

BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

CITY OF BELLEVUE

September 23, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Moolgavkar, Vice Chair Malakoutian,
Commissioners Ferris, Laing, Morisseau

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner deVadoss

STAFF PRESENT: Thara Johnson, Nicholas Matz, Emil King, Department of
Community Development

COUNCIL LIAISON: Councilmember Barksdale

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER
(6:30 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Moolgavkar who presided.

2. ROLL CALL
(6:31 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner deVadoss who was excused.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
(6:31 p.m.)

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

4. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None
(6:32 p.m.)

5. STAFF REPORTS
(6:32 p.m.)

Comprehensive Planning Manager Thara Johnson briefly reviewed with the Commission the schedule of upcoming meetings and agenda items.

6. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS
(6:37 p.m.)

Ms. Kim Lovell Price, 11015 NE 8th Street, spoke as the executive director of Downtown Action

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- Downtown, Final Review, Planning Commission, Affordable Housing Strategy are all capitalized.
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- When used together with a name, Subarea and Plan should be capitalized eg Crossroads Subarea Plan.

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to Save Housing (DASH), and Vice-President of Transforming Age, both of which are non-profit organizations committed to affordable housing. She said DASH currently owns and operates 160 affordable housing units in Bellevue on the corner of NE 8th Street and 12th Avenue NE on a 7.5-acre site. She said DASH submitted a Comprehensive Plan amendment three years ago in order to redevelop the site, which is located in a high rapid transit area. DASH is in year 15 of the property which means it is eligible for exiting its investor and redeveloping the site. The submitted CPA was sidelined to the Wilburton subarea plan and it was resubmitted on September 15. The hope was that the site would be considered as part of the housing strategy back in 2016 to incentivize the Land Use Code so that non-profits and faith-based organizations could take full advantage of redeveloping currently owned and operated sites. DASH is not looking to develop in single family areas. The DASH site is in an obvious area for redevelopment. The Commission was asked to consider the proposed CPA and was strongly encouraged to review all of the incentives DASH believes could make the project a reality in the C-1. DASH would be more than happy to meet with any of the Commissioners to discuss the issues and the solutions, specifically what incentives in the C-1 would get the project to partnering with the city.

Ms. Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, said she has been following the Comprehensive Plan amendment process as it has made its way through the Commission. She said she hoped the presentation by the staff would include the East Bellevue Community Council's role in the process timeline. Two of the privately initiated amendments fall into the jurisdiction of the East Bellevue Community Council. The Commission should pay attention to all communications received from the public and take them into consideration when drafting its recommendations. With regard to the Glendale Country Club amendment, every letter submitted to the Commission has contained a reference to the club's need for the financial gain from the sale of the property. That, however, is not something the Commission should even consider. With regard to the affordable housing issue, when Commissioners and Councilmembers say they hope some projects in particular can include affordable housing, there should be some indication from the developers that they will in fact be including discounted units. The zoning issues and the traffic study referenced by Councilmember Robertson at a recent Council meeting should be discussed by the Commission.

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Mr. Thaddeus Gregory, 999 3rd Avenue, Seattle, spoke representing SRM, owner of property at the corner of Bellevue Way SE and South Main Street, including a parcel that is bisected by a zoning line, rendering part of the property zoned DNTN-MU and the other part Office. Accordingly, the CPA submitted by SRM seeks a unified zoning designation for one of the last split-zone parcels in downtown Bellevue. The SRM proposal will provide a public benefit and will enhance the public health, safety and welfare of the city. The application outlines the housing benefits, the issue of fostering a signature gateway, and utilizing environmentally conscience transportation approaches. There would also be increased foot traffic associated with the site, extending the sidewalk, driving more people to the area, and supporting the local neighborhood economy. The notion of limiting downtown development southward beyond the downtown's current southern border is outweighed by the call for a signature southern gateway and to provide crucial centrally located housing and fostering a development that will improve and reflect the surrounding neighborhood. SRM is excited by the opportunity to transform an underutilized intersection into a signature southern gateway into the downtown. The Commission was asked to support the amendment.

