

East Bellevue Community Council
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

October 6, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Chair Hummer, Vice Chair Gooding, and Councilmembers Dhananjaya, Epstein, and Kasner

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Nicholas Matz, Senior Planner, Community Development Department
Janet Lewine, Senior Planner, Community Development Department
Thara Johnson, Planning Manager, Community Development Department

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m., with Chair Hummer presiding. She noted that Councilmembers and staff were participating remotely due to the governor's order prohibiting in-person meetings.

2. **ROLL CALL/FLAG SALUTE**

Deputy City Clerk Karin Roberts called the roll. All Councilmembers were present.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Hummer suggested moving Agenda Item 8(a), Appointment to Vacant EBCC Position, to follow the approval of the agenda.

Vice Chair Gooding moved to approve the agenda, amended to move Agenda Item 8(a) to occur as the next item. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

8. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

(a) Appointment to Vacant EBCC Position

Chair Hummer recalled that the EBCC interviewed a number of candidates to fill the vacant EBCC position during its September 1 meeting.

Councilmember Kasner nominated Michelle Valverde to fill the vacant position.

Councilmember Dhananjaya nominated Ron Epstein to fill the vacant position.

Mr. Kasner said he is looking at what will work best for the community. He said the EBCC was an all-male council for many years and only recently had two women on the council at the same time. He noted Ms. Valverde's community service experience and her role as the president of her homeowner's association.

Ms. Valverde thanked the EBCC for their consideration and reiterated her interest in serving on the council.

Councilmember Dhananjaya noted that Mr. Epstein is a longtime Lake Hills resident who has been involved in the community and has an interest in local government.

Mr. Epstein thanked the EBCC for their consideration and expressed his interest in representing East Bellevue residents.

The nomination of Michelle Valverde failed by a vote of 1-3, with Councilmember Kasner in favor.

The nomination of Ron Epstein carried by a vote of 4-0.

Chair Hummer declared Ron Epstein's appointment to position 4 on the EBCC.

Chair Hummer thanked the candidates for their interest and encouraged them to stay involved in the community.

4. **COMMUNICATIONS: WRITTEN AND ORAL**

Chair Hummer reminded the public that the EBCC cannot hear comments regarding Puget Sound Energy's Energize Eastside project or the Puesta del Sol School Conditional Use Permit (CUP) because they could become quasi-judicial matters before the EBCC in the future.

Deputy City Clerk Karin Roberts said that no one signed up for oral communications. However, one person submitted written comments for the later courtesy hearing.

Chair Hummer reminded the public to email all communications to EBCC@bellevuewa.gov.

5. **REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS:** None.

6. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Hummer welcomed Ron Epstein as the new EBCC member.

7. **PUBLIC/COURTESY HEARINGS**

- (a) Courtesy Hearing: 2020 Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs)

Chair Hummer said that tonight's courtesy hearing is the EBCC's first opportunity to comment on the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs) that could come before the EBCC for final approval or disapproval. She noted that a public hearing will be held at a future date.

Ms. Hummer provided a brief history of the creation of the EBCC when East Bellevue was annexed to the City of Bellevue. The comments from the public and the EBCC this evening will be submitted into the record and presented to the Planning Commission for their use in making recommendations for consideration by the City Council. Any site-specific CPAs approved by the City Council that fall within the EBCC's jurisdiction will come before the EBCC for approval or disapproval.

Thara Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Manager, said that three CPA proposals this year fall within the EBCC's jurisdiction.

Nicholas Matz, Senior Planner, read the City's Native Land Acknowledgement into the record for the purpose of the public hearing.

Mr. Matz said the Planning Commission will conduct the Process IV Final Review public hearing on October 28. He described the final review criteria provided in Land Use Code section 20.30I for evaluating CPA proposals. He said the following criteria have been met for the CPA proposals that have been advanced from threshold review to final review: 1) consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, other goals and policies, state Growth Management Act, Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), and other applicable law; 2) addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city as identified in long-range planning and policies; 3) addresses significantly changed conditions; 4) suitable for development in general conformance with adjacent land uses, surrounding development pattern, and zoning standards; and 5) demonstrates a public benefit and enhances public health, safety, and welfare.

