

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

March 13, 2017
6:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-113
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: Councilmember Lee

1. Executive Session

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m., and declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 45 minutes to discuss two items of potential litigation. He noted that the second item was added after the meeting agenda was published.

At 6:50 p.m., City Clerk Kyle Stannert said the Executive Session would be extended by 20 minutes. At 7:08 p.m., Deputy Mayor Chelminiak announced the extension of the Executive Session for an additional 15 minutes.

The meeting resumed at 7:35 p.m., with Mayor Stokes presiding.

2. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Chelminiak moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Robinson seconded the motion.

→ The motion to approve the agenda carried by a vote of 5-0.

3. Oral Communications

- (a) Steve Kasner commented on the vacant Council seat. He noted that a number of neighborhoods have voiced their support for one of the candidates. While he does not support that person, Mr. Kasner said he could support four of the eight candidates. He said he is frustrated with the amount of time the Council is spending to appoint a Councilmember. Mr. Kasner urged the Council to direct staff to move forward to update the neighborhood subarea plans. He suggested that a person with a transportation

background would be a good addition to the Council, and three of the candidates have that experience. Mr. Kasner thanked Councilmembers for their work in a difficult job.

- (b) Ishan Chaudhuri said he recently moved to Bellevue and he is an avid cyclist. He expressed support for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative to expand cycling infrastructure. He believes that more people would use bikes if they felt safer. He noted that bike paths and protected bike lanes would improve safety.
- (c) Adron Hall, a Redmond resident, said he does business in Bellevue and frequently rides his bike here to do so. He looks forward to the expansion of the bicycle network and enhanced cycling safety. He expressed support for pedestrian and bicycle projects.
- (d) Vicky Clarke, East King County Policy Manager, Cascade Bicycle Club, expressed her ongoing support for continued improvements to Bellevue's bike network.
- (e) Lara Litov said she and her family have been working with the homeless over the past 25 years. She urged the Council to hire an expert, independent consultant to study the development of a homeless shelter and permanent housing in Bellevue. She said this would take a step toward healing the fractures in the community due to concerns about communications with the public. She said Congregations for the Homeless has no official written business plan that has been released to the public. She said no bank would give a loan to businesses without independently audited financial statements or a cohesive business plan. She said the consultants found that 25 percent of the long-term programs in Seattle did not meet success requirements, yet have been given funding for years. She said CFH is a good organization, but the consultant might be able to help them to become a more sustainable model.
- (f) Julie Wheeler said she is opposed to the homeless men's shelter as proposed with a low-barrier designation. She recently attended a forum in which David Bowling of Congregations for the Homeless was available to answer. He admitted that he has no statistics on low barrier shelters, which is troubling for the community. She said the shelter should not be placed so close to homes in the Eastgate area. She said Mr. Bowling reported that he was given five of six locations for the shelter, and none were in the Spring District which was originally targeted for the shelter. Ms. Wheeler said the Spring District is a better location because it is in close proximity to hospitals, transit, and police, and away from schools. She said Mr. Bowling indicated he would have been happy with that location and the current Lincoln Center location. She recalled public comment before the Council the previous week in support of Aaron Laing to fill the vacant Council position. She said Mayor Stokes won the election against Mr. Laing in 2011 by 51 votes. She said Mr. Stokes received campaign donations from Wright Runstad, the developer of the Spring District. She expressed concern that Wright Runstad opted to pay a fee in lieu of providing affordable housing as part of that development. Ms. Wheeler alleged a conflict of interest for Mayor Stokes and asked him to recuse himself from this decision.
- (g) Maria Balsamo commented on how she loves Bellevue, and she does a lot of walking in her neighborhood adjacent to Bellevue College. She recently discovered the proposed homeless shelter will be a block from her house. She is concerned about the homeless and

cares about them, but she is worried that a low barrier shelter will have sex offenders, criminals, and mentally ill individuals. Ms. Balsamo said that, even if shelter residents behave properly in the shelter, that is no guarantee of their behavior outside of the shelter. She expressed concern that she will not feel safe walking in the area, especially in the wooded trails, if the shelter is placed in that area.

