



Bellevue Planning Commission

July 28, 2021

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT

Final Review Public Hearing on the DASH Glendale & Evergreen Court Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA)

STAFF CONTACTS

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POLICY ISSUES

Staff recommends approval of the DASH Glendale and Evergreen Court CPA as it would advance Bellevue’s vision of meeting the diverse housing needs of Bellevue’s growing population in an area well served by public transit and other major transportation facilities and in a mixed use area near jobs.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DIRECTION <input type="checkbox"/>	INFORMATION ONLY <input type="checkbox"/>
Request	Summary Guidance	
1. Conduct a Final Review public hearing for the proposed amendment	Direct staff to first review and present the staff recommendation, then open the public hearing and accept public testimony. Close the public hearing.	
2. Conduct a study session following the public hearing to make a recommendation	Review the application, staff recommendation, public record, and testimony. Ask questions of staff, applicants or persons giving testimony; review the proposed resolution.	
3. Take action on a recommendation	The Commission uses a resolution to the City Council for the recommendation action. Direct staff on resolution content.	

Annual CPA proposals are reviewed by the Planning Commission and acted upon by the City Council through the Final Review process set forth in the Land Use Code at [LUC 20.30I](#). Final Review evaluates the merits of proposed amendments included in the annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program. Final Review evaluation and decision includes staff review, a Planning Commission public hearing and recommendation by resolution, and City Council action by ordinance. The Planning Commission holds Final Review public hearings and makes recommendations. The City Council’s subsequent action on those recommendations, which is conveyed by resolution amends the Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

The Final Review Decision Criteria for a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment are set forth in the Land Use Code in Section [20.30I.150](#). Staff’s recommendation for the proposed amendment based on these criteria is summarized below and provided in detail in the full [Staff Report](#) and in Study Session

[materials](#) provided to Commissioners for the July 7 Planning Commission meeting, along with the July 1, 2021 [notice](#) of Final Review public hearings. Such materials may also be requested in print.

Summary Recommendation

Staff recommends approving the DASH Glendale and Evergreen Court proposal to amend the land use map designation of two parcels totaling 7.6 acres in the Wilburton/NE 8th Street Subarea from Multifamily Medium (MF-M) to Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) because it satisfies all Land Use Code [decision criteria for Final Review](#) of a Comprehensive Plan Amendment ([LUC 20.30I.150.](#))

Consistent with Bellevue’s Comprehensive Plan, the proposed amendment would increase Bellevue’s “potential for a broad range of housing choices to meet the changing needs of the community,” and it would “encourage housing opportunities in a mixed residential/commercial setting.” Consistent with the Growth Management Act, the proposal would encourage development in an urban area “where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.” And consistent with King County’s Countywide Planning Policies, the proposal would “plan for housing that is accessible to major employment centers and affordable to the workforce in them, so people of all incomes can live near or within reasonable commuting distance of their places of work.”

The proposal would allow for two to four times the number of housing units on the existing site, thereby helping the city meet its increased need for housing citywide. It would also leverage recent investments in public transit in the surrounding area namely, King County’s RapidRide B Line and Sound Transit’s EastLink light rail. The subject properties could be suitably developed under the potential zoning classifications since the site is surrounded by existing commercial and multifamily uses and since the multifamily transition zone would apply to this property, ensuring a graceful transition between residential and mixed use zones.

Finally, the proposal demonstrates a public benefit and enhances public health, safety and welfare as it increases opportunities for low and moderate income households to live where they can conveniently access jobs, excellent schools and frequent public transportation service, resulting in triple bottom line benefits – benefits to equity, the economy and the environment.

Summary Public Comment

A total of 18 public comments on the proposal from 17 individuals have been received to date, 15 of which have voiced support of the proposal and two of which have expressed concerns. Those in support of the proposal highlighted Bellevue’s need for “permanent affordable housing for working people who help Bellevue thrive and long-time city residents seeking to age in place within their community.” They also note that the two properties are in a multifamily area at the juncture of the BelRed and Wilburton commercial areas, a location well served by transit, services and job opportunities making it “an ideal location for working families and limited mobility residents.”

One person expressed concern over the loss of tree canopy and the impact that would have on air quality. Another person questioned whether the proposal would result in loss of senior housing stating, “affordable housing for all incomes falls short of needed levels in Bellevue. Seniors are especially at risk

because many exist on fixed incomes and are ill-prepared to deal with continuously rising housing prices.”

All public comments received during the Final Review process have been forwarded to the Commission and are available for viewing on the city’s Comprehensive Plan Amendment [webpage](#).

