

East Bellevue Community Council
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

July 6, 2021
6:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Chair Hummer, Vice Chair Epstein, Alternate Vice Chair Dhananjaya,
Councilmember Gooding and Councilmember Kasner

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Chad Barnes, Assistant City Attorney
Kevin McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL/FLAG SALUTE**

Deputy City Clerk Karin Roberts called the roll. All Councilmembers were present.
Councilmember Dhananjaya led the flag salute.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Kasner moved to approve the agenda, amended to move Agenda Item 8(a) to occur as the next item. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

8. **RESOLUTIONS**

- (a) Resolution No. 592 expressing limited disapproval of City Council Ordinance No. 6575.

Chair Hummer said that in May, the EBCC disapproved the reduced residential parking requirement adopted by the City Council. The City appointed Kari Sand as outside counsel to represent the EBCC in this matter.

Ms. Sand said Resolution No. 592 is intended to clarify the rationale of Resolution No. 591. As stated in the last Whereas recital, Resolution No. 592 clarifies the limited disapproval of Bellevue City Ordinance No. 6575. The EBCC's intent is to convey to the Bellevue City Council its willingness to approve new lower minimum residential parking requirements for certain types of housing near frequent transit service consistent with Ordinance No. 6575, provided that the

new lower minimum residential parking requirements only apply within one-quarter mile of frequent transit service, consistent with the Growth Management Act and RCW 36.78.620.

Vice Chair Epstein moved to approve Resolution No. 592, and Councilmember Gooding seconded the motion.

Councilmember Kasner expressed support for the motion. However, he said he has serious concerns about the process that put the EBCC in this position. He believes this situation could have been avoided with a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the EBCC, and an earlier hearing regarding drafts of the policies. He said he appreciated the work of the EBCC's outside counsel, however he believes that City staff could have helped to avoid this issue.

Vice Chair Epstein, Councilmember Dhananjaya and Councilmember Gooding expressed support for the motion.

Chair Hummer concurred with Councilmember Kasner's comments about the need for earlier communication with the EBCC. Ms. Hummer said the EBCC is focused on meeting the needs of its residents and businesses.

The motion to approve Resolution No. 592 carried by a vote of 5-0.

Chair Hummer thanked Ms. Sand for her work with the EBCC.

4. **COMMUNICATIONS: WRITTEN AND ORAL**

Don Marsh said that since the last EBCC meeting, Bellevue experienced temperatures well above 100 degrees for three days in a row, which was thought to be a once in 1,000 years scenario. He said that was a test of the electrical grid and, even under extreme stress, there were no rolling blackouts. He said there were a number of unplanned power outages, however, that affected many customers.

Ellen Weiss expressed concerns regarding the proliferation of mega houses within the EBCC jurisdiction and citywide. She has been working with a number of residents who are deeply concerned about changes in Bellevue neighborhoods. She said developers are purchasing smaller, more affordable mid-century homes at an increasing rate and redeveloping the property with large, expensive homes. She said the Comprehensive Plan states Bellevue's commitment to valuing and preserving neighborhood character. She said city codes must protect the continued existence of affordable single-family homes. She asked the EBCC to become involved in this issue to represent the many residents who are working to protect neighborhoods. She asked the City to temporarily halt the processing of single-family permit applications that include the demolition and replacement of an existing home.

Tim Hay expressed concern regarding the demolition of modest mid-century homes and the destruction of many trees. He asked the City to increase side setbacks to 11 feet, reduce ridge heights, implement a new square footage calculation for house size on residential lots, and to preserve significant trees.

Charles Thulin said he lives in Skyridge just outside the EBCC boundary. He concurred with the concerns expressed by Ms. Weiss and Mr. Hay. Mr. Thulin referred to the minutes of the June 14, 2021, City Council meeting and said the mayor requested that staff provide a recommended balance of housing types for the next discussion on affordable housing. He said Mayor Robinson expressed an interest in strategies for saving older, more affordable homes in the community. He encouraged the EBCC to help shape proposed legislation reflecting the suggestions by Mr. Hay well before the topic is presented to the City Council.

Victor Bishop said he would be speaking later about the Transportation Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA). He said he has been a professional traffic engineer for more than 50 years, including for the City of Bellevue. He is the legislative committee chair of the Eastside Transportation Association (ETA), which is a community-based organization of traffic and transportation professionals, land use professionals and others interested in regional transportation. He previously served on Bellevue's Transportation Commission, including as Chair in 2016 and 2017. He said the commission studied and developed the multimodal level of service (LOS) metrics, standards and guidelines. Mr. Bishop said he is currently the president of the West Lake Sammamish Homeowners Association.