- (h) Garrett Guiler, Board Vice President for Imagine Housing, acknowledged the community's concerns about the homeless shelter. He said Congregations for the Homeless and Imagine Housing want to do their best with regard to the proposed Eastgate shelter. However, there are risks and the organizations cannot guarantee that problems will not occur. He said the need is great and they have selected a site that they believe can work for the community. He said the intent is to provide a path to affordable housing and to give people a second chance and a place to call home. He referred to the earlier comments regarding Mr. Bowling with CFH and said Imagine Housing is available to address those comments. He encouraged the Council to make a decision as soon as possible.
- (i) Clara Fernandes said she has been working at the current shelter for four years serving meals. She said residents are regular people, and some have jobs. She said the men are respectful and helpful. She took her children to work at the shelter as well and said they enjoyed it. She questioned how the community can turn the homeless away and not help to feed them and provide shelter. She invited the Council to visit the current shelter.
- (j) Nathan Tucker spoke to the importance of having a homeless shelter in Bellevue. He commended the City for stepping up with others to pursue the Eastgate project. He acknowledged that the issue is controversial and difficult. He said the Eastgate location is not in anyone's backyard, and transit will help provide access to jobs. The nearby college provides opportunities for education. He thanked the Council for considering the shelter and noted that he volunteers at the current shelter.

Councilmember Wallace said the Council is planning to resume its discussion of the shelter issue on April 3, at which time staff will provide an update on the status of the project.

Mr. Wallace expressed concern that, during oral communications, Mayor Stokes was falsely accused of a conflict of interest. Mr. Wallace said he has served for five years with Mr. Stokes. Mr. Wallace was a lead supporter of Aaron Laing's campaign for the City Council. Mr. Wallace said Mr. Stokes is not working in any way inappropriately but is working to reach principled decisions, as is the rest of the Council. Mr. Wallace asked everyone to avoid making spurious and false accusations.

4. Study Session

(a) Council Business and New Initiatives

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak noted that Councilmember Lee was absent to attend the National League of Cities conference in Washington, D.C.

- Deputy Mayor Chelminiak moved to excuse Councilmember Lee's absence, and Councilmember Robertson seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Mayor Stokes noted the Council's ongoing process to select an individual to fill the seat left vacant by the resignation of Vandana Slatter, who was appointed to the Washington State House of Representatives to represent the 48th District. He said discussion and voting on the matter would be postponed until all Councilmembers were present.

(b) Deployment of Mobile Devices and Optimized Software for Utilities Field Crews

City Manager Brad Miyake recalled that the Utilities Department's technology initiative was included in the 2015-2016 budget process. He said the initiative is consistent with the City's core value to encourage innovation. He said the initiative was proposed by employees in the utilities operations and maintenance crews. Mr. Miyake introduced Andrew Lee, Utilities Deputy Director, and Don McQuilliams, Utilities Operations Manager.

Mr. Lee introduced discussion regarding the Utilities Department's deployment of mobile devices and optimized software for utilities field crews. He said Utilities staff meet periodically with staff in other departments to gather feedback on how they might enhance their customer support. He said Utilities field crews suggested for several years that they could do a better job with the use of mobile technologies. As a result, the mobile workforce initiative was approved in the 2015-2016 budget

Mr. McQuilliams said field staff realized years ago that they could their improve efficiency and provide better customer service through enhanced technology. He said key goals of the initiative were to enhance the ability to interact with non-English speakers, eliminate duplicative paper data collection, and provide real-time information during field activities.

Mr. McQuilliams said the internal goals were to provide the right information in the right form to staff and to follow a One City/High Performance Organization (HPO) approach to providing solutions, with ownership by staff. External goals were to improve customer service by providing real-time information, improving customer interactions, and avoiding return visits. Goals to improve business process efficiencies focused on minimizing duplication and reliance on paper and providing a more efficient means to access work orders.

Mr. McQuilliams said the initiative involved staff from a number of departments. A business analyst interviewed 60 employees and conducted a device lab, which narrowed the options to five devices to test. Staff ultimately selected the iPad as the best solution. He said 65 iPads were deployed in September 2016. He said reliable connectivity and security were important, and Information Technology staff worked with Verizon to set up a "tunnel" or straight connection to the City server. The iPads were deployed in two phases, first to introduce staff to the standard applications. The second phase introduced staff to the third-party Informer application, which works with Maximo to manage work orders.

Mr. McQuilliams said the Google Translate app enables field workers to engage in a conversation with customers and to avoid a return trip due to an inability to communicate. He described the use of Go Maps, Apple FaceTime, and Messenger apps to improve efficiency, and field crew no longer need to carry around large paper maps. FaceTime allows staff to communicate with live video capabilities to help resolve problems more quickly. Mr. McQuilliams described the storm drainage inspections capability developed by the Information Technology department to improve the efficiency of citywide NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems) inspections.