Ms. Johnson noted that three written communications had been received, one each from Betsi Hummer, Thaddeus Gregory and Larry Martin.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – None

(6:53 p.m.)

8. STUDY SESSION

(6:53 p.m.)

A. Final Review Study Session on 2020 Privately Initiated Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments

On behalf of the city, Senior Planner Nicholas Matz acknowledged the land on which the city sits as the ancestral homelands of the Coast Salish people, the traditional home of all tribes and bands within the Duwamish and Snoqualmie India Tribe. By this acknowledgement the city takes the opportunity to honor and express the city's deepest respect to the original caretakers of the land, a people that are still here continuing to honor their heritage.

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Mr. Matz said after studying the four privately initiated Comprehensive Plan amendments, the Commission would be asked to set a final review public hearing for October 28. He reminded the Commissioners that the final review criteria differed from those used for the threshold review process. He noted that all of the criteria must be met in order to craft a recommendation to advance a proposed amendment, namely that the proposal: 1) is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, other goals and policies, the Countywide Planning Policies, the Growth Management Act and other applicable laws; 2) addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city as identified in its long-range planning and policy documents; 3) addresses significantly changed conditions; 4) is suitable for development in general conformance with adjacent land use, surrounding development pattern, and with zoning standards under the potential zoning classifications; and 5) demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare of the city.

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In addition to the four privately initiated CPA's, an additional amendment is up for consideration. The city initiated amendment addresses the Affordable Housing C-1 Strategy. Mr. Matz noted that the Commission conducted a study session on the affordable housing strategy on September 9.

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Both the NE 8th Street Partners and Glendale Country Club NE amendments are within the jurisdiction of the East Bellevue Community Council and they will be presented to that body in a courtesy hearing on October 6. Comments made during that hearing will be included in the Commission record and will be part of the testimony associated with the Commission's final review public hearing.

1. 100 Bellevue Way SE

Mr. Matz said the privately initiated application proposes a map amendment from a split DNTN-MU and Office to all DNTN-MU. On August 3, the City Council accepted the recommendation of the Commission to advance the application to final review. The Commission based its recommendation on the finding that the proposed ed amendment is appropriately addressed through the Comprehensive Plan final review decision criteria with regard to the proposed configuration action.

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Mr. Matz noted the Commission had previously asked how the downtown boundary came to be applied to the site, and the ramifications of the split designation based on a series of split-site plan amendments that have been approved by the City Council going back to 2015. He said the site was originally three parcels. It is likely the split occurred because the part of the proposal

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that is designated Office was Lot 15 in a series of platted lots that extended west from 106th Avenue NE along Main Street to Bellevue Way and then south. The three lots, Lots 13, 14 and 15 ~~making up the site were combined at some point after the City's 1953 incorporation~~. In 1972, the southern portion, Lot 15, was rezoned by ordinance to Office from an old residential zoning classification. The other two properties had a different designation on them and the Office piece made the whole area look different. When the zoning changed again, a circumstance was created that subsequently allowed the property to be built on. In 1979 and 1981, when the downtown boundary was established, it became a convenient line, the line of Office, that would be in the southern boundary. The split happened because Office ~~zoning~~ on Lot 15 was the most ~~appropriate~~ designation after the city was incorporated and before the boundary for the downtown was established, ~~which stopped at the southern Office zoning line~~. Even though the property was developed in 1974, and there ~~were~~ comparable zoning ~~on~~ the two northern parcels and the one southern parcel, the historical nature of the Office ~~zone~~ set up the same kind of boundary as other Office ~~zones~~ that ~~were located~~ along the east-west boundary. ~~This~~ is consistent with the history of other lots that were split by the boundary and which have been reconciled over the last five years with plan amendments by the City Council.