5. **REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, and COMMISSIONS**

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked everyone for their support of the 4th of July fireworks event at Downtown Park, including the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA), Bellevue Collection, PACCAR, Amazon, and Microsoft. He thanked City staff including the Fire Department, Police Department, Parks and Community Services Department, and Transportation Department.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis noted that Councilmembers received a briefing from Amazon regarding a new donation of \$1.4 million to benefit parks, neighborhoods and human services in Bellevue. He said that adds to significant allocations to human services during the pandemic. He noted neighborhood enhancement projects and parks improvement projects currently underway. He said the Council is working to address homelessness and the need for affordable housing. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said the City Council held two retreats earlier this year and updated its vision and priorities, which focus on seven strategic areas: 1) economic development, 2) transportation and mobility, 3) high-quality built and natural environments, 4) regional leadership, 5) great places you want to be, 6) achieving human potential, and 7) high-performance government.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis said the City's 2020 budget performed better than anticipated. He thanked staff for their work to reduce and manage the budget. He said the City Council will have a number of budget discussions later this year and he encouraged everyone to attend. He said the City will receive and expend additional federal funding in response to the pandemic over the coming year.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis encouraged everyone to visit the new northeast gateway and plaza (Bellevue Way NE and NE 4th Street) at the Downtown Park. He said this is one element of the Grand Connection that will ultimately extend from Meydenbauer Bay Park to the Wilburton area. He noted that Bellevue was recently recognized as an All America City, which last occurred in 1955.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis said there is a new neighborhood data dashboard on the City's website. He said the City Council received an update in June regarding an independent review of the Police Department's use of force policy and other policies and practices. He noted the recent update to the City's multifamily tax exemption (MFTE) program, which will help to provide affordable housing at the 80-percent area median income (AMI) level.

Chair Hummer thanked Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis for the update and suggested that EBCC members email any follow-up questions to jnieuwenhuis@bellevuewa.gov.

6. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Hummer read the preamble to the Public Records Act. She said the EBCC had a presentation earlier this year regarding the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). She said the EBCC will promote public input from residents and businesses, regardless of political orientation. She said the EBCC looks out for all of its residents.

7. **PUBLIC/COURTESY HEARINGS**

(a) Courtesy Hearing: Transportation Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs)

Chair Hummer introduced the courtesy hearing and discussion regarding the 2021 Transportation Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs) initiated by the City Council.

Chad Barnes, Assistant City Attorney, noted that, in contrast to the later Energize Eastside item, the Council is acting here in a legislative capacity and helping to set policies. He said the Appearance of Fairness doctrine is not necessarily applied to legislative decisions versus quasi-judicial decisions on land use matters.

Kevin McDonald, Transportation Planner, introduced Loreana Marciante, Chair of the Transportation Commission.

Mr. McDonald recalled that the Council previously approved the scope of work and the contract for the Mobility Implementation Plan, which covers a number of recommendations under development by the Transportation Commission. One of the areas included in the recommendations is policies related to multimodal concurrency. Mr. McDonald said the commission will continue its review of the Mobility Implementation Plan throughout the year. The process involves the City Council, East Bellevue Community Council and Planning Commission as well. Mr. McDonald said the Council directed staff to update multimodal concurrency policies and the Mobility Implementation Plan by the end of 2021.

Mr. McDonald provided background information regarding the development of transportation policy in Bellevue. The 1989 Comprehensive Plan focused on vehicles and arterials. The 1993 Comprehensive Plan established vehicle level of service (LOS) standards for each area of the city in light of the state's growth management objectives. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan

established multimodal LOS measures, standards and targets, and the 2021 Comprehensive Plan established multimodal concurrency policies.

Mr. McDonald said the Transportation Commission established metrics for multiple travel modes including cars, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit. He said the LOC standards vary depending on the location and land use district. Mr. McDonald said the Council initiated a Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) in April for the 2021 annual work program, directing the Transportation Commission to recommend policy that would broaden the concurrency standard to include all travel modes, not only vehicles.