The two site-specific CPAs in the EBCC jurisdiction are the Glendale Country Club NE CPA and the NE 8th Street Partners CPA. There are five proposals in the 2020 Final Review work program, and the last three apply to the EBCC area: 1) 100 Bellevue Way SE, map amendment from split Downtown zoning to DNTN-MU (Mixed Use) on a 0.87-acre site, 2) Safeguard Self Storage, map amendment from Office (O) to Community Business (CB) on five parcels totaling 6.4 acres, 3) NE 8th Street Partners, map amendment from Office (O) to Multifamily-High (MF-H) on two parcels of a one-acre site, 4) Glendale Country Club NE, map amendment from Single Family-Low (SF-L) to Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) on a 3.3-acre portion of the property fronting NE 8th Street, and 5) policies to implement the City's Affordable Housing Strategy C-1.

The affordable housing CPA would develop policy for an incentive-based approach to increasing affordable housing, consistent with Affordable Housing Strategy C-1: "Increase development potential on suitable land owned by public, nonprofit housing, and faith-based entities for affordable housing." The Planning Commission discussed the affordable housing CPA proposal on September 9, 2020.

Mr. Matz provided additional details regarding the CPA proposals affecting the EBCC and the Final Review process. The NE 8th Street Partners proposal applies to a two-parcel site that currently has a veterinary hospital in a 3,600-foot building and a separate office building. Past tenants include RoboKids STEM Education, NIKA International Dance Sport Academy, El

Mundo Communications, Ireland Insurance Association, and others. The CPA application proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Multifamily-High (MF-H). The site has 20,000 square feet of building capacity and, under the current Office designation, 10 residential units could be included in the office development. Up to 18 units could potentially be developed with MF-M zoning and 28 units could be developed with MF-H zoning.

The Glendale Country Club NE CPA proposes a change in the map designation for the property from SF-L to MF-M. The site analysis indicates that the subject portion of the property is not critical to the golf course's daily operations and it is encumbered by critical areas. The presence of steep slopes and wetlands could constrain the potential housing capacity for the site. Mr. Matz said staff will explore whether a critical land use connection between the site and the remaining golf course should be established using environment, parks and open space, and land use Comprehensive Plan policies. Critical areas represent 63 percent of the site, and the estimated housing capacity is up to 25 units under MF-M zoning.

Janet Lewine, Senior Planner, described the Affordable Housing Strategy C-1 CPA proposal initiated by the Council. On July 20, 2020, the City Council directed staff to initiate work on an incentive-based approach to encourage the development of more affordable housing units. Strategy C-1 focuses on increasing the development potential on suitable land owned by public, nonprofit housing, and faith-based entities for affordable housing. The City Council approved the Affordable Housing Strategy in June 2017. Ms. Lewine said the goal of the plan is to create 2,500 more affordable homes over a 10-year period. Strategy C-1 represents perhaps the greatest potential for creating more housing for lower-income households at this time.

Ms. Lewine commented on the community benefits and community support for the proposed CPA. She said State House Bill 1377 approved in 2019 directed cities to provide a density bonus for affordable housing on faith-owned properties. However, cities may establish the amount of density bonus based on local needs. The Strategy C-1 work program includes a property and needs analysis as well as a stakeholder engagement process.

Ms. Lewine said that Strategy C-1 provides a single process for handling Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code amendments. The proposed approach is to apply the density bonus in the same areas as the existing citywide affordable housing incentive. Eligible properties must meet City policy and recent state legislation. Ms. Lewine said the proposed qualifying properties could be in multifamily and mixed-use residential districts and in single-family residential districts. Strategy C-1 excludes the use of park and public utilities property as well as the Downtown, BelRed, and Eastgate transit-oriented development (TOD) areas. Ms. Lewine presented a map depicting Strategy C-1 potential sites located north of I-90.

The proposed Affordable Housing Strategy C-1 CPA will initiate the development of policies in the Comprehensive Plan's Housing Element. The Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) will consider a new section to the existing housing incentive in LUC 20.20.128. Additional analysis will be needed to determine the appropriate density increase for qualifying properties. The process will include outreach to nonprofit housing developers, faith-based property owners, and housing and neighborhood groups. Public outreach will include the Planning Commission review and public hearing, EBCC review, notification and outreach to owners of potentially qualifying properties, and community involvement through EngagingBellevue.com.

Ms. Lewine said the EBCC and the Planning Commission will conduct their reviews and public hearings this fall. Action by the City Council on the Affordable Housing Strategy C-1 CPA is anticipated in December, and formal action by the EBCC is anticipated for January 2021. The City Council will continue to work with staff on the LUCA through early 2021.

