

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

August 1, 2016
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Stokes, Deputy Mayor Chelminiak, and Councilmembers Robertson, Robinson, Slatter, and Wallace

ABSENT: Councilmember Lee

1. Executive Session

At 6:02 p.m., Councilmember Slatter opened the meeting and declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss one item of property acquisition.

The meeting resumed at 6:35 p.m., with Mayor Stokes presiding.

2. Study Session

(a) Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing Project

City Manager Brad Miyake recalled that one of the Council's 2016-2017 priorities is to establish a permanent winter shelter for homeless men. In partnership with King County, the Seattle-King County Public Health Center site in the Eastgate area was identified as a potential shelter location. Mr. Miyake noted that the Eastside Men's Shelter is a joint project of the City, County, Congregations for the Homeless, and Imagine Housing. Staff is seeking Council direction to enter into a non-binding Letter of Agreement with King County to further evaluate siting a men's shelter and supportive permanent housing facility in Bellevue.

Camron Parker, Senior Planner, noted that Steve Roberts, Congregations for the Homeless; Sybil Glasby, Imagine Housing; Arthur Sullivan, A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH); and Emily Leslie, the City's Human Services Manager were in the audience, as well as others from the community who have worked on this initiative. Mr. Parker said the Bellevue Police Department has helped the project team to understand relevant issues as well.

Mr. Parker said there is a strong policy basis for supporting the Eastside Men's Shelter. The goal is reflected in the 2016-2017 Council Vision priorities, 2015 updated Comprehensive Plan policies, 2015 Interest Statement on Homelessness, and the 2014 Bellevue Diversity Advantage Action Plan.

Mr. Parker reported that 1,200 homeless persons were served in Eastside shelters last year, including 78 men in the year-round shelter and 571 men in the winter shelter. During the 2016 official Eastside count, 245 individuals were identified to be sleeping outside. The Bellevue School District has 252 children enrolled in its homeless student program. Bellevue Police and park rangers report an average of 10 unpermitted encampments in parks/open spaces or the right-of-way. In 2016, 50 vehicles were being used for housing, which is an increase from 30 identified the previous year.

Bellevue's response to homelessness has been largely community driven through the efforts of Congregations for the Homeless, Hopelink, Friends of Youth, Lifewire, The Sophia Way, and Imagine Housing, and through collaboration with King County and neighboring cities. The Eastside winter shelter has been sponsored in Bellevue for several years at the Crossroads Community Center from 2008-2011, St. Peter's United Methodist Church from 2011-2013, and the International Paper facility in the BelRed corridor from 2013-2015.

Mr. Parker said the proposed men's emergency shelter will have approximately 100 beds with a drop-in day center and cafeteria. Complementary associated services will include medical and health services, case management, and employment support. A service-enriched permanent housing component is included in the project. Mr. Parker described a shelter visited by staff in Tacoma, Nativity House, which has sleeping cubicles, a large day center, and supported housing on site.

Planning Director Dan Stroh described the proposed shelter on the Eastgate Public Health Center site between Bellevue College and I-90. The site has good transit access with the largest Park and Ride in the county next door and existing public health services. He recalled that the Council adopted Land Use Code Amendments last year to enable transit-oriented development (TOD) in the area. Mr. Stroh described two site layout options, both of which are challenging but feasible. The site provides the potential for permanent supportive housing as well as the emergency shelter.

Mr. Stroh said the project will require funding from a number of sources. Initial ARCH funding was provided in 2015, and additional funds are anticipated in 2017. Other resources include the King County Housing Finance program, State capital budget, State Department of Commerce grants (2016 and 2018), State Housing Fund, tax credits, and a private capital campaign.

Mr. Stroh said staff is seeking Council feedback on the proposed letter of agreement recognizing a mutual interest in establishing a partnership to develop a shelter, supportive services, and permanent housing. The letter does not represent a final decision about the specific project but demonstrates an intent to work together. The City, County and development team will negotiate an agreement for the use of the property, and the City will process code amendments consistent with the Eastgate Comprehensive Plan. The City, County, ARCH and the development partner will collaborate on the funding and program strategy, and the City will lead community outreach efforts.

Mike McCormick Huentelman, Neighborhood Outreach Manager, said the project partnership includes Congregations for the Homeless and Imagine Housing. The project team understands the need for a robust outreach process, which is beginning with surrounding businesses and residents and will continue through August. A web site has been established, and a community meeting is anticipated in September.

Mr. McCormick Huentelman said Congregations for the Homeless wants to create a community stakeholder group as its ongoing advisory group to address facility design and program operations issues. The goal is to begin operation of the emergency shelter by winter 2019.