The Transportation Commission's recommendations update existing policies and add policies to reflect a multimodal approach to concurrency standards. The state Growth Management Act (GMA) requires jurisdictions to ensure that transportation infrastructure is provided to support land use districts. If concurrency standards are not met, the jurisdiction must not approve new development. Mr. McDonald said the City's approach focuses on vehicle travel and intersection mobility standards established for 14 Mobility Management Areas (MMAs) in Bellevue. The commission recommends a more equitable and sustainable multimodal approach and recognizes that policy amendments are required to achieve this multimodal LOS.

Loreana Marciante, Chair of the Transportation Commission, noted that she has served on the commission for approximately four years. She said the multimodal approach includes walking, biking, transit, and riding in a vehicle as the four travel modes to be measured. The Commission reviewed the existing policies in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan and worked with staff to evaluate the policy language with respect to Council direction on multimodal concurrency. The Commission held three extensive study session discussions to discuss the policies and to hear public comment. On June 10, 2021, the Commission agreed to recommend embedding multimodal concurrency in the Transportation Element. Ms. Marciante said this work is part of the larger task of preparing a new Mobility Implementation Plan.

A new goal is recommended for the Transportation Element: "To improve all mobility options so that everyone in Bellevue has a safe, comfortable, reliable and efficient experience on their preferred mode, while encouraging and transitioning to more environmentally and fiscally sustainable modes." Amendments are recommended to existing policies (TR-2, TR-20, TR-30, TR-34, TR-73, and TR-132), and two new policies regarding multimodal LOS standards and performance targets are recommended. Ms. Marciante said the performance targets will help the City identify the appropriate transportation facilities to meet multimodal LOS goals.

Chair Hummer noted that a second transportation topic is included in the courtesy hearing. Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. Barnes suggested completing the full presentation on both topics before opening the courtesy hearing.

Mr. McDonald said the Transportation Commission recommended the Comprehensive Transportation Project List (CTPL) in the 2015 major update to the Comprehensive Plan in order to consolidate the list of all transportation projects. A Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) is required to change the list. Mr. McDonald said staff recommends the CPA to repeal the list and to maintain the project inventory in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. McDonald highlighted the three CTPL projects in the EBCC jurisdiction. Project 15 is to add five feet wide bicycle lanes outside of 11 feet wide vehicles lanes on both sides of SE 16th Street. The project will construct new curb, gutter, six feet wide sidewalk and a four feet wide planter on the north side between 148th Avenue NE and 154th Avenue NE. This project is a component of priority bicycle corridor EW-3, the Lake to Lake Trail. Project 16 is to conduct a needs assessment to determine whether a westbound right-turn lane should be added at 148th Avenue and Main Street. Project 84 is to replace aging wiring and poles at three signalized intersections along the 148th Avenue corridor.

Councilmember Kasner suggested removing Project 15 from the list.

Mr. McDonald said staff recommends using the TIP as the only citywide inventory of transportation projects. The Council updates the TIP annually with a recommendation from the Transportation Commission. Projects identified through subarea or corridor planning are added to the TIP early in the planning states. Projects are prioritized through updates to the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) and ultimately for funding in the Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan. Mr. McDonald noted that projects in the TIP are eligible for grant funding.

Mr. McDonald summarized that the Transportation Commission recommends policy amendments to embed multimodal concurrency standards in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Transportation staff recommends repealing the CTPL from the Comprehensive Plan.

At 7:42 p.m., Vice Chair Epstein moved to open the courtesy hearing. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Chair Hummer said that a representative from the Eastside Transportation Association (ETA) would be allowed to speak for 20 minutes. She noted that Mr. Bishop submitted his comments in writing as well.

Vic Bishop, Eastside Transportation Association, said the question to ask regarding multimodal concurrency is whether the City should allow more congestion than currently exists. He said the proposed CPA will increase congestion on arterials, neighborhood streets will be degraded, and emergency vehicles' response times will increase. Mr. Bishop said there will be more traffic delays throughout Bellevue and more accidents. He said that Bellevue residents consistently rate transportation issues and challenges as a top priority in community surveys. He said the lowest priority for residents surveyed is improvements for bike riders. However, people are unhappy about downtown traffic.

Mr. Bishop said the TFP is a 12-year plan of potential CIP projects that are subject to LOS calculations. He said 99 intersections are identified in the code. He said that 2017 was used as the base year for the current TFP. At that time, 15 intersections failed the LOS standard. Mr. Bishop said 37 intersections are expected to fail LOS standards in 2030, and three of the MMAs fail to meet the standards. Mr. Bishop said the City is required under the GMA to accommodate growth in one of three ways: 1) add transportation capacity, 2) deny permits for new

development, and/or 3) change the concurrency standards. He said the EBCC is being asked to change the standards, which will allow traffic congestion to get worse. Mr. Bishop commented on LOS standards throughout Bellevue. He suggested that this is part of a hidden agenda buried in the Mobility Implementation Plan.

