

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION  
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

February 27, 2019  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Barksdale, Commissioners Carlson, deVadoss, Laing, Malakoutian, Morisseau, Moolgavkar

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Terry Cullen, Emil King, Nicholas Matz, Department of Planning and Community Development

COUNCIL LIAISON: Mayor Chelminiak

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER  
(6:36 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. by Chair Barksdale who presided.

2. ROLL CALL  
(6:36 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
(6:36 p.m.)

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner deVadoss. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moolgavkar and the motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None  
(6:36 p.m.)

5. STAFF REPORTS  
(6:37 p.m.)

Comprehensive Planning Manager Terry Cullen informed the Commissioners that the annual retreat that had been scheduled for November 14 has been rescheduled for March 27. He said it would be held at the Global Innovation Exchange (GIX) beginning at 5:00 p.m. with a tour of the facility.

6. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS  
(6:38 p.m.)

Mr. Ed Segat with Continental Properties, applicant for a Comprehensive Plan amendment for The Park in Bellevue property located at 1515 Bellevue Way. He noted that the site is a couple of blocks north of NE 12th Street on the west side of Bellevue Way. The existing two-story structure was built in 1985. The property was purchased and closed a few days before Christmas in 2018, leaving very little time to submit the amendment application by the January 31 deadline. There is a tremendous growth in both the commercial and demographic trends in the city that have exceeded what was predicted ten years ago. The site is in the North Bellevue subarea, which the Commission intends to review during 2019. Bellevue Way is a major arterial and transit corridor, and the Comprehensive Plan calls for locating density in such places. The area is also considered walkable and is only four blocks from Bellevue Square. The nine-acre site could be designed as its own neighborhood. All of which goes to a sustainable and livable city.

(6:42 p.m.)

Mr. Jack McCullough spoke on behalf of Continental Properties. He said there is a prototype project that was built in the 1980s that involved developers finding large sites and developing on them two-story woody walkup structures with low density and lots of grade-level parking. In the lifecycle of such projects it comes time to reach a decision either to focus on doing what is needed to keep the projects viable or redevelopment them into something with some additional density. There may need to be discussions about which process to utilize in seeking a conclusion about what should ultimately be done with the site.

(6:44 p.m.)

Mr. Ian Morrison with McCullough Hill spoke on behalf of the Bellevue Technology Center. He reminded the Commissioners that the site was the subject of a Comprehensive Plan amendment in 2017 which the Commission declined to move forward. The biggest thing that has changed is Microsoft's commitment to contribute half a billion dollars for affordable housing and the city's commitment to look at zoning around transit to support mid-range and affordable housing. The Bellevue Technology Center is willing to voluntarily commit to having ten percent of any housing on the site being affordable or mid-range housing. He stressed, however, that the Comprehensive Plan may not be the right place for the conversation. The Northeast subarea planning process may be the right vehicle. There may even be another vehicle in which to have a long-term conversation about the things that are important to Sherwood Forest and the Northeast Bellevue communities, like the permanent preservation of the meadow, trees and open space, and transportation improvements. There have been conversations with planning staff and the goal is to continue those conversations. Feedback from the Commission will be of great importance.

Chair Barksdale noted the arrival of Mayor Chelminiak and invited him to offer comment.

Mayor Chelminiak noted that the recent snow and inclement weather caused the City Council to go two weeks without a meeting. He said the city crews did an incredible job of clearing the roads and at one point had 14 plows in operation. There were some areas that were stranded for a while. A report was received from Bellevue Fire Cares about persons within their purview and it steps were taken to get help to them. There was a hubbub on Tuesday about homelessness when the mayor of Seattle complained about the mayor of Federal Way buying bus tickets to send people north to Seattle for services. It has been believed that people from the Eastside and other areas go to Seattle. The fact is quite a few persons in Bellevue shelters who list their last known address as Seattle. Everyone must work together, which the Eastside cities certainly are doing by coordinating to operate shelters. At one point the men's shelter in Bellevue was 120 persons. On the women's side, a pipe burst at the shelter operating at St. Luke's and it was necessary to shuffle people around. The youth shelter in Redmond was full every night and outreach workers were out trying to get the homeless into a shelter.

With regard to planning issues, Mayor Chelminiak said the weather delays have caused delay in considering the East Main area, but the Council is committed to diving back into it and make the decisions needed so the topic can be sent back to the Commission.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – None  
(6:50 p.m.)