Mr. Parker said the next steps, if the Council chooses to move forward with the letter of agreement, are to continue community engagement efforts, proceed with the Congregations for the Homeless grant applications, and to work with King County and others on the site and facility design.

Responding to Mayor Stokes, Mr. Parker said the letter of agreement reflects a six-month process leading to a decision regarding the property conveyance on behalf of King County during the first quarter of 2017. Mr. Parker confirmed that a number of sites were evaluated, and the Eastgate site was identified as the best candidate for further analysis.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak said this has been high priority for the City and there has been an extensive review of several locations. The Eastgate site has the advantage of collocating with service providers and transit in an area experiencing redevelopment, with the opportunity for integrating new uses. He said the City and the public will need to understand the operational aspects, coordination of City departments and services, and partnerships with other agencies and community organizations as the project moves forward. Mr. Chelminiak said policy decisions might be needed by the Council. He noted the importance of serving the homeless while helping to move them out of homelessness. The project is an Eastside solution to an Eastside need. He said the cities of Issaquah, Kirkland, and Redmond provide shelter facilities as well. He said residents are often not aware of existing shelters in neighborhoods.

Mr. Chelminiak said there will be individuals in the community who will not like a particular site and fears and concerns must be addressed. He said Bellevue has been hosting a winter to six-month shelter for men. However, there is a need for a permanent shelter and permanent supportive housing to move people out of homelessness.

Councilmember Robinson said she served on the Parks and Community Services Board when the City sited the first emergency winter shelter at Crossroads Community Center. She said the homeless are part of our community and this project is not charity but provides a service for everyone in the community. She said the Eastgate site is well located near transit, public health services, education, and retail services. She hopes to see strong mental health services, work training programs, potential partnerships with Bellevue College, and community volunteer opportunities. Ms. Robinson expressed support for entering into the letter of agreement.

Councilmember Robertson concurred with her colleagues' comments about collocating the shelter with transit, services, and permanent supportive housing. She said the new temporary winter shelter will be located at Lincoln Center, and she questioned whether this site was evaluated as a permanent location. While she supports moving forward with the letter of agreement, she would like an analysis of Lincoln Center as a possible site.

Ms. Robertson said the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use Code Amendment was on the Planning Commission's agenda last week. She was the Council liaison to the Eastgate/I-90 Citizen Advisory Committee, and she said she did not recall any discussion at that time about a homeless shelter. She questioned whether the CAC addressed this in developing its recommendations.

Mr. Stroh said the site was not previously discussed with the Planning Commission as a potential shelter location because the City was in preliminary discussions with King County. Under the current code, the shelter permit would be approved. He said the Planning Commission has discussed the advantage of placing shelters near transit and other services. The Commission identified shelters as an administrative conditional use under the new Eastgate plan. Mr. Stroh said the Commission completed its review of the Eastgate plan and will forward its recommendations to the Council this fall.

Councilmember Robertson suggested that the stakeholder briefings continue beyond August because the Council, Boards and Commissions, and many residents take vacation during that time. She suggested that public outreach extend beyond businesses and local residents to transit users, Bellevue College representatives, and property owners who will potentially be involved in redevelopment. She would like to see an evaluation on how siting a homeless shelter at the proposed location would impact, if at all, realizing the redevelopment vision for the Eastgate and I-90 corridor. Ms. Robertson recalled discussion about siting a permanent shelter in the Spring District, which raised concerns about how the shelter might impact the full development of the BelRed vision.

Ms. Robertson reiterated her interest in an evaluation of the Lincoln Center and Eastgate sites, as well as thorough community outreach. She expressed support for the letter of agreement.

Councilmember Slatter expressed support for entering into the letter of agreement. She said this is a regional effort of multiple entities to address issues that affect a number of cities. She thanked the partners involved in this effort. She concurred with the need for extending community outreach beyond August, including through online information and outreach. She observed that this looks like the beginning of a conversation. She supports the service-supported components of the project.

Councilmember Wallace expressed support for moving forward with the letter of agreement. He wants to ensure a focus on goals and issues directly related to homelessness. He thanked the Congregations for the Homeless organization for the services it has provided on the Eastside for many years. He suggested a study of best practices for siting similar facilities and for identifying and mitigating the impacts to surrounding development. He said it is important to ensure that everyone in the community is safe and comfortable with the new use and location.

Mayor Stokes concurred with the Council's comments. He observed that this is an opportunity to do something extraordinary to address housing and homelessness in a way that is compatible with the community. He said it is important to provide a place where individuals can feel good about where they are and their potential for moving out of homelessness. He said there has been a long, thoughtful process to evaluate possible sites and to establish a collaborative effort with regional partners.