Mr. Bishop commented on the number of people who work or live, or both, in Bellevue. He said that three-quarters of travel is by car and, from 2018 to 2035, an additional 469,000 more trips are anticipated through Bellevue. He said that in 2035, light rail will carry 1.5 percent of total daily trips through Bellevue, bus rapid transit (BRT) on I-405 will carry 7/10's of the total daily trips, and Metro will carry four percent of the daily trips. Mr. Bishop opined that the City should remain focused on car travel as the primary mode.

Mr. Bishop said that in 2018, City staff selected 14 locations around Bellevue on city streets for permanent stations to count bike riders. He said there are three additional stations on regional trails. He calculated a total of 1,421 bicycle trips per day at those 14 locations, which also carry 485,000 vehicle trips daily. Mr. Bishop highlighted information from major employers regarding future growth, including 25,000 new Amazon employees over the next few years. He asserted that the proposed CPA removes reducing traffic congestion as a Comprehensive Plan policy.

Mr. Bishop said the current system can be revised without increasing congestion for cars. He said that what is being proposed is going to end up increasing congestion dramatically for cars in Bellevue. He noted the need for a serious discussion about transportation funding. He recommended that the EBCC reject the Transportation Commission's recommendation. He said the City should retain legal counsel to explore the implications under the GMA. He thinks there are serious implications to study. He suggested a robust citywide discussion and public hearings regarding traffic congestion. He suggested retaining and strengthening congestion relief as a key policy for Bellevue. He said the City should set a new policy to match transportation spending to the City's travel demand forecast. He believes this would optimize the overall throughput of the transportation system. He expressed concern that Bellevue residents do not receive good Metro service for the taxes they pay. He anticipates Seattle-like congestion in Bellevue in the future.

Don Marsh said he shares many of the concerns mentioned by Mr. Bishop. Mr. Marsh said he lives in Bellevue and he and his wife commute to Seattle. After becoming frustrated with the travel time, they switched to using electric bikes. He said the commute is not much longer and it is more relaxing and enjoyable. He said there was a significant increase in the usage of electric bikes during the pandemic. He believes that people will become more comfortable using bikes as infrastructure projects provide safer cycling facilities. Mr. Marsh noted the need for more bike connections throughout Bellevue, including from south Bellevue to SR 520. He anticipates that bikes will become more important for commuters in the future.

At 8:11 p.m., Councilmember Dhananjaya moved to close the courtesy hearing. Vice Chair Epstein seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Mr. McDonald said both the TIP and TFP still exist. The TIP is the universe of transportation projects, and the TFP is a prioritized list and is funding

constrained. Mr. McDonald said a project is added to the TIP either through subarea planning or corridor planning.

Councilmember Kasner opined that the lists can be confusing for the public and discourage public input. Chair Marciante said the TFP and TIP have a two-year planning cycle, and the information is presented and discussed during public commission meetings. She said the commission regularly hears public comment regarding both plans. She acknowledged that Councilmember Kasner has testified before the commission. She said projects are studied and added to the TIP based in part on a consensus of neighborhood residents.

Councilmember Kasner said the presentation did not address Vision Zero principles or the Safe Streets program. He asked how the proposed transportation CPA fits with those policies and standards. Mr. McDonald said the Vision Zero and Safe Streets concepts are parallel to the Mobility Implementation Plan and compatible with it. However, the City Council provided separate direction regarding Vision Zero, and a separate process is underway to develop a Vision Zero plan with the goal of reducing the number of fatalities and serious accidents to zero.

Mr. Kasner said that separated bike and pedestrian facilities are needed as cycling capacity is added to existing streets and as the ped-bike network is expanded throughout Bellevue. He expressed concern that the proposed CPA will increase traffic congestion and create unsafe streets. He encouraged a focus on bike facilities that are separate from roadways, such as the Grand Connection and Eastrail. He noted that two people were recently killed by a Sound Transit light rail train in Seattle.

Mr. Kasner thanked Mr. McDonald for the presentation. Mr. Kasner said he wishes this information would have been presented to the EBCC last year.