8. STUDY SESSION

A. BelRed Implementation Update  
(6:50 p.m.)

Strategic Planning Manager Emil King shared with the Commissioners a map outlining the BelRed area and pointed out that in addition to the downtown and Eastgate, Bel-Red is one of the areas where the Comprehensive Plan calls for growth to be focused. In an aerial photo he outlined the East Main, downtown, Wilburton and Bel-Red areas. The Bel-Red area is 910 acres in size, which compares to the 400-acre downtown. Three light rail stations will be located within the Bel-Red boundaries, and the Overlake Village station, which is just outside the boundary, will also serve the area. Once East Link is completed, it will be convenient to take transit trips from the subarea north to the Microsoft campus and ultimately to downtown Redmond, as well as south to the downtown and on to Seattle. The planned opening for the stations in the subarea is June 2023. There is an overlap between the formal Bel-Red subarea and the Wilburton commercial area study.

Mr. King said the new Bel-Red vision adopted in 2009 represented the outgrowth of three years' work on the part of a Citizen Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission and the City Council. The adopted plan contained an entirely new vision for the subarea and a new set of zoning provisions applicable to the area focused on forming new urban neighborhoods. Some ambitious targets were set, including 10,000 new jobs and 5000 new housing units by 2030. A new incentive system with a focus on affordable housing was part of the package, as was a package of park and stream improvements. Under the old Bel-Red subarea, the focus was largely on light industrial and commercial. In the five years prior to the Bel-Red study, disinvestment and job losses were being seen in the area. When the study was started, there was no light rail alignment or stations in the area.

The Bel-Red district spans from I-405 to the west to 156th Avenue NE to the east, and SR-520 to the north and just to the south of Bel-Red Road to the south. The new plan focuses the densest growth and the tallest buildings in and around the station areas. The new urban neighborhoods do not follow a one-size-fits-all approach. The area around the hospital district on NE 8th Street envisions medical uses, some retail and some housing, though there have been some requests to refine the vision for that area somewhat through the Wilburton CAC process. The overarching theme of more dense development in and around that hospital station remains, however.

In 2007 Safeway began selling off its properties in the 120th/Spring District node. Ultimately they sold 36 acres to Wright-Runstad that turned into the Spring District with a primary focus on office uses, though with provisions for up to 20 percent of the area for housing. There are also provisions that allow for retail uses. The GIX ended up in the Spring District.

The 130th Avenue node is located adjacent to the Cadman site. No large-scale development has occurred in that area over the past decade. Some interim improvements have been made there.

The area served by the station in Redmond on 156th Avenue NE has a housing and retail focus.

Commissioner Morisseau asked what the percentage of housing is for the 130th node. Mr. King said there are over a thousand units there currently and there is a relatively small amount of retail. More than 95 percent of the new transit-oriented development is focused on housing in that area.

Mr. King said the Council's work to secure a TIFIA loan totaling almost \$100 million will allow for building out the transportation infrastructure needed to support the new neighborhoods. A host of projects are currently under way with others planned to happen over the next five to ten years. They include improvements on 120th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE that are needed to support the growth envisioned for the node.

With regard to natural systems in the Bel-Red area, Mr. King said there are five streams, portions of which are daylighted and portions of which are piped. Part of the vision is too the piped sections daylighted as redevelopment occurs in the area.

Something that gained a lot of traction after 2009 was the vision of turning the old Burlington Northern/Sante Fe corridor into what is now known as the Eastside Rail Corridor. The idea is to have development embrace the corridor as a key amenity. Based on direction from the Council, consideration is being given to trail-oriented development.

Commissioner Morisseau noted that different segments of the Eastside Rail Corridor are owned by different jurisdictions. She asked if the city of Bellevue owns the segment that runs through the city limits. Mr. King said most of the portion within Bellevue is owned by King County, with the exception being the section between NE 6th Street and roughly SR-520, which is owned by Sound Transit and which they purchased to facilitate the light rail alignment. The city, however, has a lot of influence over what will happen within the 40- to 60-foot right-of-way as a member of the regional advisory group and by virtue of having a good working relationship with King County and Sound Transit.

The Commissioners were shown a map of the Spring District and Mr. King highlighted the anticipated development phasing of projects that are planned, under construction and already completed. He noted that more park and open space improvements will be made in the area as additional office, housing and hotel uses develop. An aerial photo of the Spring District prior to 2009 was positioned against a 2018 aerial photo showing the degree to which things have changed. A photo of the Spring District light rail station under construction was also shown to the Commission.