Summary Planning Commission Comment

Planning Commission comments during the previous study session focused on why there were no anticipated impacts to the transportation system given the proposal could result in doubling or quadrupling the number of units on the site, and on how the existing housing shortage represented a significantly changed condition. Previous comments also focused on elements of the proposal that affected affordability, longevity of affordable housing status, and estimates of rent.

Regarding impacts to the transportation system, the transportation analysis performed for this proposal indicated that the proposed increase in density could result in an increase in vehicle trips from approximately 29 pm peak hour trips to 143 pm peak hour trips. However, no impacts would be expected from this increase. Impacts in this case refer to impacts on the adequacy of the transportation system to handle additional trips as measured by the city’s level of service standard defined in [BCC 14.10.030](#). Levels of service consider the average volume to capacity ratio of system intersections within Bellevue’s Mobility Management Areas (MMAs) along with congestion allowances set for each MMA. Since the site is well served by transit, including the RapidRide B Line on NE 8th Street, and the EastLink light rail stations less than one-half mile away scheduled to open in 2023, additional trips generated by the proposal are not anticipated to push average volume to capacity ratios over the maximums allowed. A more specific transportation analysis would be performed when any development proposal is submitted.

Regarding the housing shortage being a significantly changed condition, the third Final Review criterion reads thus, “The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions since the last time the pertinent Comprehensive Plan map or text was amended.” Significantly changed conditions are defined in [LUC 20.50.046](#) as, “Demonstrating evidence of change such as:

- unanticipated consequences of an adopted policy, or
- changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area, or
- changes related to the pertinent plan map or text; where such change has implications of a magnitude that need to be addressed for the Comprehensive Plan to function as an integrated whole.” (bullets added)

The housing shortage in the city, eastside and in King County is both an unintended consequence of adopted policies that permit the county and its jurisdictions to plan for population growth and adopt growth targets based on population projections of past trends that perpetuate the status quo of an imbalanced job to housing ratio, and the shortage is a significantly changed condition of the surrounding area in which the subject property is located. While the condition is not unique to a geographically narrow area, it is nonetheless a significantly changed condition of area surrounding the subject property.

While future proposed comprehensive plan amendments that address the housing shortage may satisfy that one criterion, they must also meet the other four Final Review criteria to be worthy of recommending approval. They must be consistent with major plans, goals and policies of the city; they

must address the interests and changed needs of the entire city; if site specific, their sites must be suitable, and the proposal must conform with adjacent land uses and surrounding development patterns; and finally, proposed amendments must demonstrate a public benefit and enhance the public health, safety and welfare of the City.

Since the Wilburton/NE 8th Street Subarea Plan has not undergone a full update since its adoption in 1981, many conditions of the surrounding area have changed significantly including the condition of the housing market, with a shortage in housing resulting in high escalation of housing prices, and the condition of public transit service, with the increased investment in high frequency services near the subject property.

Regarding affordability, longevity and estimates of rent, the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation provides a 100 percent increase in FAR incentive for affordable housing, which requires affordability to last the lifetime of the project, and rents would be required to be set to no more than [King County's Income and Rent Limits](#) (see updated 2021 rent limits in Attachment D). Detailed responses to Planning Commission comments are available in the [July 7 Study Session materials](#).

AMENDMENT NOTICE

Notice of the application for a 2021 Comprehensive Plan amendment for DASH Glendale and Evergreen Court was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on [May 13](#) and mailed and posted as required by [LUC 20.35.420](#). The amendment was introduced to the Planning Commission during the June 9 Study Session, when information requests were solicited and the Final Review public hearing for July 28 was set. Following Planning Commission's request, staff's recommendation was brought to the Planning Commission on July 7 for additional discussion prior to the public hearing. Notice of the July 28 Final Review public hearing before the Planning Commission was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on [July 1](#) and was sent to parties of record.

Effective community engagement, outreach and public comments in 2021

Applicants, residents and communities are engaging across a variety of media during the 2021 annual plan amendment review process. The city's early and continuous community engagement for this Comprehensive Plan amendment includes:

- ✓ Official Weekly Permit Bulletin notices as required
- ✓ Responding in writing to requests for information and returning phone calls
- ✓ Expanded web page material for Comprehensive Plan Amendments
- ✓ A June 9 Final Review Planning Commission study session
- ✓ A July 7 Final Review Planning Commission study session

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Final Review Decision Criteria
- B. DASH Glendale and Evergreen Court Site Map
- C. Public Comments through 0722_2021
- D. King County 2021 Income and Rent Limits
- E. Planning Commission Final Review Resolution for DASH 2021 CPA