Mr. Matz said that comments from tonight's hearing will be submitted into the record. Staff's recommendation will be published with the hearing notice on October 8. The Planning Commission will conduct its CPA Final Review public hearing on October 28, and the City Council will review the Commission's recommendations in November and December 2020.

Chair Hummer thanked staff for the presentation. She noted that Thara Johnson is the staff liaison to the Planning Commission.

At 7:15 p.m., Councilmember Kasner moved to open the public hearing. Councilmember Gooding seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Deputy City Clerk Karin Roberts read a written comment from Wei Song. The writer noted the urgent need for affordable housing and expressed support for the NE 8th Street Partners CPA to allow for multifamily uses. As a real estate professional, the writer stated that the rezone would help the community to meet future growth needs by providing higher density homes in the area.

The following individuals provided oral comments:

Dana Nunnelly expressed support for the NE 8th Street Partners CPA proposal. She grew up in Bellevue and currently lives in Kirkland, where she serves as the chair of the Kirkland Cultural Arts Commission and as vice president of the Kirkland Parks and Community Foundation. She said the rezone request aligns with the multifamily zoning already in the area and would take advantage of nearby transit services. She said the property owners held an open house for the residents and businesses within a 500-foot radius of the site. She noted the urgent need for housing in the region.

Clint Whitney, General Manager of Glendale Country Club, asked the EBCC to support the club's CPA proposal. He noted the vibrant landscape, environmental benefits of the property, and the club's investments in drainage infrastructure. He said the proceeds from the redevelopment of the small portion of their property will be reinvested in the golf course. He said the club wants to be a good neighbor and has been working with the community. Based on public input, the club modified the planned access point and addressed reducing the overall density of the site.

Brenda Barnes described the Glendale Country Club CPA proposal. The subject portion of the property has not been used for the golf course in decades. She said the CPA provides the opportunity for modest infill housing along the NE 8th Street transit corridor. She noted there is MF-H development east of the country club. However, the club believes that MF-M density would provide for a graceful transition to surrounding uses. She said that any future project would go through design review and a critical area review.

Ian Morrison, a land use attorney with McCullough Hill Leary, encouraged the Council to support the Glendale Country Club CPA proposal. He raised the issue of the CPA's consistency with existing Comprehensive Plan policies. He said the Wilburton Subarea Plan, Policy 34, strongly encouraged the continuation of the golf course use at Glendale Country Club. He said the proposal represents approximately two percent of the entire 5 million square feet of the club property. Mr. Morrison said the proposal is consistent with Environmental Policy 11 in the Comprehensive Plan that encourages private stewardship of open space. He said the property is one of the largest private open spaces in Bellevue. Mr. Morrison said there is a direct nexus between the CPA proposal and the Wilburton Subarea Plan. He noted the demand for affordable housing near transit services in Bellevue. He said that redevelopment of the small portion of the property will allow the golf course to continue to operate.

TC Wu said he is the owner and manager of NE 8th Street Partners and he operates a family owned real estate business. He works near the CPA subject property. He does not have any current plans for development. However, he believes the community's needs can be better served if the designation of his subject properties are consistent with the surrounding development. Mr. Wu said he has always had a good relationship with his tenants. He said the commercial portion of the building was empty when they purchased it four years ago, and it has been hard to find commercial tenants. He requested the Council's support of the CPA proposal and noted his interest in providing needed housing.

Harold Moniz, Senior Planner at CollinsWoerman, said the NE 8th Street Partners property includes two separate parcels, with each approximately 20,000 square feet in size. The property is currently zoned Office and is surrounded by residential zoned properties. The site is well served by transit. The CPA proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Multifamily-High (MF-H). The map designation would allow R-30 zoning (30 units per acre), which is consistent with the surrounding zoning. The zoning allows a maximum of 28 units. Mr. Moniz said they conducted a preliminary traffic analysis, which concluded that residential uses would produce fewer morning and evening peak vehicle trips than office uses.

Jessica Roe commented on the Final Review criteria for the NE 8th Street Partners CPA proposal. However, she noted that they would provide written comments with more details regarding the review criteria. She said there have been major reinvestments in transit along NE 8th Street and the emergence of the commercial corridor to the east on 140th Avenue NE. She said the property is relatively isolated. She noted the significant need for housing in Bellevue. She said this is a great opportunity for transit-oriented development (TOD). She said that developing housing at the location is consistent with the City's environmental goals related to private vehicle trips.