Commissioner Carlson asked if any changes would be made to 124th Avenue NE with the additional office, retail and residential traffic. Mr. King said the light rail line will pass under 124th Avenue NE and there is a plan to make improvements to the roadway in terms of sidewalks, landscaping, and widening the roadway. Mayor Chelminiak added that there are two City Light easement issues that remain unresolved, both of which relate to the widening of the roadway. The section that goes over the light rail line will be widened during construction of the bridge, saving a lot of money.

Mr. King showed photos of the GIX development and examples of the office buildings being built in the Spring District, including the new REI headquarters that is in the permitting phase. Also shared with the Commissioners were photos of the range of different housing types that are being built in the area, ranging from five- and six-story apartment buildings to buildings that are

in the seven- to eight-story range. A surprising number of new two- to three-story townhouse buildings are being built in the area to the south of Bel-Red Road where previously there were old office buildings. He noted that within the last ten years plans were submitted to the city for transit-oriented developments on the Angelo's Nursery and Sherwood Shopping Center properties. Those plans were approved and buildout of those sites has begun. In all there will be more than a thousand residential units there within a ten-minute walk of the light rail station.

Mr. King said the forecast developed in 2009 for the time period extending to 2030 included 5000 new housing units and 10,000 new jobs. Growth in the area based on what has been constructed and permitted to date, there are 2243 new housing units and 4416 new jobs, representing about 44 percent of the forecast.

Commissioner deVadoss asked what methodology is used to determine the number of jobs. Mr. King said the calculation is made both from counts taken at new developments and from information supplied by the state.

Commissioner Morisseau asked what the occupancy rate is for the housing units. Mr. King said the units have leased very well. Apartments usually hover around the 90 percent occupancy rate. New projects tend a bit of time to fully lease up, as long as five months.

Mr. King noted that the Council has spent quite a lot of time over the past few years working with Sound Transit on the maintenance base in the Spring District. As a mitigation measure, an understanding was reached with Sound Transit to have a significant portion of the site set aside for a transit-oriented development.

The city is also working with Sound Transit in regard to the park and ride facility associated with the 130th light rail station. Originally, the plan called for a surface park and ride but through negotiations an understanding is being sought to have a more vertical development that will more closely match the vision for the area.

One effort under way that will help inform the Bel-Red look-back involves looking at the streetscape plan, the urban design and bike infrastructure associated with the streets. How things were done ten years ago does not exactly match how things are currently being done based on best practices. The review work will look at typologies and develop recommendations for further consideration. Also in the works is a study aimed at determining how to implement the local street network. The experience to date has been primarily in regard to the 36-acre Spring District and admittedly it is easier to plan out a street grid when working with essentially a single property owner. The areas around the 130th station and near the Cadman site are much more complicated given multiple property owners who might want to develop their sites at different times.

Mr. King reminded the Commissioners that the Bel-Red Subarea Plan includes the concept of developing an arts district. In 2009 the Pacific Northwest Ballet facility was located in the subarea and there were a lot of arts and culture things happening in the old warehouses. The concept has not in the intervening years really taken off. Direction will be sought from the Council about what can be done working with the Commission to further the arts district concept in the future.

Commissioner Laing asked about stakeholder engagement and community outreach as part of the process. He noted that the look-back was initially intended to occur at the five-year mark, but that did not happen. Mr. King explained that a series of focus groups were held a couple of years

ago with property owners and other stakeholders. The process acknowledged that the process took place at the eight-year mark rather than the five-year mark, and that the great recession took its toll on development through about 2012. He said he has developed a list of issues raised and will be following up on them. A webpage has been launched that talks about the Bel-Red implementation and look-back processes, and calls and comments from interested parties often come in with ideas for additional things to consider. He said he has also made a concerted effort to have a presence at any and all Bel-Red events. The list will ultimately go to the Council for approval before any of the items on it are specifically addressed.

Commissioner Morisseau asked what is known about why the arts district concept has not taken off. She also asked what has been learned already from the Bel-Red experience about what has and has not worked. Mr. King said the ultimate scope of work will need to be approved by the Council, but generally it is known that the vision for the area is strong and people have bought into it. Quite a lot of public and private investment has been made to date in the area since 2009. The level of stream enhancements that have occurred to date is low and should be noted as an issue, though that in part is because not much development has occurred in areas where there are piped streams that need to be daylighted. More work could also be done on furthering the soft infrastructure and amenities that are needed in the area. The Spring District did put in a one-acre park, but other amenities are needed. The Bellevue School District has received voter approval for two new elementary schools, one of which is already built across the freeway that serves the downtown area. The property identified for the second school is in the Bel-Red area has been purchased by the district. With regard to the arts district concept, a major issue has been and continues to be the cost of art and commercial space in general in the Bel-Red area. Additionally, not much has happened yet in the 130th node for a host of reasons. The hope is that in future years as things redevelop the arts district concept will be embraced. There is also a question to be answered about what the city can do to help organize the fragmented group of artists and cultural organizations.

