

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

October 28, 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,
Danny Rogers, Pamela Unger

MEMBERS ABSENT: Alexander Strunkin, Bill Thurston

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Kattermann, Department of Planning and
Community Development; Andrew Kidde,
Mediation Program Manager

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER, APPROVAL OF AGENDA, APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Lampe called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

There was agreement to reverse agenda items 3 and 4.

A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Mr. Breiland. The motion was seconded by Mr. Long and it carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the September 23, 2014, meeting minutes was made by Mr. Long. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hammond and it carried unanimously.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

Chair Lampe took a moment to make sure everyone was aware of the fact that he also serves as chair of the Transportation Commission. He said he was not aware of any conflict of interest.

Senior Planner Mike Kattermann disclosed that he is a member and an officer of the Bellevue First Congregational Church which recently sold its property at NE 8th Street and 108th Avenue NE and will be moving to 11061 NE 2nd Street. He said nothing the Committee will deal with should directly affect the church's new property.

3. "POSITIONS v. INTERESTS"

Mediation program manager Andrew Kidde explained that his team of volunteers mediate neighbor-to-neighbor disputes. He said he does a lot of training and a certain amount of facilitation. The program is evidence of the commitment the city of Bellevue

puts into its neighborhoods.

Mr. Kidde explained that "positions" are the solutions people come up with when first approaching a problem, while "interests" are the reasons people want what they believe will solve a problem. By focusing on interests rather than positions, people are much more likely to be able to reconcile with the interests of someone else. A focus on positions has each person saying what will solve the problem for them personally. Positions make people feel powerful because they involve apparent solutions and self-advocating. Interests, on the other hand, can make people feel like they are revealing too much about themselves. While that may be true in negotiating with a car salesman, it is not true when talking about designing a solution to a problem.

Neighbor A comes up to Neighbor B and he is annoyed with a history of things. He tells Neighbor B in no uncertain terms to cut down an offending tree. Neighbor B, however, likes the tree and does not want to cut it down. Their positions are at odds, but what their interests are is unknown. Neighbor A may want more light in his yard, may be tired of raking the leaves that fall from the tree, may be thinking the tree is a hazard to his family, or may be bemoaning the loss of a view he used to have before the tree grew tall. Neighbor B may have several interests both related and unrelated to the tree that could be helpful. He may want to keep the tree healthy and may see the benefits of keeping it pruned, which may dovetail nicely with allowing more light into the yard of Neighbor A. Neighbor B may have a teenage son willing to rake the leaves for a fee. Neighbor B may want to avoid a conflict with Neighbor A, and most certainly he would be interested in avoiding any liability from a falling branch. At the interests level are all sorts of things that dovetail, none of which are apparent at the positions level.

In tying the principles of mediation to planning, Mr. Kidde offered the Committee a fictional scenario that he said was loosely based on situations he has encountered over the years. In the scenario a commercial area called Cedar Glen can be termed neighborhood blight. There is an abandoned gas station, a vacant strip mall that rival gangs have been tagging, and a patch of swampy forest behind it. The residents of the charming single family neighborhood that borders the area drive by the area quickly. A development company recently bought the property and announced its intention to develop it; their spokesman came to a neighborhood meeting with glossy photos of other mixed use developments they had done that included stores, offices, open space and apartments. A neighborhood coalition formed, however, upset about the proposed level of density and claimed that the development would bring traffic, crime and declining property values.

Mr. Kidde explained that the stakeholder is the residents, and their position is "Don't do it, it will ruin the neighborhood." Their interest is safety, property values, and maintaining and enhancing the livability of their community. Interests are almost always framed as positive things people want; rather than "free from crime," the interest is "safety."

Continuing to explain the scenario, Mr. Kidde said the local branch of the Sierra Club steps forward with a claim that the soggy ground behind the development is actually

prime wetland and habitat for endangered migratory birds. They demand that the city consider the fate of the species in its Environmental Impact Statement. The stakeholder there is actually the environmentalists, and their position is "study." Their interests lie in protecting the birds and the wetland.

The city has been getting pressure from housing advocacy groups. The planning director has stated that the city may require the developer to build 15 percent of the new housing units as "low-income." The stakeholders involve a complex layer of groups, including the city, the housing advocacy groups, and those actually in need of low-income housing. Their collective position is "include housing in this project," and their interest is the need to provide housing for those in the community.

