance.

All meetings must be open to the public. Notice of each meeting must be posted ahead of the meeting along with an agenda. All materials provided to the Committee members must also be made available to the public. The meetings will all be recorded and minutes will be written. All of those things will be done by staff on behalf of the Committee.

A quorum consisting of a majority of the Committee members must be present in order to take any action. If a quorum is not reached, no decisions can be made by the body; there could be general discussion, but the meeting would not be counted as an official meeting.

Mr. Stannert informed the Committee that some things most would not consider to be a meeting may in fact qualify as a meeting under the Open Public Meetings Act. Any environment where the majority of the Committee members are present and participating in a discussion of the business of the Committee counts as a meeting and can run afoul

of the Act if the meeting was not noticed, does not have a published agenda, and results in no minutes being written. The law was written prior to the advent of email and electronic communications. Nonetheless, the courts have ruled that dialog involving a majority of the members of a body counts as a public meeting. There will undoubtedly be emails sent out to members of the Committee, and the members need to be very careful in replying; by replying to all or by replying with an action-oriented statement, a member could inadvertently fall under the definition of a meeting. The best practice is to always reply directly to the person sending the email.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Lampe, Mr. Stannert explained that if four members of the body were to hold a conversation, the definition of meeting would not be met. But if one person who participated in the conversation subsequently holds a conversation with two more members, the definition of meeting will have been tripped. The answer is to hold all discussions within the forum of a scheduled Committee meeting. The Act is not violated by having a quorum of Committee members together in the same room, rather in what is talked about.

Mr. Stannert said the Public Records Act also applies to the work of the Committee. One requirement of the Act is the assigning of one individual to represent the group so that the public in seeking records will have only a single person to contact. Mr. Stannert said for purposes of the Committee, he is that person. The Act was passed in 1972 and also predates electronic communications; even so, it applies to all information created in the course of doing business related to the Committee. The Act broadly defines as a public record anything that is recorded, anything that is created, and any writing regardless of format. The public has the right to request any public record, and staff will coordinate with the members in making sure records are kept in accordance with the Act.

Mr. Stannert stressed that all electronic communications, including texts, emails and handwritten notes pertaining to the business of the Committee, along with pictures taken during site visits, are public records under the Act and can be requested by the public. The staff are working to create an email account for the Committee, and to be safe any email sent by a member on a topic of business before the Committee should include the Committee's email address. That way the staff can maintain and manage all emails as public records.

There are monetary consequences involved in not complying with the Public Records Act. The courts have made rulings imposing penalties for failure to comply as high as \$100 per day per document not disclosed where malicious intent is involved.

Mr. Stannert said many of the records that will be created will have historic value, thus the city will need to preserve those records and provide them to the Washington State Archives. Other records, however, will not need to be kept at all. Records with no retention value include things created only for personal value; they include notes taken during meetings, and documents and emails pertaining to administrative functions, such as meeting scheduling. Anything relating to the conduct of the meetings, what is being developed or produced as a recommendation to the Council will have a permanent retention value, including email communications that contain information about business before the Committee. The Committee members were urged to make every effort to keep all communications related to the work of the body at the meetings, and to keep staff in the loop for all emails.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Thurston, Mr. Stannert said the black and white version is that where there are no communications at all, the Public Open Meetings Act will not be violated. Where there are conversations between members where a quorum is present, the conversations should occur at a scheduled meeting. The gray area lies in between. Conversations among members in person or electronically are allowed provided the chain of persons involved does not exceed a quorum of the group. To be safe all emails should be cc'd to the Committee email address the staff are setting up.

Ms. Unger asked if any member of the public requesting to see the emails from Committee members would be provided with only the content or if they would be able to see the email address of the senders. Mr. Stannert said it would be the latter and suggested it might be a good idea to set up a separate email account to use for conducting the business of the Committee.

Mr. Kattermann pointed out that the contact information for the Committee members is retained for use by the staff but is not published information. He pointed out that he had provided the members with a three-page summary of board, commission, committee and task force protocols.

There was agreement to move up on the agenda the election of chair and vice-chair.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Mr. Kattermann informed the Committee that the chair and vice-chair were to be selected by the Committee, would be full voting members, and would serve for the life of the Committee. The responsibility of the chair is to run the meetings, provide neutral facilitation, and assuring adherence to the operating guidelines. The chair should encourage active participation by all Committee members and on occasion will be asked to make presentations to the Council or other boards and commissions in concert with staff. The role of the vice-chair is to assist in carrying out the chair's duties and to act as chair in the absence of the chair. The role of the members is to attend all meetings, making sure to inform staff when they are not able to attend a meeting, and to attend special outreach events.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Lampe, Mr. Kattermann said the anticipated life of the Committee is one year, though it may run longer and may require more than one meeting per month.

The election was conducted by secret ballot. Mr. Lampe was elected to serve as chair and Mr. Breiland was elected to serve as vice-chair.

3. COMMITTEE PROCEDURES (Continued)

B. Committee Charge/Operating Guidelines

Mr. Kattermann pointed out that printed copies of the Committee charge, as established by the City Council, were included in the project notebooks. He said the Committee is to provide guidance to the staff and the consultant in developing a plan; to engage the community in the process; to identify and prioritize strategies that will help to enhance the community and integrate the station into the area; to seek to optimize access to and

from the station by pedestrians, bicycles and transit patrons; to support the land use vision in the Comprehensive Plan; and to consider redevelopment only on the properties to the east of 112th Avenue SE. The work of the Committee will not include the light rail station itself, any ancillary facilities, the tracks, the alignment, the portal, construction issues, noise and visual impact mitigation, or anything on property owned by Sound Transit. The Committee is to focus on the areas within a quarter to half a mile of the station, except the park issue is being addressed by the Parks and Community Services Board.