Mr. Matz said the current property boundaries derive from the original platting decisions. He noted that he had previously described how Main Street was seen as the center of a spine rather than as an edge, and how the properties on the southern part related to that. The southern boundary as it currently exists generally occurs where commercial and residential zoning diverged from the historical development pattern. That is also what happened on the 100 Bellevue Way SE site.

Mr. Matz noted that the Commission was not looking at a specific development proposal for the 100 Bellevue Way SE CPA. The issue of whether or not the site can be developed under the potential zoning classification that would occur through a rezone should the CPA be adopted is centered on the question of development capacity. If the site were to remain split, the portion of the three sites where the strip center is located has a building capacity of 78,000 square feet at the 3.25 FAR allowed in the perimeter zone. The portion that would remain Office has a building capacity of about 7000 square feet under the non-downtown 0.5 FAR. If combined into a single designation, the three-lot site would have a capacity of approximately 140,000 square feet.

Commissioner Ferris said she generally supported the proposed amendment as a way of increasing capacity and bringing about a more dynamic gateway to the southern part of the city.

Commissioner Bhargava asked if the proposed additional capacity would translate into any meaningful traffic impacts. Mr. Matz said a potential trip impact based on a PM Peak analysis will be done. It will look at the number of trips a multifamily and office development on the site would generate under the split-designation scenario and under the proposed scenario. Where a proposal does not exceed the threshold of 30 PM Peak trips, the assumption is made that the changes can be mitigated by the city's codes and policies and rules. Above that threshold, additional mitigation must be considered, including questions of access and configurations. Where the impact is deemed to be even more significant, a broader environmental brush is brought to bear. He said in his opinion, the impact would be less than significant.

Commissioner Bhargava asked if the traffic analyses take into account potential trip reductions that would happen due to a mixed use designation, including increased pedestrian trips. Mr. Matz said the way in which traffic impacts is managed is called level of service. The approach does not allow for fully exploring the consequences of creating opportunities for people to live and work in situations in which they do not need cars. The level of service standard precludes

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building pedestrian traffic into the environmental review, but that does not mean such things cannot be anticipated given the tools available to address non-motorized issues.

Commissioner Morisseau said it was her understanding, based on comments made by Councilmember Robertson, that the proposed amendment, if approved, would not in fact result in moving the downtown boundary southward, which the city has promised the neighborhoods it will not do. Mr. Matz said that is correct. The question before the Commission, as with other split designations, is the failure to give both sides of the split equal due under the zoning code. Commissioner Morisseau said Councilmember Robertson also said she wanted to be sure that allowing the amendment to move forward would not set a precedent and create changed circumstances.

Commissioner Malakoutian asked if staff had an estimation of how many split-zone parcels remain. Mr. Matz said there were at one time six such parcels germane to the downtown. To date, five of them have been addressed and fixed. The 100 Bellevue Way SE site is the last one. There is a site to the east that continues to be slightly split, but that boundary was moved through a Comprehensive Plan amendment action and the site has been built. Citywide there are some 250 split-zone properties.

Councilmember Barksdale said an issue was raised during a Council meeting around the potential for affordable housing on the site. The potential for affordable housing on the site could be made available if consideration were to be given to extending the city's multifamily tax exemption to include the site. That issue will be raised at an upcoming Council meeting and that would be an opportunity for the developers to suggest they should be considered for multifamily tax exemption status.

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Mr. Matz said the comment received from Mr. Gregory was the only one received on the application since the August 3 Council action to establish the work program.

2. Safegard Self Storage

Mr. Matz said the privately initiated application proposes a map amendment from Office to Community Business (CB) on five parcels in the Crossroads subarea totaling 6.4 acres. The Council on August 3 accepted the recommendation of the Commission to advance the amendment to final review. The Commission found that the proposed amendment does not raise policy or land use issues that are more appropriately addressed by an ongoing work program by the City Council, primarily because the Crossroads subarea plan has been amended over the years to build in the policy guidance needed to address the land use mix in Crossroads, with particular focus on multifamily buildout, opportunities for mixed use development, and an historically ongoing community focus.