Mr. McQuilliams described the benefits of the Informer application, which is the mobile version of the desktop Maximo program. After approximately eight weeks of use, staff has suggested incorporating interactive maps and better search capabilities for future updates to the software. He presented a video demonstrating how the Informer app works. He noted that 80 percent of staff use the iPad more than two days a week, 53 percent indicated they use it daily, and 62 percent of those surveyed indicated that having the device reduced the number of trips during the day.

Councilmember Robinson commended staff's presentation and the innovation demonstrated by the mobile workforce project and the Utilities Department overall.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak said this is a great example of how technology saves time. Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Mr. Lee said a time savings of 10 percent equates to approximately 6.5 staff.

Responding to Mayor Stokes, Mr. McQuilliams said the use of the applications result in fewer errors because much of the information is entered through drop-down menus with specific selections and avoid the challenges of interpreting handwriting.

Responding to Councilmember Robertson, Mr. McQuilliams said the technology is not creating more data but is using the data in a different form. He said the use of video for diagnosing problems generates more data. However, most of it is used for a specific work order and is not saved. Mr. McQuilliams said videos are saved for specific inspections. Mr. Lee noted that the latter practice was followed before the implementation of the mobile technology.

(c) Update on Bellevue Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative (PBII)

City Manager Miyake introduced staff's update on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative (PBII).

Franz Loewenherz, Principal Planner, said the Comprehensive Plan includes policies related to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative (PBII). The latter is focused on fulfilling the vision provided in the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Mr. Loewenherz described maps depicting the priority bicycle corridors. The PBII scope of work was established in May 2015. In Fall 2015, the public was invited to identify areas of Bellevue

where they feel unsafe walking and biking. That effort resulted in the identification of 1,600 data points. The Transportation Commission worked with the community and staff to develop 52 Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program concepts that were later released online for public input in Spring 2016. That survey resulted in more than 500 comments. Mr. Loewenherz said interviews were conducted as well, which reflected a widespread interest in increased safety for biking and walking. An open house at City Hall was attended by 140 individuals, and many comments noted on the need for separation and protection related to bike facilities.

Mr. Loewenherz said Mayor Stokes and Councilmember Robinson joined City staff and the Cascade Bicycle Club to facilitate a policy ride through the Downtown to identify opportunities for pedestrian and bike improvements. He said staff worked extensively with the business community as well throughout the process. The Transportation Commission took all of the feedback and developed consolidated guidance for staff to realize the 2009 vision: 1) connected network in place of a piecemeal implementation, 2) protected, physically separated facilities to minimize conflicts with the roadway, and 3) rapid implementation of opportunities that can quickly advance project delivery.

With the passage of the transportation levy in November, the Bicycle Rapid Implementation Plan (BRIP) can move forward to implement 16.7 miles of new and upgraded bicycle facilities by 2019. An additional 1.8 miles of bike facilities will be implemented through other programs by 2019. Mr. Loewenherz said the facility types are anticipated to be: 1) off-street paths (4 percent), 2) protected bike lane (43 percent), 3) conventional bike lane (29 percent), and 4) shared lane marking (24 percent). He highlighted I-90 bicycle volumes and pedestrian volumes as well as the Vision Zero crash data available online.

Mr. Loewenherz described a partnership with Microsoft using video analytics to proactively identify dangerous areas for bikes and pedestrians. The project is building hybrid technology that can process video streams and analyze them to identify trends, such as numerous near misses at particular locations. He presented a video describing the video analytics project.

Mr. Loewenherz said he and Councilmember Robinson accepted a Safer Streets Safer People award from the U.S. Department of Transportation. He said he appreciates the opportunity as a City employee to develop an innovative approach using the existing traffic camera infrastructure. He said the video analytics project will be launching a platform to invite public input that will make the technology more adept at classifying bikes, pedestrians, and cars. He said partners in the project include New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Calgary and Vancouver in Canada, and other jurisdictions.

Mayor Stokes thanked Mr. Loewenherz for the presentation and expressed his support for the initiative and innovations.

Councilmember Robinson questioned whether City planning for road projects considers the impacts on bike and pedestrian elements. She expressed concern that the blinking left-turn signals might be especially confusing for bicyclists and pedestrians. Mr. Loewenherz said the Transportation Commission is currently contemplating a multi-modal level of service (LOS) tool to be considered by the Council. That model will allow staff to assess the implications across

multiple travel modes. He said Transportation staff is constantly thinking about the tradeoffs between transportation modes.

