

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

April 11, 2016
6:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-113
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Stokes, Deputy Mayor Chelminiak, and Councilmembers Lee¹, Robertson, Robinson, Slatter, and Wallace

ABSENT: None.

1. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m., with Mayor Stokes presiding. There was no Executive Session.

2. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Chelminiak moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Robinson seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.²

3. Oral Communications

- (a) Jessica Powers, Director of Development Services, McCullough Hill Leary, spoke regarding the Grand Connection project and the Wilburton area commercial planning and study area boundary. She requested that Eastridge Corporate Center on NE 1st Street, east of I-405, be included in the study area. She noted that the office development is located within one-half-mile of the light rail East Main Station and the Wilburton/Hospital Station. She said there are opportunities to add moderate infill density and to create a redevelopment plan consistent with Bellevue's future plans to allow more urban growth around transportation hubs. She said the firm supports Bellevue's long-term vision and wants to grow with the city in strategic locations. Ms. Powers said the current Wilburton study area boundary terminates immediately west of Eastridge and includes other office-zoned properties.

¹ Councilmember Lee arrived at 7:05 p.m., toward the end of the discussion under Agenda Item 4(b).

² Councilmembers Robertson and Wallace joined the meeting after the vote.

- (b) Alex Zimmerman reiterated his ongoing request that the City Manager hold monthly or quarterly discussions with the public.

Mayor Stokes asked Mr. Zimmerman to bring a new topic the next time he wants to speak to the Council.

- (c) Bill Hirt expressed concerns about Sound Transit's East Link light rail project, including that it will not have adequate capacity. He said Sound Transit never studied bus rapid transit for I-90. He said light rail construction will begin soon and continue for four or more years, and the I-90 middle roadway will close next year. He said Sound Transit has not been truthful about the project.

4. Study Session

- (a) Council Business and New Initiatives

Mayor Stokes said the appointments to Boards and Commissions would be handled during an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Stokes requested Council consideration of his nominees for the Affordable Housing Technical Advisory Group (TAG):

Eric Campbell, Main Street Property Group
 Hal Ferris, Spectrum Development
 David Hoffman, Master Builders Association
 Katherine Jordan, Lake Hills resident
 Chris Jowell, Imagine Housing
 Jan Laskey, Bank of America
 Kim Lovell Price, Downtown Action to Save Housing (DASH)
 James McEachran, Human Services Commission
 Michael Orbino, Seattle King County Realtors, John L. Scott Bellevue
 George Petrie, Goodman Real Estate
 Andrea Sato, Kantor Taylor
 Dwight Schrag, Downtown Bellevue Residents Association
 Rich Wagner, Baylis Architects, and
 Tim Walter, King County Housing Authority.

- Councilmember Robinson moved to approve the list of Affordable Housing TAG members as recommended by the Mayor. Deputy Mayor Chelminiak seconded the motion.

Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Mayor Stokes confirmed that, as indicated in his memo to the Council, an owner of rental property in Bellevue will be identified to serve on the TAG as well.

Ms. Robinson said she is eager to hear what this group of experienced professionals will recommend with regard to affordable housing. She thanked the Mayor for moving this forward.

Mayor Stokes noted that this is a Technical Advisory Group. However, broader community outreach will be conducted as well.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

(b) Update regarding the False Alarm Reduction Program

City Manager Brad Miyake introduced staff's update on the False Alarm Reduction Program, and welcomed Police Chief Steve Mylett, Police Legal Advisor Melissa Chin, and Lt. Lisa Patricelli.

Chief Mylett presented the update on the False Alarm Reduction Program and said the Police Department is seeking Council direction about whether to make changes to the program. He recalled that, in 2014, the Police Department handled approximately 3,360 alarms, and 98 percent were determined to be false alarms. A false alarm ordinance was adopted in 1977 and amended in 2004. However, the Police Department had been operating without an active false alarm monitoring program since 2011.