B. Introductory Study Session: 2019 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments  
(7:27 p.m.)

Senior Planner Nicholas Matz noted that there were four Comprehensive Plan amendments to be considered: a citywide amendment to the text of the policy of the Human Services Element called Vision Zero for Gun Safety; The Park in Bellevue; Crossroads/Bellevue Technology Center; and 12620 Northup Way. He stressed that at the threshold review stage, the task of the Commission was to determine whether or not a proposed amendment raised appropriate issues that should be considered. The merits of each amendment are not addressed during threshold review.

Beginning with the Vision Zero for Gun Safety amendment, Mr. Matz pointed out that the applicant, Vernon Schrag, had been working with staff for the last year and a half to craft an amendment that could actually be considered. As drafted, the proposed policy amendments to the Human Services Element are based on a framework associated with Vision Zero for traffic safety, an approach that was endorsed by the city in 2015 and which recognizes that deaths and serious injuries on city streets are unacceptable and preventable. Policies related to Vision Zero have been adopted into the Transportation Element and they are being implemented. Mr. Schrag believes the same approach should be used to address another form of preventable violence.

The discussion for the proposed amendment to the Human Services Element states that human services are services that enable individuals and families to meet basic human needs and offer a continuum of support. In order to address the needs, Bellevue has established five community



goals that all community members should have. The link from Vision Zero for traffic safety to the Human Services Element is the proposed third goal, a safe haven from all forms of violence and abuse.

The second step involves looking at the cross-connect associated with the human services Needs Update, which is a biannual report on the status of how the city is serving human services needs in the community. The document links directly to the stated goals. As proposed, that would include Goal 3, a safe haven from all forms of violence and abuse. The goal is deemed important because all forms of personal violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse and neglect are unacceptable in any of Bellevue's communities.

Mr. Matz said the proposed amendment would amend the Human Services Element with the aim of implementing a policy goal of striving to achieve zero deaths and serious injuries from gun violence in Bellevue by 2035. As proposed, specific policies would be framed around a comprehensive risk review and assessment; coordination of regional best practices; implementation of gun safety strategies supporting a safe city; and the promotion of healthy living through a sense of safety contributing to successful businesses and neighborhoods.

Commissioner Carlson asked what the numbers are relative to gun-related deaths and accidents, and specifically what problem the amendment seeks to solve. Mr. Matz said those numbers and issues will be addressed going forward, beginning at the next study session on March 13.

Commissioner deVadoss asked if the city went to the applicant or if the applicant came to the city. Mr. Matz said the applicant came to the city with the proposal.

Commissioner Laing said he is always benefited from having the actual proposed language in front of him. Mr. Matz pointed out the links in the packet materials to each of the proposed amendments where all materials could be found.

Commissioner Laing pointed out that the issue involves a number of ~~S~~second ~~A~~amendment legal issues. He stressed the need for the Commission to be provided with direction from the legal planner or the City Attorney's office to avoid moving forward on issues that will ultimately be found to be unlawful. He also said he would want to know what the city of Bellevue is not already doing to address gun safety and reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries from gun violence. There are local, state and federal rules that come into play with the topic. He asked if there is something about the proposed amendment that is aspirational and that will serve as a gap filler, or if the language will only be laudatory and not really add anything to what is already in place. The Commission may need to hear from the police department and from mental health and medical professionals. Additionally, he said he would like to hear more about the collaborative process that has gone on between the city and the applicant. Mr. Matz allowed that the Commission will need a great deal of information from a number of different sources. He added that staff provide the same level of service to everyone wanting to propose a Comprehensive Plan amendment regardless of content and intent, and all of the service provided starts and ends with the Comprehensive Plan. The goal is to present to the Commission something that can actually be worked on. Mr. Schrag first came forward in April 2018, but having missed the application window he was advised to come back later. Over the course of the summer and fall months he worked on his proposal and then came back to work with staff to make the proposal look like a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Commissioner Moolgavkar asked if any other city or municipality done something similar. Mr. Matz said Kirkland appears to be leading the pack regionally in terms of using city policy to

address issues of gun safety. In the absence of other efforts, the national dialog is seeing local jurisdictions define for themselves the roles they want to play. According to the Municipal Research and Services Center, however, no cities in Washington state have yet taken the step of using their comprehensive plan to address the topic, so Bellevue would be the first.

Commissioner Moolgavkar said it would be helpful to know if Kirkland or any other jurisdiction taking a similar approach has encountered any litigation as a result. With regard to interstitial law, she pointed out that the traffic code also has local, state and federal laws and she said it would be good know how the Vision Zero for traffic deaths and serious injuries compares to the proposed Vision Zero for Gun Safety in terms of filling in the gaps.

Commissioner deVadoss said he had significant concerns about overreach by the city in the domain of gun violence. He also commented that the document was very confusing in the way it uses phraseology and terms such as hate crimes. He pointed out the need to be very clear about exactly what the problem is and how the proposal will do something about it. Mr. Matz said that issue will receive attention, particularly in light of significantly changed circumstances.

Commissioner Carlson asked if the applicant, when using the framework of what the city does relative to traffic safety, was informed the driving is a privilege and that firearms ownership is a constitutional right. Mr. Matz said he did not raise that point with Mr. Schrag but could not say whether or not the applicant was informed regarding the distinction.

Commissioner Laing said he saw in the proposal many laudable things, but said he worried that City Hall may not be big enough should the issue turn into a second amendment debate between folks on both sides of the issues. The issue is exactly the kind of thing that brings out crowds of people with torches and pitchforks in support of their positions. For that reason, the Commission needs to be very clear about the confines and the problem to be solved by the proposal to avoid seeing things evolve into something really big really quickly.

Turning to The Park in Bellevue application, Mr. Matz said the site-specific amendment is for the property at 1515 Bellevue Way NE to the north of NE 12th Street and the downtown boundary. The site is currently designated Multifamily-Medium and Multifamily-Low and the proposal is to change to Multifamily-Urban Residential, a designation that does not exist in the Comprehensive Plan. The proposal includes adding a Multifamily-Urban Residential definition to the glossary and deleting policy S-NB-39 from the North Bellevue ~~S~~ubarea ~~P~~lan, a policy that directs urban design improvements and issues related to development around the intersection of NE 12th Street and Bellevue Way NE. There has also been a call by the applicant to initiate a Land Use Code amendment, something that can only be done by the City Council, the Planning Commission or the director of the Department of Development Services. The proposal is to ensure consistency under the Growth Management Act by creating an R-110 zoning district for the site.

Commissioner Morisseau asked if there are existing designations that would help the applicant get close to what they are trying to accomplish without having to create a new designation. She also asked for more information about policy S-NB-39. Mr. Matz said the closest currently existing designation outside of the downtown is R-30, something that reflects the city's deliberate desire to focus growth in areas where it can be supported. For comparison purposes, an R-110 zone would look like something with an FAR of 3.0. He said policy S-NB-39 has specific language that instructs redevelopment around the intersection of Bellevue Way NE and NE 12th Street to address certain issues of urban design. The row of brick townhouses along NE 12th Street had to respond to the policy because of the urban design treatment afforded to the



intersection by the policy. The proposal to delete the policy stems from not wanting to have to address that in the redevelopment of the site.

Commissioner Laing asked when it can be expected that the North Bellevue subarea will be updated. He also said it would be helpful to have a map showing the nearby FARs for the developments within the downtown boundary to see how they compare to the proposal. Mr. Matz said he would supply such a map.

Mr. Cullen said the North Bellevue ~~S~~subarea ~~P~~plan, which is going to be the Northwest Bellevue neighborhood plan, is currently under way and will be coming to the Commission later in the year as a plan amendment. It has already been initiated by the Council. He stressed that the neighborhood area planning process, which is branded as Great Neighborhoods, is very different from what most people think of as a traditional neighborhood plan. It will be much more strategic in scope, will not look at land use and infrastructure issues, will be more aspirational and visionary, and will get into the community developing strategies the neighborhood can partner with the city on in implementing them. The Commission will be given a presentation on the Great Neighborhoods program at an upcoming meeting.

Mayor Chelminiak asked if staff could take what an R-110 development might look like and match it up with a downtown zone or possibly one of the Bel-Red zones. Mr. Matz said he would be happy to do that as part of the discussing around creating an Multifamily-Urban Residential zone.