Mr. Kattermann said what typically works best for advisory bodies is not taking a lot of formal votes. Other than electing the chair and vice-chair, and approving the final recommendation, the Committee should to the extent possible operate by consensus. It should be left to the chair to determine where a formal vote would be appropriate.

The final recommendation of the Committee will be transmitted to the City Council, though the land use issues will end up before the Planning Commission, and the transportation issues will be directed to the Transportation Commission.

5. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. East Link

The consensus of the Committee was not to take the time to watch an animation showing the entire East Link light rail line.

B. Project Objectives

Mr. Kattermann informed the Committee members that the project objectives were included in the project notebooks. The guiding principles were approved by the Council and apply to the station area planning work to be done for all six of the stations in Bellevue.

Answering a question asked by Ms. Unger, Ms. March said the 90 percent plans for the South Bellevue station and the area along 112th Avenue SE to SE 4th Street will be available in November. The 90 percent plans for the East Main station will not be available until the spring of 2015.

Mr. Kattermann stressed that the Committee is to establish a clear vision by having a sense of ownership and engaging the community. He proposed combining the October 28 Committee meeting with a public workshop or open house to begin the visioning process that will establish the work program for the Committee. The Committee is to take advantage of the investment in light rail for other community enhancements; to consider station connections; and is to adhere to the principles of universal design, which came out of the Light Rail Best Practices study. The Committee is also to focus on preserving community character and context-sensitive designs. Land use changes will be considered for the east side of 112th Avenue SE, including a mix of housing and other uses, a higher urban scale, pedestrian orientation, and integration with the station and the neighborhood.

C. Issues, Work Program and Schedule

Mr. Kattermann said the four major issues that will be addressed by the Committee are neighborhood access and concerns about cut-through traffic; hide and ride parking in the neighborhood; pedestrian/bicycle/transit connections to the station; and the redevelopment potential on the east side of 112th Avenue SE. Other issues will be addressed as they arise.

It was noted that the work program is based on a one-year timeframe with monthly meetings and breaks in December and August. The schedule calls for visioning and scoping during the fall months; conducting analysis and developing concepts over the winter; refining the concepts in the spring; and final refinements and development of a final report in the summer for approval in September.

Answering a question asked by Ms. Unger, Mr. Kattermann explained that the work of the Committee will be done without giving consideration to budget issues. If the Committee believes a sidewalk or other amenity is needed, it should make that recommendation without regard for cost. Any recommendations involving capital projects or programs will eventually work their way through the city's budgeting process. Only projects in the plan will be considered for implementation.

D. Public Outreach

Ms. March said public outreach will be critical to the success of the Committee. She said her role is to help make connections with members of the public, to help organize events, and to provide the Committee with feedback. She said a project website has been set up and that she would be its prime keeper along with the project email address. She said she would appreciate having effort put into sharing information about the Committee meetings with the public, and being kept informed of any community events.

Bellevue High School is a unique element of the neighborhood. It lies within a half mile of the station and presents an opportunity to engage with the students in interesting and exciting ways. Sammamish High School students were recently actively involved in the station area planning effort around the hospital station and it was refreshing to see their plans for the future.

Ms. March said an opportunity for comments from the public will be provided at every Committee meeting. She stated that it could occur at both the beginning and end of each meeting, or just at the end, at the direction of the Committee. There was consensus to include the opportunity at the beginning and end of each meeting, and to limit individual comments to three minutes and to allow up to five minutes for comments from those representing official organizations.

There was agreement to have the Committee's meeting on October 28 last only about an hour and follow it up with a public workshop.

Mr. Kattermann said the Committee can expect to hear comments from the public about elements that are outside the scope of the Committee's purview. The chair can allow the comments or not at his discretion. All comments, on topic or not, will be collected by the staff and where appropriate will be passed along to the correct group.

Mr. Kattermann reviewed with the Committee members other materials contained in the project notebooks, including the policies that came out of the best practices report that

are related to station area planning; a map showing all six stations in the city and the areas identified as appropriate for transit-oriented development; an advisory document developed by the East Link Permitting CAC to set the context for each of the stations for the benefit of Sound Transit; the Southwest Bellevue subarea plan; related East Link materials, including information on the project from Sound Transit; the Light Rail Best Practices report along with a disk containing the appendices associated with the report; the public outreach plan approved by the Council for station area planning overall; and consultant products and draft reports.

6. REMARKS FROM MAYOR BALDUCCI

Mayor Balducci thanked the Committee members for their willingness to share their time and experience on behalf of the community. She said the work of the Committee will be vitally important. Everyone appointed to serve on the Committee clearly cares deeply about the issues. The Council has confidence in and supports the Committee. There will be a myriad of issues raised and addressed, not the least of which is the desire of the neighborhood to retain its look and feel and quality of life, and what the station area should look like when all is said and done.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

8. REVIEW AND APPROVE COMMITTEE CALENDAR

Official action was not taken to approve the calendar.

9. OTHER BUSINESS/QUESTIONS - None

10. ADJOURN

Chair Lampe adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m.