With regard to the second question, Mr. Loewenherz said there currently is not data on the effects of blinking left-turn signals, unless there is a crash or incident. However, the video analytics project will allow conflicts to be identified and analyzed.

Councilmember Wallace complimented Transportation staff for their proactive work in the area of transportation technology. He noted that the City is currently recruiting a transportation technology staff person to facilitate continued enhancements.

Councilmember Robertson thanked staff for the presentation and expressed support for the technology initiatives discussed this evening.

Ms. Robertson questioned the implications for risk management if a particular location of multiple incidents is identified and improvements have not been implemented. Mr. Loewenherz said the City's Risk Manager supports the effort and believes it will help to address some of the past settlements involving the City.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak expressed support for staff's efforts and partnership with Microsoft. He observed that the City is on the cutting edge with regard to transportation. He referred to public comments requesting enhanced safety for cyclists. He said improvements to the bike and pedestrian network are also important to the business community. He said it is good to see the use of technology to improve efficiency and safety.

Mayor Stokes said it is great for the City to receive recognition and awards for its innovation. He thanked staff for their work.

(d) Update on the Grand Connection Visioning Process

City Manager Miyake recalled that design concepts for the Grand Connection visioning process were last presented to the Council in October.

Dan Stroh, Planning Director, opened the update on the Grand Connection project extending from the Meydenbauer Bay waterfront to the Wilburton District. He said this will be a transformative project for the community.

Bradley Calvert, Community Development Program Manager, said the evening's focus would be on the I-405 crossing element. He highlighted the project timeline, which anticipates completing the visioning process by May. He recalled the design charrette one year ago initiating the visioning phase, and highlighted some of the design concepts that emerged over the past year.

Mr. Calvert described three options for the I-405 crossing: 1) Low – NE 6th Street Extension; 2) Mid – High Line type bridge (New York City) between NE 4th and NE 6th Streets; and 3) High – Lid between NE 4th and NE 6th Streets. He said the alternatives were presented to the Council

on October 24, 2016, and an online open house was held to solicit feedback on the three concepts.

Mr. Calvert said the original Option 1 was the most direct route that maintained visibility from the Downtown and completed modifications to NE 6th Street. The option has been updated to create a more curvilinear form, more green space, and potentially connecting to the Lincoln Center property for public space. Mr. Calvert said the alternative considers the use of a cross laminated timber (CLT) installation, which absorbs CO² emissions. He said the material has been used in high-rise construction. Additional significant changes to Option 1 include better buffers to the sights and sounds of the freeway and the flexibility to be responsive to modifications to NE 6th Street.

Mr. Calvert said the original Option 2 was designed as a series of lily pads across the freeway, a split route to the Eastside Rail Corridor, future building integration, and limited public space. Updates to that alternative include a light and thin concrete structure, one connection to the Eastside Rail Corridor, buffers to the freeway, and a level crossing. A challenge of this option is that the walkway is primarily accessed through private properties.

Option 3 is a lid park with a rolling natural landscape, distinct zones, a barrel vault over the freeway access ramps, and the integration with future developments. Updated features include climbing walls, outdoor sports facilities, observation decks, natural terrain playground, forest area, and a lower profile. The connection to the Wilburton commercial area is moved to the north, and access is provided to 116th Avenue NE. All three options provide a level crossing to the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Mr. Calvert said the next steps are continued collaboration with key stakeholders, an air quality analysis, and the creation of final design graphics. He said the project team is exploring vegetation and other materials to help absorb CO² emissions. Release of the Draft Framework Report for Sequence One is targeted for May.

Mr. Calvert described a survey to gather feedback on arts and culture elements. Public comments indicated that art should improve the public spaces, preferred locations are Downtown Park and the Pedestrian Corridor, and innovative art (including illumination, interactive and gateway elements) should be considered. The survey identified awareness, project quality, and project relevance as primary barriers to participation.

Mr. Calvert described the collection of feedback from Big Picture School students, who identified art, public games, and food as top priorities. The feedback recommended a playground for ages 8 to 20 years old, multicultural features, colorful elements, games, illumination installations, protected bike lanes, and a performance stage.