Chief Mylett said Ordinance No. 6214 was adopted by the Council on December 8, 2014, repealing the 1977 ordinance. On May 1, 2015, the City entered into a services contract with the Public Safety Corporation (PSC) to administer a false alarm management program using the CryWolf software. The program was initiated on July 6, 2015 by educating the public and sending out registration information to monitored alarm users. The collection of fees and false alarm fines began on October 1, 2015. Billings and collections were suspended in December 2015 to make needed corrections to the program. Billing resumed on March 1, 2016.

Chief Mylett said the City has experienced a decrease in false alarms, and the Police Department will continue its education efforts with the community. He acknowledged that there were problems during the early implementation, due largely to a breakdown in communication between the Police Department, PSC, and residents. He believes those issues have been resolved.

One issue was that PSC's notices were not in accordance with the City's ordinance. PSC now sends all forms and notices to the Police Department for review before use, and all notices now comply with the ordinance. Additional issues related to PSC's customer service, problems with PSC's web site, and mailings from PSC. The phone service and web site issues have been corrected. All mailings will now be reviewed and approved by the Police Department and will have the City's Police Department logo and identification information. Chief Mylett said some residents were offended by the name of the program: CryWolf. The vendor will now refer to itself only as the Public Safety Corporation.

Chief Mylett said residents were concerned about personal information requested by PSC, and the updated registration form no longer requires personal information including one's drivers license number or full date of birth. The year of birth is still required, however, to claim the senior citizen reduced rate.

Chief Mylett said the Police Department created a City phone line dedicated to false alarm issues. Tutorials have been created for the public and City staff, and a false alarm web page has been established on the Police Department's web site. Staff has been trained on the false alarm ordinance and increased its public outreach efforts. Chief Mylett said the City's Crime Prevention Detective attended a False Alarm Reduction Association conference earlier this year to assess the current state of the alarm industry and the strategies adopted by other agencies and jurisdictions.

Chief Mylett said triggers for false alarms have been identified for certain problematic locations. In some case, technical malfunctions were triggering multiple false alarms. Those problems have been corrected.

Chief Mylett said the Police Department recommends continuing the program and allowing it to fully take effect and, with Council direction, returning to the Council with a proposed amendment to the False Alarm Ordinance reflecting changes to the registration fee structure to address constituent complaints regarding the annual permit fee. One possible amendment is to change the annual fee to a one-time registration fee.

Chief Mylett said staff recommends expanding the program to include non-monitored alarms, which can trigger a false alarm. Requiring all alarm owners to register in the program provides consistency and fairness throughout the community.

Responding to Councilmember Robinson, Chief Mylett said a non-monitored alarm could trigger a false alarm response if a neighbor hears an alarm and calls the Police because the neighbor is not home. He said the registration form provides information to enable the Police to attempt to contact homeowners with alarms to help determine whether it might be a false one.

In further response, Chief Mylett said the program has saved 100 man hours to date, which is significant. Ms. Robinson questioned whether a reduction goal has been established. Chief Mylett said PSC indicates that jurisdictions have reduced false alarms by approximately 60 percent over a one-year period.

Responding to Councilmember Robertson, Chief Mylett said the implementation of a false alarm program tends to result in homeowners fixing their alarms where needed. This and continued public education contributes to a further reduction in false alarms.

Ms. Robertson questioned whether the 60-percent reduction typically includes both monitored and non-monitored alarms. Chief Mylett said he would provide the information.

Councilmember Robertson said she would be in favor of a graduated fine schedule for false alarms, which would provide a stronger incentive for homeowners with repeated false alarms to remedy problems with their systems. Ms. Robertson said she was unsure about whether residents with non-monitored alarms should be required to register. She observed that a homeowner with a triggered alarm should not be penalized because a neighbor called the Police, because the homeowner is not causing the Police response.

Ms. Robertson questioned the cost of terminating the contract with PSC. Ms. Chin said the early termination fee was approximately \$21,000 in November. However, the fee decreases over time.

Councilmember Robertson questioned whether responding to false alarms would be consistent with the Police Department's interest in community outreach and increased patrols in neighborhoods. Chief Mylett said responding to false alarms detracts from that objective. He said a primary concern in any response is officer safety and, if officers are frequently responding to false alarms, the natural tendency can be to not expect a true emergency. Secondly, while a false alarm response provides a Police presence, it can also cause concern and anxiety for residents.