Ellen Lenhart said her home faces Glendale Country Club. She expressed her strong support for the Glendale Country Club CPA proposal, which will preserve the golf course's open space, trees, and Kelsey Creek habitat through the property. She said the benefits of the CPA proposal are ensuring the long-term financial stability of the club, maintaining the integrity of the neighborhood, promoting the City's vision for a vibrant NE 8th Street corridor, and providing additional housing that is consistent with Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan.

Louis Nickols said he is a longtime resident of NE 5th Place and a member of the Glendale Country Club since 1967. He expressed his support for the club's economic viability and the

preservation of open space and the environment. He expressed support for the Glendale Country Club CPA proposal. He said he appreciates that they are choosing a lower density approach that keeps the development's height and scale in line with the surrounding community.

At 7:50 p.m., Councilmember Dhananjaya moved to close the public hearing. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Councilmember Dhananjaya thanked staff and the applicants for their work on the CPA proposals. Responding to Mr. Dhananjaya regarding the NE 8th Street Partners proposed CPA, Mr. Matz said the Land Use Code requirements for R-20 and R-30 zoning have roughly the same setback and height requirements.

In further response to Mr. Dhananjaya, Mr. Matz said there are no specific development proposals in the CPA process. He said the review of the proposals includes a trip generation analysis to study the anticipated traffic impacts. Mr. Matz said there are generally fewer peak hour trips associated with residential uses than office uses. He said the estimates are based on the maximum capacity of the site and not on a specific development proposal, which could result in lower density.

Referring to the Glendale Country Club CPA proposal, Councilmember Kasner said that some neighbors are concerned about having adequate buffers to single-family development. Responding to Mr. Kasner, Mr. Matz said the parcel is currently located in the Wilburton-NE 8th Street neighborhood or subarea. Mr. Matz said that subarea planning under the new neighborhood structure has not yet occurred and the neighborhood boundaries have not been set.

Mr. Kasner expressed concern that the veterinary clinic and any other businesses on the NE 8th Street Partners site will relocate. He supports the Glendale Country Club CPA proposal for the MF-M map designation.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Mr. Matz said the NE 8th Street Partners CPA proposes a map amendment to MF-H for the development of housing only.

Chair Hummer referred to the NE 8th Street Partners CPA and said it was interesting to see that community feedback resulted in a change in the access route to the west. She said it was interesting that the neighbors to the east asked for the move in the access point where there is what appears to be a street immediately in front of their apartment.

Mr. Matz said that what appears to be a street is the easement for Puget Sound Energy's power line. He said easements are created to grant access to private property for specific reasons.

Ms. Hummer referred to a written communication from a member of the public about the critical areas. She said her understanding is that the Glendale Country Club property has wetlands. Mr. Matz said the applicant submitted documentation indicating that roughly 62 percent of the site is constrained by wetlands and wetland buffers. He said the Land Use Code addresses development on critical areas.

Ms. Hummer asked whether it would be possible for EBCC members, especially the newest member, to be able to participate in the training provided to new Planning Commissioners. Mr. Matz suggested that Chair Hummer work with Deputy City Clerk Roberts to pursue training.

Ms. Hummer said she toured the sites referenced in the CPA proposals, and she observed that access to the NE 8th Street site is limited. As the development density increases, she wondered whether there has been any thought to providing pedestrian access, and perhaps added vehicle access, to other properties. Chair Hummer asked whether there are impacts to the church next to the Walgreens store.

Councilmember Dhananjaya said he appreciated that the Glendale Country Club reached out to the neighbors to discuss their CPA proposal. Responding to Mr. Dhananjaya, Mr. Matz said the access point will ultimately be determined by the City through development review.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Ian Morrison said the genesis of the Glendale Country Club CPA proposal is the Wilburton Subarea Policy 34, which states that the City strongly encourages the continuation of the golf course use. Mr. Morrison said that the sale of the small portion of the site will facilitate the golf course's continued operations and preserve the large open space. He noted the need for housing, especially near NE 8th Street and transit services.

In further response to Mr. Dhananjaya, Mr. Morrison said the neighbors were more supportive of MF-M density housing than of higher density housing development. Mr. Morrison said the decision to propose the MF-M map designation was based on wanting to balance the benefit of housing on NE 8th Street with environmental and transportation issues and impacts. He said the housing units will be overlooking the golf course open space for some time.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. Morrison said the golf course operates as a nonprofit organization. Mr. Whitney said the club will sell the property to a developer, and all proceeds will be reinvested in the golf course.