Mr. Calvert said one of the early implementation strategies is a raised intersection at 106th Avenue NE and the Pedestrian Corridor. That project is partially funded through a grant.

Mr. Calvert presented examples of art elements, including illumination installations, from other cities. He said the idea is to light up the city at night and to engage the public.

Councilmember Robertson said she is excited about the Grand Connection, and the Council has been very engaged in the project's progress. She observed that all three options have improved. She expressed support for the light, technology, and game elements and the objective of engaging the public. She noted how the annual arts festival led to the development of the Bellevue Arts Museum and public art. She envisions events along the Grand Connection as well.

Mayor Stokes thanked staff for the presentation and suggested engaging Bellevue High School students in the project.

Councilmember Wallace said he appreciated the enhancements to the options. He observed that Option 1 is the least expensive and provides opportunities for adding elements. His key priority is to connect the Bellevue Transit Center with the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Councilmember Wallace questioned how the option fits with the light rail alignment. Mr. Stroh said the light rail project does not preclude the ability to complete the other half of the NE 6th Street interchange. Mr. Wallace suggested that the option could accommodate a bike lane and, potentially, future driverless shuttles. He said it would be helpful to see more details of the light rail station to understand how everything would connect and function.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak said all three options are memorable. He likes the improvements to Option 1, including the potential curvilinear structure with views and other elements. He would like to see further ideas developed for Option 2 as well. He likes the art illumination ideas.

Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Mr. Calvert said City staff posed preliminary questions regarding the project to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Now that the concepts have become more developed, City staff will engage in more in-depth discussions with WSDOT staff.

Councilmember Robinson noted her interest in providing access from neighborhoods to the Downtown, as well as providing access to the Meydenbauer Bay waterfront. She said the project needs to be accessible and interesting, and she is not sure which option best meets that objective. She observed that the project will require extensive improvements along the Pedestrian Corridor.

Mayor Stokes said Deputy Mayor Chelminiak and Councilmember Wallace have been key Council liaisons on the project. Mr. Wallace suggested considering whether Option 1 and Option 3 could start with Option 1 as an initial spine with additional elements, including those in Option 3, to be added over time.

Mr. Stokes commended staff for moving forward so quickly with the project. He said it is great to have planning and transportation staff working together.

Councilmember Robertson expressed support for Mr. Wallace's idea of phasing project elements.

5. Council Discussion of Upcoming Items: None.

6. Continued Oral Communications

- (a) Steve Kasner, speaking as a member of the East Bellevue Community Council and Vice President of the Lake Hills Neighborhood Association, said he was very impressed with projects discussed during the meeting. He said the EBCC has repeatedly asked the Transportation Commission over the past two years to remove the TFP project on SE 16th Street. He said Councilmember Robertson attended the most recent EBCC meeting, and she indicated that certain transportation connectivity items would be reviewed again by the Commission. He said a City transportation employee plans to come to an EBCC meeting. Mr. Kasner observed that residents do not understand that certain projects in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan will go through their neighborhoods. He suggested that residents might have specific ideas for the sections traveling through their neighborhoods, which will generate bicycle cut-through traffic. He encouraged the City to work with residents early in planning processes. With regard to the Grand Connection, Mr. Kasner said he hears complaints in East Bellevue that car dealerships have moved there from 116th Avenue to allow for the creation of the Grand Connection. Residents are concerned about the homeless shelter planned for East Bellevue as well.
- (b) Pamela Johnson said that establishing a homeless shelter is always a difficult process. She observed that the community does not understand Bellevue's role related to the proposed Eastgate shelter. She said a certain amount of homelessness will always exist. She questioned the future of the shelter and housing project. Will it grow or become smaller over time? Is Congregations for the Homeless the best organization to operate the facility? Who provides oversight and ensures accountability related to setting challenging but achievable goals and to meeting those goals? Does the City have any authority in the shelter's success? Will the City's role be oversight, collaboration or facility mentoring? Will the City's role be validating that this is a good program to support the facility? She noted her understanding that the site is owned by King County. Is the City required to financially support the shelter? She questioned the City's role in creating a prosperous economy and fair housing that results in fewer people becoming homeless. Ms. Johnson opined that residents do not understand the City's role versus the other parties (e.g., King County and CFH).

Councilmember Wallace noted that the Transportation Commission recently discussed the TMP (Transportation Management Program) versus the TFP (Transportation Facilities Plan), as referenced by Mr. Kasner.

Mayor Stokes declared the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Kyle Stannert, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw