

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

August 3, 2020  
6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis, and Councilmembers Barksdale, Lee, Robertson, Stokes, and Zahn

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

2. Roll Call

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll. All Councilmembers were present and participating remotely.

3. Approval of Agenda

Mayor Robinson noted the need to amend the agenda to add one item. She said Councilmember Barksdale requested that the City Manager provide an update regarding the status of the City's review of public safety practices.

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the agenda, amended to add Agenda Item 6(b), Public Safety Community Engagement. Councilmember Lee seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

4. Written Communications

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo said the Council received six emails to be read during tonight's meeting. She noted additional written communications in the Council's desk packet regarding agenda items as well. Ms. Arredondo said she would read the written communications for up to three minutes each.

Ms. Arredondo read an email from Susan Pappalardo, representing Splash Forward and other stakeholders. Ms. Pappalardo thanked the Council for its continued support in moving the aquatic center project forward to meet the increasing demand for access to aquatics programming for all ages and abilities, and to address the large gap in public aquatics facilities in Bellevue. She said it has been 10 years since the City identified the need and scale for a comprehensive aquatics facility. Noting the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Pappalardo said the health and wellness of our community and workforce are essential to rebuilding the economy. She encouraged the Council to use this time to be ready when the economy improves. Ms. Pappalardo's email said that Splash Forward and the Isaac Sports Group conducted a feasibility study analysis and report on aquatic programs, which provides a recommended right-sized aquatic center for Bellevue. She said the report identifies areas where further analysis is needed. She said Splash Forward will provide the added detail and analysis that can be used by the City, potential partners, and stakeholders in the next phase. Splash Forward's preferred design option is detailed in the report. Ms. Pappalardo said that, with the collective aquatics reports, they now have the framework to fully engage private partners and to refine the design concepts.

An email from Sandy Karlek said she began working with clients at the Bellevue Aquatic Center nine years ago. In 2015, she started her own company focusing primarily on adaptive swim lessons for children with special needs. Ms. Karlek's email said that swimming is an essential life skill for children on the autism spectrum, as they have a much higher risk of drowning. She urged the Council, as it considers a new aquatic center, to retain the current aquatic center and to invest in it for warm water therapy and swimming lessons. Ms. Karlek described the high demand for therapeutic, warm water programming and expressed concern regarding the lack of facilities. She highlighted her recommendations regarding swimming lessons and reiterated the important benefits for children on the autism spectrum.

Ms. Arredondo read an email from James Rivard, Managing Principal of SRM Development, regarding SRM's 2020 Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) proposal affecting property adjacent to Bellevue Way SE. Mr. Rivard said the location can become Bellevue's signature southern gateway into downtown Bellevue. He said SRM is excited to work with the City to transform this critical intersection by providing a mixed-use development that furthers both the downtown and city center south goals. Mr. Rivard said SRM can bring Bellevue much-needed centrally located housing and high-quality commercial space, all supported by a range of transportation options. The email stated that SRM submitted a CPA proposal in January aiming to rectify the split-zoning designation of the SRM property by upzoning the southern portion to a Downtown-Mixed Use designation. The proposal is needed to allow the production of housing and to allow for the coordinated development of an important gateway location. The uniform zoning designation requested in the proposal would allow future redevelopment of the SRM property to advance the goals stated in the Comprehensive Plan. The email continued with additional comments regarding the benefits of the CPA proposal and a southern gateway to Bellevue.

Ms. Arredondo read an email from Tim Motts, President and CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Bellevue (BGCB), said his family moved to the Newport Hills neighborhood a couple of years ago. He said that one of his three sons is on the autism spectrum. He commented on the importance of access to an aquatic center for children to have a safe environment to learn basic

water safety and to take swimming lessons and water therapy classes. Mr. Motts said there is a great need for swimming lessons and aquatics programming for low-income and underserved children and families. The email said the Samena Club provides an annual eight-week swim and water safety program, with 90 percent of the participants being low-income youth. The email highlighted the BGCB's response to the pandemic to assist youth and families, including providing meals. Mr. Motts said the BGCB serves more than 12,000 youth annually through club programs.

Ms. Arredondo read an email from Hanna Floss expressing concern regarding the mutual aid response of the Bellevue Police Department to assist Seattle during protests, which included the deployment of an armored vehicle and tactical forces. She said the response escalated tensions at the protest. She encouraged the Council to reduce the Police Department budget and to redirect funding by investing in community-led education, health, and safety programs. She encouraged funding to assist youth experiencing homelessness, address the opiate crisis, and to provide non-police responders for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

Ms. Arredondo read an email from Larry Martin, writing on behalf of the family that owns the Safeguard Self-Storage property. Mr. Martin asked the Council to include the family's Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) proposal in the 2020 work program, as recommended unanimously by the Planning Commission. The property is adjacent to Crossroads Park and close to Crossroads Shopping Center. The email noted plans for developing a mixed-use neighborhood. Mr. Martin's email highlighted changes that have occurred since the land use designation and zoning for the site were last considered in 1988.