The developer now states he may back out. Given the long list of requirements, the developer is concerned the development may not be profitable, and the property may need to be sold. The residents are concerned that the eyesore will remain. The stakeholder is the developer. The position is "We'll pull out and you can live with your blight." The interest is reasonable profit, though developers also often look to produce good products that will enhance their reputation.

In all there are multiple stakeholders, multiple positions, and multiple interests. The discussion could, however, begin with a problem statement: "Can the property be developed in a way that will enhance the livability of the adjacent neighborhood, preserve the wetland, include affordable housing, provide a wholesome activity center for teens, and returns an acceptable level of profit for the development?"

Mr. Kidde suggested that while ambitious, planning should begin by asking big questions like that. The implementation of best practices would suggest that all stakeholders should be included, not just those who could do an end run around the project and stop it at the end but those who are not able to represent themselves, including future generations, homeless persons, and teenagers. The main job of the Committee is to represent the interests of the people who appointed the Committee members.

Mr. D'Agnone said the station area planning process is unique in that the stakeholders are in fact those who will live there in the future. The project will hopefully be in place for a hundred years. Mr. Kidde agreed and said it is the job of every Committee member to represent a broad set of interests.

Ms. Hammond commented that some in the community believe the light rail project and the stations it will require will create blight, not take it away. Some believe the system will greatly enhance the city, and others believe it will degrade the city. She stressed the need to get to a full understanding of what the interests are, including the interests of those who believe the project was forced on the city.

Mr. Kidde said at the heart of it is all is the need of human beings to feel they are being listened to and that their positions are appreciated and respected. It may be that there are people in the community who believe they have not gotten that.

Chair Lampe said one step toward that end will be to make it clear to those who offer comments during the open house that they will be taken seriously.

Mr. Kattermann said what will be a long process is just beginning. The Committee members will be hearing from a lot of different stakeholders, and what most likely will be stated will be positions as opposed to interests. He urged the Committee members to zero in on the interests so that a plan can be developed to address as many of those interests as possible through the process.

4. DEBRIEF FROM TOUR

Mr. Long said he has been following the light rail issue for some time. He said from a property operations standpoint, he is pleased a plan has been formulated for getting light rail in Bellevue. The project, however, will clearly impact many along the route. He said it was truly helpful to see firsthand the lay of the land and how some will be impacted.

Mr. King said he was struck by how many indirect implications there might be, from lighting to sidewalks and trails to parking in the neighborhoods. It must be acknowledged that Surrey Downs residents have a much different perspective that will need to be considered and accommodated to the extent possible.

Mr. Breiland said the tour helped him better understand the size of the parcels on either side of 112th Avenue SE and the general lay of the land.

Ms. Hammond said she is a Surrey Downs resident but her property is on the west side toward the north end of the neighborhood, a location that will not see as many impacts. She said she has been concerned about those living along 111th Avenue SE. The tour and the conversations about what the Committee can and cannot influence have been helpful.

Chair Lampe said he also is a Surrey Downs resident and found the tour very helpful in understanding the limited access there will be to the station under the current plans. It will be important to try to answer the question of what is appropriate. He said it was eye opening to learn there are buildings along 114th Avenue SE that are literally constructed across Sturtevant Creek.

Ms. Powell said she lives in the Bellecrest neighborhood which has 108th Avenue SE as its western border. She said hopefully the high school kids will be using light rail to get to and from school, or to and from Seattle to participate in programs, classes or activities. The tour did not touch much on the ADA requirements. As Surrey Downs residents age in place, ADA access within the neighborhood will be important.

Mr. King commented that access to the station from Surrey Downs will either be from the little park on the corner or from going around 110th Avenue SE to Main Street to SE 3rd Street and 112th Avenue SE. Good access through the park will require good lighting

and security. The park itself will need to be integrated into the issue of access to the station.

Ms. Hammond said she absolutely agreed but pointed out the need to keep the homes by the park from having light shine into them, keeping the residents awake at night.

Chair Lampe commented that there are always unintended consequences. The redevelopment of Bellevue High School has yielded a great facility, but the lighting there is very bright and it impacts the local neighborhood.

Mr. King asked if the question of access from 112th Avenue SE to the station is within the purview of the Committee. Mr. Kattermann said the kiss and ride area is part of the station design itself, but in terms of getting across 112th Avenue SE there will be a crosswalk and a light at the south end of the station; the crosswalk will line up roughly with the main driveway to the Hilton. The closest crossing at the other end will be at Main Street and 112th Avenue SE. Access to the station from the surrounding area is definitely within the purview of the Committee.