Mr. Matz said the subject site is developed with an existing public storage unit. There is multifamily to the north, single family to the east, Crossroads Park to the west and south, and further to the west is the Crossroads Shopping Center. Without recommending or referencing any particular development proposal, he said the capacity analysis looked at the difference between the current designation and the proposed designation. Given the size of the property, under the existing Office designation there could be three different types of land uses: office, which would produce roughly 92,500 square feet of building capacity; and office with a residential component, which would limit the residential element to no more than half the FAR, which would yield 46,000 square feet of building capacity and 46 units of 1000 square feet each. Under a CB designation, an all-residential development could result in 191 units with approximately

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5000 square feet of ground floor retail. The CB designation includes a 45-foot building height limit. The applicant believes the CB designation will yield the best possible outcome in terms of a mixed use development, and has noted they would be able to include 20 affordable housing units through the bonus incentive provisions of the Land Use Code. This analysis will be looked at more closely in the staff recommendation.

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Mr. Matz said the letter previously received from Mr. Martin and made available as part of the public record outlined how they believe the final review decision criteria are met. It is the only comment received on the application since the August 3 Council action to establish the work program.

Commissioner Bhargava asked for clarification of how staff came to the conclusion that under CB the site could have 5000 square feet of ground floor commercial. Mr. Matz said he asked the applicant to comment on what he thought they would be including. The development agreement for Uptown Village required them to have a certain amount of commercial space. CB does not require a minimum amount of commercial space, though it does require the inclusion of ground floor retail in residential projects. The ground floor retail will be accounted for in the traffic analysis.

Commissioner Morisseau asked for clarification on the requirements for commercial space under the CB designation. Mr. Matz said CB does not restrict future development to solely residential. CB requires commercial space to be provided at the ground floor level, accessible to the community as well as to the residents of the associated housing units when there is a residential component. There is no minimum requirement for commercial space, but it does have to be present. A development agreement, which would be required for the site, could realize more commercial capacity for the ground floor retail use.

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Commissioner Ferris said she assumed the intent for the Crossroads area is to increase the density of housing. She asked if the loss of office capacity in the area is a concern to anyone. Mr. Matz said it certainly is a concern. The storage facility use on the Office-zoned site is actually a nonconforming use, and it is legitimate to ask what might go on the site should the storage use go away. He said that was why he indicated the site could support 92,500 square feet of building capacity given the 0.33 FAR. There is definitely a focus on housing, but there is housing coming from other designations in the city, most notably office. On three of the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments, Office is the zone people want to amend in moving toward housing solutions. Office does not appear to be a utility designation that is likely to appeal to people for more office. With regard to the Safegard site specifically, the pertinent policy question is what is the use that will best support Crossroads redevelopment. The current Crossroads subarea plan clarifies that office is an appropriate use on the site.

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Commissioner Malakoutian noted that a property owner seeking to change the designation for a site may present plans for how they want to redevelop the site, but once the designation change is approved, they are not held to that specific proposal. Mr. Matz confirmed that. He said the Comprehensive Plan designation for a site creates a bucket of capacity which can be realized in a number of different ways. The issue is how much a particular designation represents in terms of a land use and a policy change. The Comprehensive Plan process is not used to anoint a particular development proposal. For Crossroads in particular, the use of the development agreement process is a significant advance force that allows for creating more specificity in terms of mixed use projects within the framework of conventional zoning. A development agreement is essentially a contract between the city and a developer to do certain things. There are policies in the Crossroads subarea plan that require a development agreement where

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multifamily is part of the mix, and that require certain things be addressed, such site design and connectivity. If the amendment goes forward, at the rezone level the property owner will need to enter into a development agreement with the city.

Councilmember Barksdale noted the city is interested in putting in more retail closer to where people live to give them more access to retail and services. He said a Community Business designation would help achieve that goal.