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.

6. Report of the City Manager

(a) Robotic Process Automation Pilot Project

City Manager Brad Miyake introduced staff's briefing regarding the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) pilot project.

Sabra Schneider, Chief Information Officer, said the project was a collaborative effort of Information Technology Department (ITD) staff and Development Services Department (DSD) staff. She said that, in order to move specific review software to the cloud, more than 2,500 plan review sessions needed to be migrated from an on-premise version of the software to the new cloud version of the software. The vendor did not have an automated way to move the files. As a result, City staff developed the RPA pilot project, which configured a "robot" to emulate the repetitive actions of a human and completed the migration. Ms. Schneider said there was a low error rate following the migration.

(b) Public Safety Community Engagement

Mr. Miyake recalled that, in June, the Council committed to a review of public safety practices to: 1) review the Bellevue Police Department's use of force policies, 2) engage the community

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

11. Land Use: None.

12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions

- (a) Threshold Review of the Planning Commission recommendations and the criteria set forth in Part 20.30I.140 LUC to determine by motion which amendment proposals will be included in the 2020 annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program.

City Manager Miyake introduced discussion regarding the Planning Commission's recommendations for the 2020 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) work program.

Thara Johnson, Planning Manager, said the Planning Commission recommends including four privately initiated CPA proposals in the threshold review process as part of the 2020 CPA work program.

Nicholas Matz, Senior Planner, highlighted the eight threshold review criteria and noted that a CPA application must meet all the criteria. Mr. Matz said the Kapela Property CPA application was withdrawn before its consideration by the Planning Commission. The applicant cited issues related to the pandemic.

Mr. Matz described the four CPA proposals and their locations in Bellevue. All the proposals reflect the intent to provide more retail development and market housing.

The Glendale Country Club NE CPA application proposes a map amendment from Single Family-Low (SF-L) to Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) on a 3.3-acre portion of the currently undivided property. The area is triangle shaped and fronts NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

The Safeguard Self Storage CPA proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Community Business (CB) on five parcels totaling 6.4 acres in the Crossroads area. The NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Partners application proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Multifamily-High (MF-H) on two parcels on a nearly one-acre site. The 100 Bellevue Way SE CPA application proposes a map amendment from the existing split zoning of Downtown Mixed Use (DNTN-MU) and Office (O) to DNTN-MU for the entire 0.87-acre site.

Mayor Robinson welcomed Planning Commission Chair Radhika Moolgavkar to the meeting and thanked Anne Morisseau for her service as the former Commission Chair.

Ms. Morisseau said the Commission's study was thorough and reflective of the threshold review decision criteria. She said the votes were unanimous for three of the CPA proposals, and the Glendale Country Club NE proposal was recommended for threshold review by a vote of 5-1. Ms. Morisseau said the Commission's vote was unanimously in favor of moving the 100 Bellevue Way SE application forward. The Commission recommends approving the proposed

amendment because the CPA application satisfies all Land Use Code decision criteria for threshold review of a privately initiated CPA. Ms. Morisseau highlighted the Commission's primary findings. If the proposal is selected for the annual work program, the Commission will continue to study how the downtown boundary came to be at 100 Bellevue Way SE and its ramifications based on the series of split-zone plan amendment designations previously approved by the City Council.

The Safeguard Self Storage proposal was unanimously supported by the Commission, which determined that the proposal met all the threshold review decision criteria. Ms. Morisseau summarized the Commission's key findings. She said the proposed CPA addresses significantly changed conditions affecting the subject property and the surrounding area. She noted a question about whether the site has been subject to the same level of plan amendment scrutiny as other land use matters in the Crossroads area. If selected for the annual work program, the Commission will continue to study how the Crossroads Subarea Plan has been amended over the years to build in policy guidance regarding land uses.

Planning Commission Chair Moolgavkar said the NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Partners CPA proposal was unanimously approved for threshold review by the Commission. The Commission found that the proposal satisfies the Land Use Code decision criteria for threshold review of a privately initiated CPA. The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions resulting from the unanticipated consequence of an adopted policy when higher density multifamily development emerged as a major residential land use in the areas west and east of the site. Ms. Moolgavkar said transit use has increased in the area as well.

The Planning Commission recommended by a vote of 5-1 to include the Glendale Country Club NE proposal in threshold review. The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions resulting from the unanticipated consequence of an adopted policy when higher density multifamily development emerged as a major residential land use in the areas west and east of the site along NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Ms. Moolgavkar said the Commission anticipates an increased focus on transit services in the area. She said Commissioner deVadoss expressed concern regarding potentially isolating the site without a land use reason. Ms. Moolgavkar said there was a brief discussion by the Commission about including the entire golf course in the proposal. If selected for the annual work program, the Commission will continue to study potentially isolating the proposed multifamily housing site from the Glendale Country Club.