Ms. Hammond suggested the Committee should be familiarized with what will be going on between stations that may impact the neighborhood.

Ms. Powell commented that the transit-oriented development area is geographically very large compared to Surrey Downs. The density to be realized should be better understood.

Ms. Hammond said she would like to have a condensed version of what the process is for developing a site like where the Red Lion is. She pointed out that most members of the Committee are not builders and developers. Mr. Kattermann said he would be happy to invite staff from Development Services to address the development and design review processes. He added that the Committee could decide to recommend design standards for what occurs on the site.

Ms. Powell asked what kind of pressure the city is likely to see to upzone Surrey Downs after the East Link project is completed and the transit-oriented development is in place. Mr. Kattermann said there are policies in place that were reinforced through the best practices process. The policies clearly state that the city will not have redevelopment in those single family areas. The caveat is that policies can be changed, though the process is not an easy one and involves Comprehensive Plan review and amendment, which in turn is followed by the rezone process. In all likelihood to realize an upzone of Surrey Downs would require a request from the neighborhood itself.

Mr. Brieland suggested the Committee would also benefit from a debrief on the Downtown Transportation Plan and how it relates to the study area.

****BREAK****

5. REVIEW OF CAC WORK PROGRAM

Mr. Kattermann said the final Committee meeting of 2014 will occur on November 18. He said the agenda for that meeting includes reviewing feedback from the workshop, identifying additional issues for the scope, an initial discussion of the potential land use changes to the east of 112th Avenue SE, and an initial discussion regarding "hide and ride" parking in the neighborhood.

Mr. Kattermann explained that while the vision for the East Main station area planning involves reviewing everything everyone would like to see occur over the long term, the scope is the actual work program that will be undertaken to move things toward addressing the vision. The scope will be finalized at the November 18 meeting. The scope will need to be approved by the Council before it can be handed to the consultant; the hope is the consultant will be on board in January. The approved budget for the entire study totals approximately \$150,000.

The Committee members were told that going forward a single meeting per month is planned. There may be, however, occasions when an extra meeting will need to be scheduled. There will be no meeting in December. The range of the land use parameters will be set at the January meeting, and the discussion regarding parking will continue. The group will also be updated regarding land use and transportation issues that were addressed as part of the Downtown Livability Initiative process, provided that by then the Council will have acted on those recommendations. The Committee will also start its discussion of neighborhood traffic and access, both vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle access.

Mr. Kattermann said a draft report and recommendation from the Committee will be completed in June and will be made the subject of a public hearing. The draft will then be forwarded to the Council for review in July, and will be back before the Committee in September to be finalized.

Answering a question asked by Chair Lampe, Mr. Kattermann said the Committee will identify several concepts and ideas and will put them out at an open house for the public to react to before being refined by the Committee. The public hearing will be more of a formal event where the public will comment on the draft report and recommendations.

Ms. Hammond asked what the process is in the unlikely event that the Council disapproves of the draft report. Mr. Kattermann said that would be completely up to the Council. The Council could send the report back to the Committee with some specific direction; could decide to shelve the report; or could decide to send it to some other body to work out details. Certain elements, such as rezones and land use changes, will by law be carried to the Planning Commission, and some items may need to be reviewed by the Transportation Commission.

Ms. Powell asked if the Committee will in any way integrate with the East Link permitting CAC. Mr. Kattermann said the two groups are moving forward on different time tables and are dealing with different issues. There may be some areas of overlap

and if there are staff will make the connections.

6. OPEN HOUSE OVERVIEW- PURPOSE AND ROLE

Mr. Kattermann said the focus of the open house is on the vision and scope. The idea is to hear what the public has to say. He encouraged the Committee members to mingle, to answer questions when asked, and to not be afraid to direct the public to staff to have specific questions answered. There will be a welcome table where the attendees will receive information about the purpose of the meeting; a table with information about the East Link project generally as well as the station area planning process; and a table at which the public can voice their particular ideas and concerns. Transportation staff will attend to talk about access to the station by pedestrians and vehicles, including what will be changing as a result of the closures on 112th Avenue SE. Mr. Kattermann said at his table the focus will be on the redevelopment potential on the east side of 112th Avenue SE.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

8. ADJOURN

Chair Lampe adjourned the meeting at 5:24 p.m.