Commissioner Ferris asked if a development agreement could be used to require 20 affordable housing units on the site. Mr. Matz said a development agreement would not necessarily require that. The applicant would want to take advantage of the city's affordable housing incentives in the Land Use Code.

Commissioner Morisseau observed that the zoning near the site shows mostly Office and multifamily housing. She asked why the applicant chose to seek a CB designation given that there is no CB zoning in the immediate vicinity. She also asked how the site specifically fits into the greater Crossroads subarea plan. Mr. Matz stated that the site is not the sole remaining Office site in the area. Directly to the east is the Salvation Army center which is also zoned Office. The park land adjacent to the site zoned Public Facility/Office. He said the long-time owner of the site has been looking to see what opportunities exist for the site that fit with the subarea plan, and the available options are Multifamily-High, Community Business and Neighborhood Mixed Use. The Crossroads policies seek to bring more multifamily into the area with a mixed use focus. After considering the options, the property owner chose to go with CB.

Commissioner Morisseau asked for a staff analysis of the possible unintended consequences of having the site as the only CB-zoned site in the area. Mr. Matz pointed out that all of the Crossroads Shopping Center site is zoned CB running from NE 8th Street north to NE 15th Street. He said he would include in his analysis what things would look like should the site redevelop entirely with a commercial focus.

3. NE 8th Street Partners

Mr. Matz said the privately initiated application seeks a map amendment from Office to Multifamily-High on two parcels that total nearly one acre on NE 8th Street. The Council accepted the recommendation of the Commission to advance the proposal into final review, in part on the finding of the Commission that the amendment addresses significantly changed conditions, and the fact that higher multifamily development and the potential for redevelopment has emerged as a major residential land use pattern in the areas west and east of the site along NE 8th Street, which has policy support for a transit focus. A number of neighborhood service and convenience uses have developed within close proximity to the site.

The existing two-parcel site is roughly 41,000 square feet. A veterinary hospital is located in a 3600 square-foot building on the western portion of the site, and a two-story office building is located on the eastern portion of the site. The balance of the site is used for parking. Tenants that have used the address include the Cryptic Club, Robo Kids, the American Academy of Fine Arts, the NIKA International Dance Sport Academy, El Mundo Communications, chiropractic physicians, and the Ireland Insurance Association.

Mr. Matz noted that if the site were to remain with an Office designation, redevelopment could yield 20,000 square feet of building capacity given the 0.5 FAR, or a commercial/residential mix that could include ten 1000-square-foot units of residential capacity, which is half the allowed

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floor area. Under a multifamily designation, the capacity of the site would be 18 units at Multifamily-Medium and 28 units at Multifamily-High.

Both Multifamily-Medium and Multifamily-High have comparable site dimensional requirements for setbacks and building height. Ten units of multifamily added to the area is unlikely to yield a significant difference in measured traffic impact, but from the developer's perspective either Multifamily-Medium or Multifamily-High could make accommodating the required parking difficult. Given the site's adjacency to other multifamily, there would not be any transition area requirements triggered.

Mr. Matz said the policy question is how the Comprehensive Plan can balance goals for local business retention while ensuring that the City has the requisite land use and building types it needs to address changing conditions. The site is home to an older development that is not within an employment center but which has served a role for small businesses to provide local services. The land use strategy seeks to enhance the growth and vitality of existing neighborhoods, including small businesses, while providing for commercial uses and development that serves community needs. Balancing acts are part and parcel of each of the Comprehensive Plan amendments before the Commission, all pertinent to the question of providing additional housing represented by this proposal.