Mayor Stokes invited King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci to comment on the project. Ms. Balducci thanked City and County staff, Congregations for the Homeless, and other partners for their hard work to date. She said this is a first and important step to initiate public conversation about the permanent shelter. She recently visited the Eastgate Public Health Center and learned about their need for more space, staffing, and other resources. She said the letter of agreement allows the partners to move forward to address the many issues and elements involved in planning the shelter facility. She looks forward to continuing to work with the City in her role on the King County Council.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak noted the memo in the Council's desk packet proposing a minor revision to the letter of agreement. The revision better conveys that the City is not being asked to pre-determine a legislative outcome on the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use Code update.

→ Deputy Mayor Chelminiak moved to authorize the City Manager to enter into a non-binding Letter of Agreement with King County to further evaluate siting a men's shelter and supportive permanent housing facility on property owned by King County, adjacent to the Eastgate Public Health Clinic and the Eastgate Park and Ride facility. Councilmember Slatter seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

(b) Critical Areas Overlay Update for consistency with the Growth Management Act requirement of jurisdictions' planning under RCW 36.70A.040.

City Manager Miyake recalled that the City updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2015, and is now required to update development regulations to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and with the State Growth Management Act. This requires the update of the Critical Areas Code to maintain the City's eligibility for State grant funding. Mr. Miyake said staff is seeking Council direction to draft a narrowly tailored code amendment focused on the sole purpose of maintaining compliance with the City's development regulations and with GMA, and to direct that the City hold a public hearing to complete the mandated Critical Areas Ordinance update as soon as possible.

Mike Brennan, Director of the Development Services Department (DSD), said staff recommends moving forward as quickly and efficiently as possible to maintain the ability to apply for grants. He noted the Planning Commission's efforts to complete the Downtown Livability work and to establish recommendations regarding low impact development regulations.

Carol Helland, Land Use Division Director, said the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.130) requires a review and update of the Comprehensive Plan (Adopted in 2015) and a review of regulations for consistency with State law. In May 2016, the Council adopted Resolution No. 9094 affirming consistency with the Growth Management Act in development regulations, with the exception of critical areas regulations.

Ms. Helland said the basis for updating the Critical Areas Code is to comply with State and local interests in maintaining the Growth Management Act, which ensures that communities are protecting environmental resources in a consistent manner statewide based on a current understanding of the relevant science. The State uses grant funding eligibility as the mechanism to encourage jurisdictions to meet the GMA consistency requirement.

Ms. Helland said a consultant was hired following the Council's approval of Resolution No. 9094 to complete the review of best available science and the existing conditions report. The City's updated Comprehensive Plan will be compared to best available science, the existing conditions report, and GMA requirements to identify the necessary Critical Areas Ordinance amendments.

Ms. Helland said preliminary findings indicate that the City will need to draft consistency amendments identifying critical aquifer recharge areas and aligning the City's list of species with local importance with the State's protected species list. The latter will eliminate certain species currently regulated as protected. Revisions related to the Hilltop annexation are anticipated as well. She reiterated that the amendments will be narrowly tailored to comply with state law and to maintain the City's eligibility for grant funding.

Ms. Helland said next steps will be drafting of the code based on the consultant's analysis, public outreach into September, preparing staff's recommendation, and presenting the code update to the City Council during a Study Session. Ms. Helland said staff recommends that the City Council hold the public hearing due to the Planning Commission's full docket, and due to the fact that the amendments are primarily mandated by state law and not subject to the City's discretion. A public hearing will be held before the East Bellevue Community Council as well prior to its approval or disapproval regarding the application of the amendments within the EBCC jurisdiction.

Councilmember Robertson recalled that the Shoreline Management Program (SMP) was transmitted to the State Department of Ecology last year. She said shoreline properties are currently regulated under the City's Critical Areas Ordinance, and she questioned how the two processes relate to each other. Ms. Helland said staff anticipates adoption of the SMP by the DOE later this year. She said critical areas within shorelines are required to be regulated in the same way as critical areas outside of shorelines, which provides the opportunity for the City to align the two processes. Ms. Helland said both sets of regulations will ultimately be approved by the DOE as a package.

Councilmember Robertson said she supports holding the public hearing before the City Council. Going forward, she wants to be sure to understand how the Critical Areas Ordinance amendments comply with the DOE's approval of the SMP.

Responding to Ms. Robertson, Ms. Helland said Bellevue has a number of City-owned wells as well as privately owned wells in the Hilltop area. Before annexation, King County did not identify the Hilltop well system as a critical aquifer recharge area. The City's plan is to demonstrate that the circumstances have not changed as a result of annexation, and to propose identifying the State's wellhead protection plan as the appropriate mechanism for governing critical aquifer recharge areas in Bellevue.