Mr. Matz summarized the community outreach efforts related to the CPA proposals. The highest number of comments were received for the Glendale Country Club NE proposal. Of those, 18 were generally in favor of the proposed CPA, and 10 individuals requested more information. Ten individuals spoke during the public hearing.

Ms. Johnson said staff has had to modify and adapt its community engagement approach due to the pandemic. She noted that other amendments initiated by the Council consistent with Action C-1 of the Affordable Housing Strategy will be incorporated into the CPA review as well. Ms. Johnson said a courtesy public hearing will be held with the East Bellevue Community Council prior to the Planning Commission's public hearing in October. Staff anticipates final City Council action on the CPAs during the fourth quarter.

Mayor Robinson thanked everyone for the presentation.

Councilmember Barksdale thanked Ms. Morisseau for her leadership and welcomed Ms. Moolgavkar as the new Planning Commission Chair. He thanked staff for their thoughtful work with the Commission. He expressed support for the Planning Commission's recommendations regarding threshold review.

Councilmember Lee thanked staff and the Planning Commission for their work. Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. Matz said the Glendale Country Club NE CPA application proposes a map amendment from Single Family-Low (SF-L) to Multifamily-Medium (MF-M). Mr. Matz said that final review includes an evaluation of the compatibility of the proposal with existing development.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for moving forward with the Planning Commission's recommendation.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for the presentation and said he was ready to move forward with the recommendation for threshold review.

Responding to Councilmember Zahn regarding the CPA application that was withdrawn, Mr. Matz said that, under the rules adopted by the Council last year, once an application has been submitted and is considered complete, the three-year rule is triggered. He said the three-year rule applies to the Kapela property CPA that was withdrawn.

Councilmember Robertson expressed support for moving forward with threshold review as recommended by the Planning Commission. Responding to Ms. Robertson, Community Development Department Assistant Director Emil King confirmed that the City has processed a number of rezones for split-zoned properties over the past several years. He said the other remaining parcel is near and east of the 100 Bellevue Way SE subject property. It was recently developed as an apartment building under the split zoning, so there would be no net effect in changing the zoning.

Ms. Robertson said the 100 Bellevue Way SE proposal moves the downtown boundary farther south than at any other point. She said the City promised the neighborhoods that it would maintain the downtown boundary. While she has been supportive of fixing the split-zoned parcels, she wants to be sure the CPA does not set a precedent for continuing to modify the downtown boundary. Ms. Robertson said she would like the Commission to opine on how this will not set a precedent and subsequently create a new changed circumstance for the properties immediately to the east.

Regarding the Safeguard Self Storage CPA proposal, Councilmember Robertson observed that there is no Community Business (CB) zoning near the location. She asked whether this creates a precedent that will lead to upzoning on adjacent properties. She expressed a similar concern about the NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Partners CPA proposal regarding the potential for setting a precedent that would trigger upzones on adjacent properties. Ms. Robertson said she had the same concern

regarding the Glendale Country Club NE proposal as well. Ms. Robertson said the site touches adjacent Multifamily-Medium zoning. However, the frontage is primarily along Single Family-Medium development.

Councilmember Robertson said she is hoping that the Transportation Commission and staff will review the transportation impacts of the proposed rezones. She looks forward to seeing the analysis for final review.

Mayor Robinson concurred with Councilmember Robertson's concerns regarding the potential for setting precedence that will trigger property upzoning. However, Ms. Robinson said she is supportive of the Planning Commission's recommendations. She said it is important that any future development be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Ms. Robinson said she wants to ensure that the City is exploring every opportunity to encourage the development of affordable housing. She wondered whether the City could achieve affordable housing or receive fees in lieu to be used for affordable housing. She would like staff and the Planning Commission to review the Affordable Housing Strategy to determine whether some of the requirements could be linked to upzoning.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. Johnson confirmed that staff will incorporate the Council's comments tonight into the final review.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the Planning Commission's recommendation and for exploring affordable housing opportunities and policies.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis concurred.

→ Councilmember Robertson moved to adopt the 2020 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) Work Program as recommended by the Planning Commission, and to direct staff to ensure that the CPA Final Review analysis includes an evaluation of transportation impacts, the potential for setting precedence for upzoning, and how the CPAs might be used to achieve affordable housing units. Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

- (b) Ordinance No. 6522: 1) authorizing execution of a grant agreement with King County to accept \$221,909 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") funding to fund economic relief and recovery activities in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency; 2) amending the 2019-2020 Operating Grants, Donations, and Special Reserves Fund to increase the appropriation by \$221,909; and 3) authorizing the expenditures of said funds.

City Manager Miyake said Ordinance No. 6522 authorizes a grant agreement with King County to accept \$221,909 in funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.