Councilmember Kasner asked whether there are subsidies available for businesses that are displaced due to housing redevelopment. Mr. Matz said staff would follow up with more information regarding the City's economic development assistance.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya regarding Affordable Housing Strategy C-1, Ms. Lewine said staff monitors growth and other factors that are impacting the housing market, including the pandemic. She said that Bellevue's job growth exceeds the availability of housing, especially affordable housing.

Councilmember Kasner said he is not comfortable with the concept of increased housing density on faith-based properties in the middle of single-family neighborhoods. He opined that Strategy C-1 will affect East Bellevue more than other areas because land is more affordable.

Ms. Lewine clarified that the policy offers a density increase but not a rezone. For example, in a R-5 zoned area, a developer might be able to obtain an increase from five units to seven units. However, they would not be allowed to develop a multifamily project. Ms. Lewine said the

density increase applies only to the type of housing inherently allowed in the existing zoning district.

Chair Hummer said that her top concern regarding the Strategy C-1 CPA is that affordable housing will be concentrated in East Bellevue, where there is already a great deal of multifamily housing. She expressed concern about potential unintended consequences from the policy. She cautioned that a number of initiatives related to housing could dramatically change neighborhoods over time.

Responding to Ms. Hummer, Ms. Lewine said the CPA proposes a policy in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan that addresses the concept of allowing additional density on faith-owned, nonprofit, and public surplus properties. The policy also responds to State House Bill 1377, which directs cities to provide a density bonus for affordable housing on faith-owned properties.

Chair Hummer referred to existing housing for seniors at the Church of Resurrection in an R-5 district. She said they have a variety of housing types organized in a way to create a sense of community. However, she observed that similar examples have not been mentioned in discussions about Strategy C-1. Ms. Hummer said that Andrew's Glen and other examples of affordable housing are multifamily housing, which has raised some concerns among residents regarding the anticipated outcome of implementing Strategy C-1.

At 8:32 p.m., Councilmember Dhananjaya moved to extend the meeting by an additional 15 minutes. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Ms. Lewine noted that the Church of the Resurrection housing was developed as a planned unit development (PUD), which involved a lengthy, complicated process. She said the City later focused on providing more straightforward incentives to encourage affordable housing. She believes that Strategy C-1 will be beneficial for the community.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Ms. Lewine said the policy requires the development of affordable housing for a 50-year term, consistent with the new state law. She noted that a number of churches and organizations have unused properties that could be used for affordable housing. Ms. Lewine said the eligible organizations must already receive a tax-exemption as a faith-based property.

Councilmember Kasner expressed concern that perhaps a greenbelt could be classified as surplus property and then be used to develop affordable housing. He said residents are looking for certainty. He said he would like to see a map of the properties that could be developed under the policy over the next several years. Mr. Kasner thanked staff for all of their work.

Ms. Lewine noted that a number of criteria will be used to determine a property's eligibility for the incentive.

Chair Hummer said that Catherine Drews, the EBCC's attorney, is retiring from the City Attorney's Office. Ms. Hummer thanked her for her assistance and involvement with the EBCC. Ms. Drews said she enjoyed working with the EBCC, and she wished them well as they continue to represent their constituents.

Councilmember Kasner thanked Ms. Drews for her expertise, professionalism, and sense of humor.

Councilmember Dhananjaya thanked Ms. Drews for her guidance and wished her well.

9. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Discussion of November Meeting Date

Chair Hummer said the EBCC's next regular meeting date falls on Election Day.

Councilmember Kasner said he would prefer to keep the meeting on November 3.

Vice Chair Gooding moved to reschedule the next meeting to November 10. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-1, with Councilmember Kasner dissenting.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Deputy City Clerk Roberts said the EBCC cannot hold another courtesy hearing on the Puesta del Sol project because the matter has gone before the Hearing Examiner and the record has been closed. She said the EBCC will hold a public hearing on the project.

At 8:50 p.m., Councilmember Kasner moved to extend the meeting for an additional five minutes. Councilmember Epstein seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Chair Hummer noted upcoming topics before the City Council including transportation planning and the City's Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI).

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(a) Summary Minutes of the September 1, 2020, Regular Meeting

Vice Chair Gooding moved to approve the minutes of the September 1, 2020 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

11. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:51 p.m., Chair Hummer declared the meeting adjourned.

Karin Roberts, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

/kaw