Commissioner Morisseau asked if the development to the west of the subject property is single family housing and Mr. Matz allowed that it is. She asked if the residents in that area have been informed about the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment. Mr. Matz said in addition to the single family to the west, there are multifamily develops to the north and south of the site. The Comprehensive Plan amendment process includes posting a notice of application and putting up signs on the property announcing the proposal. Information is also distributed to property owners and residents within 500 feet of the property boundaries. As people come in, a parties of interest list is built and used in sending out information. Staff will also seek to meet with the neighborhoods to talk about the proposal.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Morisseau about the neighborhood planning program schedule, Mr. Cullen said it is currently under way in both Northwest and Northeast Bellevue. Those two plan amendments will be coming to the Commission later in the year. The aspirational element is only part of the process; the other part is strategic. Large community meetings are planned for March in both neighborhoods, and staff will meet with the Council on April 8 to discuss what comes out of those meetings. An update will be provided to the Commission around that time as well. ~~1.32.13.4~~

Mr. Matz said the application regarding the Bellevue Technology Center has a lot of pieces to it that will be viewed in more detail going forward with threshold review. The application seeks a change from Office to Multifamily-Medium for roughly 4.7 acres in the southeast corner of the 46-acre site in order to achieve an affordable housing component. The application also seeks seven ~~subarea~~ policy amendments to encourage transit-oriented development densities, affordable housing, treating neighborhood edges with conservation easements, addressing multimodal mobility, and strengthening economic vitality. The intent is to redevelop the site to transit-oriented development-level densities. There are also three policy amendments sought that would direct citywide action to address similar transit-oriented development sites that would encourage transportation demand management strategies for transit-oriented development, add

improvements to the city's 12-year Transportation Facilities Plan for multimodal LOS, and ensuring neighborhood stability by seeking to mitigate the impacts from regional transit improvements in the area.

Commissioner deVadoss commented that the site has been before the Commission every couple of years. He said it was his understanding that there is a policy in place that applies to the area to the east of 156th Avenue NE that would prevent the type of development envisioned by the application and he asked why the city should keep plowing the same field. Mr. Matz said the city's Comprehensive Plan is open and transparent and property owners are entitled to ask for changes to it. While it is true the site has been before the Commission three times in the last five years, the opportunity to ask questions and seek changes is always available.

Commissioner Moolgavkar asked why the last two proposed amendments related to the site were not carried forward and at what point in the process it failed. She also asked if there has been a significant change since the last time the site was before the Commission. Mr. Matz said he would wait for the threshold review discussion before addressing the issue of changed circumstances. He said staff would also be providing the Commission with a chronology of everything that has gone on on the site since 1972. The previous two Comprehensive Plan amendment applications were in fact withdrawn by the applicant before they came to the City Council for threshold review.

Commissioner Laing asked if the Bellevue Technology Center site is within the Northeast Bellevue subarea. Mr. Matz allowed that it is.

Commissioner Morisseau asked if the subarea process might actually be the better process for addressing the site. Mr. Matz answered that because a Comprehensive Plan amendment application has been submitted, it must be allowed to follow through the threshold review exercise of a study session, review and public hearing for the benefit of the applicant as well as the community. The conversation around other options will be addressed when the decision criteria are reviewed, and staff's conclusions in that regard will be outlined as well. The Commission will at that time be afforded the opportunity to indicate whether or not any other path exists.

Mr. Matz said the 12620 Northup Way Comprehensive Plan amendment seeks a change from Bel Red-General Commercial to Bel Red-Commercial Retail for the 1.7-acre site to the north of Northup Way and the south of SR-520. The question about what is going on in the Bel-Red subarea will be germane to the conversation going forward. The Washington State Department of Transportation is planning to reconstruct the intersection and there will be issues related to where the ramps will be located.

Mr. Matz reminded the Commissioners that Comprehensive Plan amendments are subjected to a two-step process. The procedures and criteria are codified in LUC 20.30I. The question of expanding the geographic scope is addressed in threshold review and the staff will bring forward a preliminary recommendation regarding whether or not the scope should be expanded. Time is spent during the threshold review phase to determine whether the future merits of an application should be considered. If moved forward, those merits are addressed during the final review phase. The Commission's recommendations ultimately are forwarded to the Council for ordinance action.

Mr. Cullen said the threshold review public hearing is scheduled for April 24. The scheduled date for the Council to take up the amendments is tentatively set for May 21. As envisioned, the

schedule gives the Commission more time to thoughtfully review each application.

9. OLD BUSINESS – None

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

11. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

13. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morisseau and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Barksdale adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.