Vice Chair Epstein thanked staff for the presentation. Responding to Mr. Epstein, Mr. McDonald said the performance metrics were set by the Transportation Commission in 2017 with its Multimodal LOS Report. The commission continues to use the 2017 report as the foundation for the metrics for the pedestrian mode, bicycle mode and the transit mode. Mr. McDonald said there is ongoing conversation about the metrics and targets to use for the vehicle mode, largely based on the commission's prior work in 2017. He said the bicycle metrics set a LOS limit and a level of separation that provides for safety. He noted the importance of continuing to enhance connectivity between trails and bike facilities. Mr. McDonald said the Commission is beginning to study a model in which both intersections and travel corridors are monitored and compared to specific targets.

Ms. Marciante said there is a policy that states that performance targets are set in the Mobility Implementation Plan. She said the Commission is currently reviewing the performance targets. She said the only policy change in the proposed CPA is to modify a one-dimensional standard into a multimodal standard. She noted that the public is welcome to the Transportation Commission meetings to hear the discussions and public hearings.

Councilmember Gooding said Mr. Bishop shared somewhat troubling information about traffic congestion estimates for Bellevue. Mr. Gooding said he did not understand the meaning of equity

and sustainability within the context of a driver sitting in traffic. He said that increased traffic congestion hurts lower-income residents the most because they often have longer commutes. He asked whether anyone had a rebuttal to the statistics presented earlier by Mr. Bishop. He said he believed he read that 20 percent of the transportation budget is allocated to biking infrastructure.

At 8:30 p.m., Councilmember Kasner moved to extend the meeting to 10:00 p.m. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Chair Marciante said she has seen some of the data presented by Mr. Bishop in the past. Her perspective is that he takes data and misrepresents certain facts in the way he aggregates certain data or allocates certain data. In terms of expertise, Ms. Marciante said she is currently employed as a national practice expert in emerging mobility, which includes transportation planning and technological transformations. She said she worries about pedestrian and bike safety in neighborhoods. She noted the reality that growth is allocated to Bellevue and she welcomes it. She likes the diversity and energy that is brought by growth. Ms. Marciante said the way she looks at her work is not to build more arterials or highways but to instead focus on technology and operational improvements.

Ms. Marciante said the Commission sees the reduction of traffic congestion as a top priority. She said there are limited opportunities left in Bellevue for capacity improvements. She acknowledged that congestion is likely to get worse in highly dense areas that are growing without multiple travel options. She noted the importance of providing bike infrastructure. She suggested improvements to highway on-ramps to avoid traffic backups into neighborhoods. She said the Commission is trying to understand what is reasonable at the system level and intersection level for all four travel modes. She said the Commission tries to balance the needs and requests contained in the TIP.

Ms. Marciante said traffic congestion is a function of the growth, increased density and jobs, which also bring increased revenues and a better quality of life. She said there is nothing in the proposed CPA that causes congestion.

Ms. Marciante said the Commission is reviewing an equity analysis and trying to understand where lower income individuals, disabled individuals, and other populations live and work. She said the analysis is being done for the Mobility Implementation Plan to ensure that transportation projects and facilities are addressing equity. She said it is important to serve individuals who are dependent on public transportation.

Councilmember Gooding said he would appreciate seeing any information that addresses the statistics cited earlier by Mr. Bishop. Mr. Gooding opined that the equity policy fails, and equity is poorly defined in a number of areas (e.g., transportation, education). Mr. Gooding said he would appreciate any written corrections to Mr. Bishop's information.

Mr. McDonald invited all EBCC members to attend the Transportation Commission meeting on July 22 when the Commission will discuss the concept of equity in transportation planning and implementation. Regarding the information presented by Mr. Bishop, Mr. McDonald concurred with Chair Marciante that the numbers are accurate. However, they are being misrepresented and

misinterpreted. Mr. McDonald recommended that EBCC members review the annual concurrency reports for an accurate reflection of the statistics, data and outcomes measured by the City related to traffic congestion. He said it is important to note that the City measures evening peak hour traffic in terms of how it addresses concurrency because the evening peak hour is the most capacity constrained time of day.

Councilmember Dhananjaya thanked Chair Marciante and Mr. McDonald for the presentation and Mr. Bishop and Mr. Marsh for their comments. Mr. Dhananjaya expressed support for a multimodal transportation system with options for individuals. He said he would like to see data broken down into ingress and egress into the city, as well as traffic volumes in the city limits. He suggested looking at mobility and travel times through specific corridors. He noted that technology will continue to provide new transportation options. He said a number of companies are adopting flexible hybrid work schedules following the pandemic, which will affect traffic patterns and volumes. He said it would be helpful to have any data mentioned by Mr. Bishop.