Commissioner Bhargava asked if there are any policy incentives such as increased density in exchange for creating pedestrian trips within a certain neighborhood or within a certain distance from a neighborhood as a way of avoiding vehicle trips. With regard to the Safegard site, he said one could think about opportunities to enhance compatible commercial uses that would drive pedestrian traffic rather than vehicle trips. Mr. Matz said the city generally looks at areas where infrastructure has been put in place to support connectivity and multi-modal transportation modes. There are incentives in place in areas like Bel-Red and the downtown, though it is assumed development in such areas will also provide options for cars. Relative to the NE 8th Street site, the issue was raised because of the transit focus the street has. The city has not, however, intervened from a policy standpoint to make it easier for the connections to happen.

Department of Planning and Community Development Assistant Director Emil King said the question about what the city might want to do to incentivize walkability and retail uses that might drive walkability is a good one. The current batch of annual Comprehensive Plan amendments are specific in that they seek a change from one zone to a new zone that is already in place and could be used in those areas. A planning effort that steps back and takes in and entire area could clearly involve consideration of incentives to drive pedestrianism. The option of exempting ground-floor retail has been used to that end.

Commissioner Ferris noted that city planners have considered the area around the 130th station as a hub for arts uses. She said many on the list of tenants that have used the NE 8th Street Partners site would not fit into that kind of category. She asked if the NE 8th Street Partners site is included in the vision for an arts center. Mr. Matz said it is not and that the arts district focus is entirely in Bel-Red.

Commissioner Morisseau asked why staff believes the policy question should be around business retention given that the small site is close to business zoning to the east on 140th Avenue NE, and on the Bel-Red corridor. Mr. Matz explained from the perspective of the totality of the issues that have come forward, the market is saying Office-designated sites would be better served by supplying residential capacity to the city. While not yet a wave or a trend, that direction is broadening across designations. Office sites outside of the downtown do serve a particular

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economic purpose as places for smaller businesses to get a foothold, especially community serving office uses. The question of business retention in the economic development chapter looks at the city as a whole. As such, it is a policy question to consider, though it is not the only policy question to consider.

4. Glendale Country Club

Mr. Matz said the privately initiated application proposes a map change from Single Family-Low to Multifamily-Medium on a roughly 3.3-acre portion of the currently undivided Glendale Country Club property. The NE 8th Street Partners site is just to the east of the site. The Council on August 3 accepted the Commission's recommendation to advance the application into final review. The Commission based its recommendation in part on the fact that there are significantly changed conditions given that higher-density multifamily development has emerged as a major residential land use pattern in the area east and west along NE 8th Street, which is the result of an increasing transit focus. A number of neighborhood service and convenience uses have been developed within close proximity to the site.

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Mr. Matz said the application states that the northeast corner of the club site that is the focus of the proposal is not critical to the daily operations of the golf club. It is encumbered by critical areas on the western side that abuts the club fairway, and by utility lines to the east. The presence of steep slopes and wetlands critical areas and their associated buffers do constraint the potential housing capacity of the site. The applicant has stated the belief that the proposal could result in the development of up to 32 new homes. Mr. Matz said development feasibility and site access issues will be addressed in the staff recommendation.

The site's non-suitability for use as a golf course may be appropriate from a financial perspective. That aspect was presented in the materials from the applicant as well as in subsequent testimony and it is part of their question, but from a Comprehensive Plan standpoint it is less clear how the definition of suitability is consistent with the plan. Isolating the site for the purposes of housing potential also has the effect of isolating the site from the environmental and open space benefits it currently provides to the neighboring areas. Staff wants to establish a nexus between the site and the remaining golf course property relative to how they function and the guidance provided by environmental parks and open space and Comprehensive Plan policy. The application and the recommendation should address concerns expressed in the city's land use strategies about ensuring that new infill development appropriately fits into existing neighborhoods, and the role the golf course plays will be a key component of that.

Mr. Matz said under Single Family-Low the site would yield three units. If a change to Multifamily-Medium were to be effected, the fact that 63.2 percent of the site is impacted by critical areas means the site could yield an estimated 25 housing units. Under Multifamily-High, and given the same critical area constraints, the capacity is estimated to be 37 units.