Ms. Robertson wants to understand which amendments are mandatory and which are optional for the Council's discretion. She expressed interest in a practical analysis of how proposed changes affect individual property owners. She supports a narrowly tailored update but will want sufficient information to fully address the proposed amendments.

Councilmember Wallace questioned whether the DOE would consider extending the deadline for the update and continue to maintain the City's eligibility for grants. Ms. Helland said staff is demonstrating positive progress and has not lost any grants to date. The City has completed the best available science analysis and the gap analysis. City staff is in the process of discussing grant eligibility with the State. She said 23 of 39 jurisdictions are in the same position as Bellevue.

Responding to Mr. Wallace, Ms. Helland said the City submitted the Shoreline Management Program to the State DOE in 2015. Mr. Wallace expressed concern about the State's delay in reviewing the City's SMP package. He recalled that DOE staff made comments on the City's proposal before it was adopted by the City Council and transmitted to the agency. Mr. Wallace questioned the expectation that the City address critical areas regulations in a timely manner while it is still waiting for the SMP to be reviewed.

Ms. Helland said the State Department of Commerce reviews the City's Comprehensive Plan updates and the consistency of regulations with the Growth Management Act. She said the DOE has had staff turnover, and the City's submittal to the DOE consists of 23 boxes of documentation that were transmitted later in 2015. Ms. Helland said certain lakeshore property owners asked the City to delay public hearings to the fall.

Mr. Brennan said staff is in regular conversations with DOE staff to move the SMP review forward. Separately, the City is required to comply with GMA requirements involving the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations. He said that, if there are elements that arise during conversations about the critical areas update, they can be incorporated into a future work plan if desired by the Council.

Councilmember Wallace said the State's review timeline is frustrating because the City Council, Planning Commission, and staff have heavy workloads related to a number of issues of interest to residents. Mr. Wallace would like the City to seek assurance from the DOE that the review

will be completed. Given the State's delay and the Council's workload, he is not eager to pursue the critical areas update at this time if it is not absolutely necessary.

Responding to Mayor Stokes, Mr. Brennan said staff is designing the update with a narrow scope to expedite the City's effort and adoption. He said staff is mindful of the potential for jeopardizing the City's eligibility for grant funding.

Noting concerns from Councilmembers regarding the timing and complexity of the two processes, City Manager Miyake suggested that staff provide frequent status updates to the Council to monitor the threat of losing grant funding.

Councilmember Robertson said that, if the update starts looking more complicated, she reserves the right to recommend sending the matter to the Planning Commission. She said the Council's workload does not allow extensive study of this new initiative. However, she is willing to start with the intention of a streamlined update to be expedited by staff and the Council.

Mayor Stokes concurred with Ms. Robertson, while noting that the Planning Commission's workload is heavy as well.

→ Deputy Mayor Chelminiak moved that the Council direct staff to conduct a narrowly tailored code amendment to the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO), aimed at maintaining the City's development requirements under the Growth Management Act, and to advance the code package to the City Council for a public hearing. This process path is necessary in order to accomplish the State-mandated CAO update as quickly as possible to maintain grant eligibility. Councilmember Robertson seconded the motion.

Mr. Chelminiak said the update process needs to provide for public involvement and to be narrow and aimed at compliance with State law. It will be important to be able to demonstrate how any required amendments will affect individual property owners.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

3. Civic Services Fleet Top Rankings [*Regular Session Item 6(a), City Manager's Report*]

City Manager Miyake introduced staff to announce two awards recognizing the performance of the City's Fleet Communications division.

Laurie Leland, Civic Services Assistant Director, said the City has made significant investments in fleet equipment and services. The City's fleet has been ranked 7th of the 100 best fleets in North America, and was previously ranked at number 12. The award is sponsored by the National Association of Fleet Administrators and is given to agencies demonstrating a commitment to providing high-quality equipment, competitive pricing, and strong maintenance service in an efficient and environmentally responsible manner. Within the category of mid-sized fleets, Bellevue was ranked as number 1 by the American Public Works Association. Ms. Leland noted that there are more than 40,000 government fleets in North America.

Ms. Leland introduced the Fleet and Communications management team: Pat Spencer, Demitri Bergeron, Sean Pownall, and Tom Wall.

Mayor Stokes thanked everyone for their hard work.

At 7:56 p.m., Mayor Stokes declared recess to the Regular Session.

Kyle Stannert, CMC
City Clerk

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