Chair Hummer thanked Mr. McDonald and Chair Marciante for the presentation and discussion. She thanked Mr. Bishop for his comments as well. She said that the proposed CPAs are a dramatic change to a Comprehensive Plan that has been in place for a long time. She said that bikes have been around for a long time. She spoke about her past experience and bicycle safety and encouraged enhanced education to cyclists and drivers. She opined that it is more dangerous to have separate car and bike lanes, which can have confusing rules and/or signage.

Ms. Hummer encouraged a delay for further consideration of the CPAs and expanded community involvement. She suggested that TR-2 include language to “improve mobility and take into account how congestion affects transit and how congestion affects pedestrian traffic, and how vehicle congestion affects bike riders.” She said vehicles are still the most popular commute mode. She expressed concern that the number of workers commuting to Bellevue will continue to increase.

Ms. Hummer encouraged staff to address the information described by Mr. Bishop. She noted that Bellevue’s adaptive traffic signal system has noticeably enhanced traffic management. She noted that in the past she lobbied to have project TFP-158 removed from the TFP, and the mayor argued in favor of the project. She said the project has not been funded. She suggested it is important to keep language regarding congestion relief in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Hummer said reducing traffic congestion is a top priority for both residents and visitors. She wishes the City Council would have conducted the BelRed Lookback before initiating these Transportation CPAs. She said the EBCC has approval/disapproval authority over the applicability of the CPA within its jurisdiction.

Ms. Hummer said East Bellevue has the highest usage of free lunch programs, highest population of Hispanics, and the greatest number of subsidized, low income housing units. She suggested that the rest of Bellevue needs to look like East Bellevue in terms of pursuing equity.

Councilmember Kasner said he wants more specific data about the metrics used to develop the proposed Transportation CPAs.

Vice Chair Epstein concurred with the need for further study before making a decision on the CPAs.

Councilmember Dhananjaya encouraged enhanced public engagement regarding the CPAs. He said an incremental approach might be appropriate. He said Bellevue should coordinate with neighboring cities to ensure common goals. He said it would be helpful to have more data provided to the EBCC.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. McDonald said the Transportation Commission made its recommendation, which now rests with the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on July 28 regarding the CPAs. Mr. McDonald suggested that tonight's discussion could be summarized and shared with the Planning Commission for the public hearing.

Chair Hummer asked Deputy City Clerk Roberts to prepare a memo summarizing the EBCC's comments for transmittal to the Transportation Commission, Planning Commission and City Council.

Mr. McDonald noted that the Transportation Commission has moved from discussing the policies to reviewing the Mobility Implementation Plan. He said public outreach is underway, including a community survey to be opened soon.

Chair Hummer noted that EBCC members may participate in providing public comment as individuals as well.

Ms. Hummer suggested public outreach, including perhaps an anonymous survey, to tenants through the King County Housing Authority.

Chair Hummer thanked everyone for their comments. She thanked Chair Marciante for her service and input.

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- (a) Energize Eastside North Segment Community Council Discussion
[Continued from June 1, 2021 meeting.]

Chair Hummer recalled that the EBCC previously held a courtesy hearing regarding Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) Energize Eastside North Segment project. The staff report and applicant report were heard during the presentation. A report from CENSE (Coalition of Eastside Neighborhoods for Sensible Energy) and comments from the public were heard during the courtesy hearing. Ms. Hummer welcomed City staff and PSE staff to hear comments and questions from the EBCC. She encouraged the public to send written comments to ebcc@bellevuewa.gov and/or to Liz Stead, Development Services Department (DSD), at estead@bellevuewa.gov.

Liz Stead, Land Use Director, introduced Reilly Pittman, Senior Land Use Planner, who will be taking over as planner for the Energize Eastside project. Ms. Stead noted that Heidi Bedwell left employment with the City.

Councilmember Kasner expressed concern that people speaking on both sides of this and the previous issue sound like they are speaking different languages. He asked about the project timeline for the Energize Eastside South Segment project. He said he would like to discuss with Mr. Barnes the definitions for a significant fact and an insignificant fact, as it relates to the Energize Eastside project. Mr. Kasner said he would like a better understanding of what the EBCC can and cannot do with regards to the Energize Eastside project permits.