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Commissioner Morisseau asked about the concerns voiced about the environmental utility of the site for flora and fauna which in its natural condition attracts wildlife to the site, especially birds. Mr. Matz said that question will be addressed in the context of the connection between the site and the golf course and the environmental role they play in the community, versus the land use role the applicant hopes development of the site could play in the community.

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Commissioner Bhargava commented that in thinking about wildlife and environmental corridors consideration is generally given to more than just a specific site. The environmental connectivity of similar areas of refuge that are adjacent or within a short distance are usually taken into

account in terms of the ability of wildlife to get to and from the site. That essentially means giving consideration to whether or not the site plays a role in the larger ecological grid. The question relative to the subject property is whether or not developing the site will have adverse environmental impacts. Mr. Matz said he would include that research in the staff recommendation.

Commissioner Morisseau commented that the Council specifically wanted the Commission to look for ways to find affordable housing opportunities during the review of the various Comprehensive Plan amendments. She asked staff to include a response to that issue in their recommendation.

Commissioner Morisseau said another concern voiced by the Council was the issue of upzoning of the various sites. Mr. Matz said that question is what prompted staff to look at the issue of environmental versus land use, and particularly the role the Glendale Country Club CPA site and the golf course play in the community.

Commissioner Morisseau asked if the Transportation Commission at any given point will be asked to review any of the proposed amendments and provide input. Mr. Matz said the Transportation Commission is not asked to weigh in relative to site-specific Comprehensive Plan amendments over which the authority of the Planning Commission is absolute in terms of land use. The potential traffic issues are looked at through the lens of environmental review and threshold determination. The Transportation Commission is involved relative to larger transportation policy questions which impact larger areas of the city. He clarified, however, that planning staff work with staff from Transportation, Utilities and Development Services staff to gain their feedback on the development potential for the proposed amendments.

Mr. Matz said the staff's final review recommendations will be published on October 8 along with notice of a public hearing on October 28. The East Bellevue Community Council will hold a courtesy public hearing on the two private amendment applications that fall within its jurisdiction on October 6, and the record of that hearing will be made available as part of the testimony for the Commission's public hearing. The Commission's recommendations will be forwarded to the Council for review and action before the end of the year. The East Bellevue Community Council will act in January on whether to validate or invalidate the decision of the Council relative to the land use actions within its jurisdiction.

Commissioner Morisseau said she had a concern with the fact that after the Commission and the staff go to all the work of reviewing and developing recommendations for Comprehensive Plan amendments, and after the Council reviews the recommendations and acts on them, the East Bellevue Community Council can simply vote to invalidate it all. She said the process seems inefficient and suggested it could be improved by finding a collaborative approach that uses the city's resources in a better way. Mr. Matz said the role of the Commission and the Council is to do the work appointed to each body. East Bellevue Community Council Councilmembers are encouraged to participate and share their views through the public comment and hearing process. He said Land Use Code 20.35.450 gives the community council its authority to validate or invalidate decisions of the Council with regards to land use matters in its jurisdiction.

Commissioner Moolgavkar suggested the issue would be good to address at the Commission's retreat.

The Commission confirmed its intent to schedule the public hearing for October 28.

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9. OTHER BUSINESS – None

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 9, 2020

Commissioner Morisseau referred to the penultimate paragraph on page 4 and said it did adequately reflect the point she was trying to make. She said she was thrilled the city is looking for creative ways to find sites to help solve the affordable housing issue. She said the point she was making about using school district sites was that the student body population is currently growing and there are already issues of capacity in serving the students within the school district. Some schools are having to use portable facilities as classrooms. Using school district properties to provide affordable housing units could worsen that situation for the schools. She asked to have the paragraph in the minutes amended to reflect that point.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Malakoutian. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bhargava and the motion carried unanimously.

11. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, spoke as a private citizen and said the meeting had been great. She said she appreciated the Commission recognizing some of the issues she had previously raised and how they were addressed.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

13. ADJOURNMENT

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

Chair Moolgavkar adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

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