Renee Zimmerman, Local Government and Community Engagement Manager for PSE, said the South Segment conditional use permits (CUPs) were received from the City of Bellevue and from the City of Renton. PSE is waiting to hear about its permit application from the City of Newcastle. She said it is very common to permit linear projects in multiple phases. She said the Energize Eastside project was originally planned to be completed in two phases, with the South Segment being the first phase.

Councilmember Kasner asked if there are other PSE projects that have been split into two or more segments within one city. Ms. Zimmerman noted Sound Transit light rail as an example. Mr. Kasner clarified his interest in an electricity project example.

Responding to Mr. Kasner regarding the demand for the project capacity, Brad Strauch with PSE said the demand for electrical service exceeded the summer need forecast for the project in 2017, 2018 and 2020.

Ms. Stead said City staff reviews a broad range of information and data, with the assistance of outside technical experts, to evaluate electrical demand.

Councilmember Kasner questioned the accuracy of claims that demand is growing because the population is increasing. He asked whether there is updated, accurate data to forecast electrical demand. He said at one point the rationale for the Energize Eastside project was focused on winter peak demand and now it is focused on summer peak demand. He said he needs a baseline of assumptions and facts from both sides before he can make a decision on moving forward. He asked about the remaining timeline before the EBCC takes formal action. Ms. Zimmerman suggested submitting comments and questions to City staff as part of the usual process.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. Barnes said that EBCC members may submit questions to the applicant, which will be addressed throughout the City's remaining permit review process. Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Mr. Barnes said this is the beginning of the process. Mr. Barnes said that questions raised tonight will be considered throughout the remainder of the process, whether through the staff report and/or a future hearing before the Hearing Examiner. Mr. Barnes suggested that technical questions would be difficult to address in this forum. However, that does not prevent the EBCC from raising questions to be addressed as part of the City's review process.

Councilmember Kasner said he would like the EBCC to have a complete set of data before the Energize Eastside North Segment project goes before the Hearing Examiner.

Vice Chair Epstein noted the community's concern regarding safety and the colocation of the transmission lines with the Olympic pipelines. He expressed an interest in more information regarding those challenges and concerns.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. Barnes confirmed that this is a quasi-judicial matter. He said the EBCC will ultimately be asked to make a decision based on the record that is established in support of the permit application. Mr. Barnes said the EBCC's review is confined to the information contained in the record that is developed throughout this process. He cautioned EBCC members against outside research regarding the project.

Chair Hummer noted that the EBCC has ongoing concerns regarding the lack of information and/or guidance provided to the EBCC in various planning processes. She said it is difficult to make an informed decision without all of the facts. She said it would be helpful to have access to the ongoing record in the form of emails and written comments, and minutes of different meetings.

Ms. Hummer recalled past public comment from an individual who said they were not informed in a timely manner of the first public meeting (i.e., EBCC courtesy hearing) regarding PSE's Energize Eastside North Segment project. She asked about staff's process for noticing meetings to individuals within a certain distance of projects. She encouraged the broad distribution of information regarding public projects. She asked how a person can become a party of record in a matter.

Ms. Zimmerman said the City handles the legal noticing. In response to Chair Hummer, Ms. Zimmerman said PSE is not a public entity and is not subject to the OPMA. Mr. Pittman highlighted the series of public notices issued by the City in a number of formats regarding the Energize Eastside North Segment project.

Chair Hummer said she heard from the public that notice was published in March stating that the first public meeting would be held at the EBCC meeting in June. She confirmed in May that the topic would go before the EBCC in June. Ms. Hummer expressed concern that the EBCC did not receive information earlier. She said the EBCC does not have access to the actual permit. She opined that the public should have access to information without having to go through a public records request.

Ms. Stead said the City noticed the public hearing for the Land Use Code regulations and followed the proper procedure. She said the City provided notice to everyone who was a party of record for the South Segment project permits. Responding to Ms. Hummer regarding the permit file, Ms. Stead said the record is always available through a public records request and is an ever-changing document. She said the application materials are available online for the public.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Ms. Zimmerman said the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) identifies the long-term energy resource strategy. Ms. Hummer said that although PSE is a private company, she believes that certain information should be available to the public. She questioned the accuracy of data regarding electrical demand. Ms. Zimmerman said PSE's Energize Eastside website provides studies and data related to the project. She said the City has permit information as well. Chair Hummer said she would like access to more data from PSE. Ms. Zimmerman said she did not have access to more information and suggested requesting the information through City staff.

At 9:54 p.m., Councilmember Kasner moved to extend the meeting for 45 minutes. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Chair Hummer said the public has expressed concerns regarding safety and construction during and after the project. Ms. Zimmerman said that the construction impacts and techniques are detailed in the EIS (Environmental Impact Statement). Regarding the colocation of the power lines along the corridor of the two oil pipelines, Ms. Zimmerman said safety is the top priority for PSE. Since the 1960s, PSE has safely operated and maintained transmission lines in the corridor shared with the pipelines. She said PSE has maintained its commitment to safety in the design and construction phases of the Energize Eastside project. PSE hired experts to provide design and protocol recommendations regarding the proximity of the transmission lines to the pipelines as well as construction and safety. Ms. Zimmerman said that pipeline safety considerations were thoroughly studied in the EIS. She noted that certain conditions were attached to the South Segment project CUP, including a requirement that an independent pipeline safety inspection expert be on site during the construction of the project.

Ms. Stead said the City of Bellevue partnered with the cities of Redmond, Renton and Newcastle to study the Energize Eastside project. The EIS was issued in March 2018 and covered the entire Energize Eastside project area across jurisdictions. The EIS studies environmental impacts as required under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Ms. Stead said the EIS studied the proximity of the transmission lines to the oil pipelines, the environmental impacts of tree removal, PSE's proposed alignment, and the chosen alternative. The EIS provided a full analysis of the potential environmental impacts for the entire Energize Eastside project. The court rejected a 2020 challenge to the EIS and found that the environmental review complied with SEPA. Ms. Stead said the City will continue to rely on the EIS in making permitting decisions on the North Segment project.

Chair Hummer said there have been questions during public comments about the use of old technology and why the existing infrastructure cannot be used for the line upgrades.

Mr. Strauch said a number of technologies were studied early in the EIS process, including battery solutions and solar energy. He said that transmission lines are still necessary regardless of how the energy is generated. He clarified PSE was interested in both the summer and winter peak usage since the beginning of the Energize Eastside project. Mr. Strauch said the existing wood structures cannot support the new transmission lines and do not meet other guidelines.

Councilmember Dhananjaya thanked Chair Hummer for her questions and comments. Responding to Mr. Dhananjaya, Ms. Stead said the liability for damages related to the transmission line project is not addressed in the EIS. She said liability is also not part of the criteria in reviewing a CUP application.

Mr. Dhananjaya asked whether there is an agreement between PSE and the Olympic Pipeline Company. Ms. Zimmerman suggested raising the question with City planning staff.

Mr. Dhananjaya asked what would happen if the North Segment permits are not approved. Mr. Strauch said PSE would continue moving forward with the South Segment. He said both segments are needed to meet long-term electrical demand.

Councilmember Kasner asked the City and PSE to provide a list of their staff currently working on the Energize Eastside project. He said that would be helpful for future discussions, especially with recent turnover in project staff. Responding to Mr. Kasner, Ms. Stead said she would follow up regarding the City's next annual meeting with PSE.

Mr. Kasner noted public comment from Bridle Trails residents that they were advised to comment regarding the project at the EBCC meeting. He encouraged City staff to work directly with Bridle Trails residents to address their concerns. He thanked Chair Hummer for guiding the EBCC through these processes.

Chair Hummer expressed her interest in ensuring that tonight's comments are entered into the record. Ms. Stead confirmed that the EBCC meeting minutes will be added to the record.

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

- (a) EBCC Packet Publication Date; Three-Month Calendar of Proposed Agenda Items; List of future EBCC Topics; EBCC Rules of Procedure

Noting the time, Councilmember Kasner moved to postpone this item to the August meeting. Vice Chair Epstein seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Referring to the earlier discussion, Mr. Barnes suggested that Chair Hummer provide for the record additional details regarding the memo of questions she submitted to City and/or PSE staff. He said that would help avoid any issues regarding ex parte contacts.

Ms. Hummer said she submitted a combination of her own questions as well as those raised by the public to Chad Barnes, Deputy City Clerk Roberts, Heidi Bedwell, perhaps Renee Zimmerman, Vice Chair Epstein, and perhaps Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis. Mr. Barnes stated his understanding is that Ms. Zimmerman was not a recipient of the original memo, but that it was later transmitted to PSE. He said he believed Kevin McDonald received the questions/comments as well.

11. **CONTINUED COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

12. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- (a) Summary Regular Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2021

Vice Chair Epstein moved to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2021 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:21 p.m., Chair Hummer declared the meeting adjourned.

Karin Roberts, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

/kaw