Mayor Stokes said the Council is asked to provide guidance on the fee schedule and whether to require non-monitored alarm owners to register.

Ms. Robertson said she is pleased with the decision to stop using the CryWolf program name. However, she noted that the name is still in PSC's web addresses.

Councilmember Slatter thanked the Police Department for responding to the public's and the Council's concerns. She noted that 70 percent of the complaints are related to the annual registration fee and to the fine for not paying the fee. She questioned whether there is more to that issue. Lt. Petracelli noted that Crime Prevention Detective Amanda Jensen hears the majority of the complaints on this issue. She said residents are largely opposed to the \$25 fee and question the purpose. However, the City can choose to waive the fee if desired. Lt. Petracelli said other agencies have found that, if there is not a registration fee, alarm owners are often more accepting of a fine should a false alarm occur.

Ms. Slatter observed that a false alarm fine makes sense, while the registration fee is not necessarily warranted from the public's perspective. Lt. Petracelli said the \$25 is an implementation fee. The City receives approximately \$11 and the vendor receives the rest. The logic is that requiring a registration fee makes homeowners more accountable and responsible in keeping their contact information up to date with the Police Department. Lt. Petracelli said most agencies charge a registration fee. She said the Department wants residents to register their alarms, even if there is no fee, in order to have the contact information.

Responding to Councilmember Wallace, Chief Mylett said the presence of a security alarm provides a legitimate reason for the Police Department to request contact information that would be beneficial in determining whether there might be a false alarm, whether there is a need to secure the property in the event of an actual break-in, and/or whether there is a need to inform a resident about a faulty alarm. He said the purpose of the program is to reduce false alarms in order to better utilize Police resources.

Mr. Wallace suggested that the program lacks full compliance with constitutional principles, and he does not like the idea of requiring the registration of alarms. While he registered his alarm system, he said there are certain individuals in the community with legitimate security concerns related to releasing information about their residence and alarm system.

Mr. Wallace said he does not have confidence that there are good security protocols for the information collected from residents. He would prefer to discontinue required alarm registration.

He questioned why false alarm tickets cannot be issued in the same manner as parking and traffic tickets.

Chief Mylett said the Police Department will do whatever the Council wishes. However, the program currently in place has been proven to be successful nationwide in reducing false alarms. He said that issuing a warning would likely require an officer to return to the residence after the homeowner returns home.

Councilmember Wallace reiterated that he would prefer to discontinue the program. He observed that it is not going well and that there are concerns in the community about the security of the data obtained through registration.

Responding to Ms. Chin, Mr. Wallace said he has encouraged residents to take their concerns to the Police Department. With regard to the security of the information, Ms. Chin said public disclosure laws protect alarm user information. However, she acknowledged that there is always the potential for hacking into computer networks.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Chelminiak, Lt. Petracelli said registration requires a person's name, address, second contact person, two contact numbers, and the alarm provider's name. The year of birth is required to receive the reduced senior fee rate.

Mr. Chelminiak observed that he could look up anyone's mortgage online and find information about their residence. He opined that the \$25 registration fee is not unreasonable for the service provided by the Police Department. He agreed with Councilmember Robertson's suggestion that PSC change its URL from "CryWolf." With regard to program-related mailings, Mr. Chelminiak suggested including a City Hall phone number on all correspondence.

Mr. Chelminiak said he is not concerned that the program violates privacy rights. He is in favor of continuing the program. He supports requiring all alarm owners to register whether their alarm is monitored by a professional service or not. He supports a one-time registration fee.

Councilmember Robinson said she would like to continue the program and to evaluate the outcomes after one year. She favors a one-time registration fee versus an annual fee.

Mayor Stokes concurred with the one-time fee. He supports requiring registration for all alarms.

Responding to Mayor Stokes, the Council indicated majority support for a one-time registration fee. Councilmember Slatter said she would prefer no registration fee but will accept a one-time fee.

Responding to the Mayor, Lt. Petracelli said Detective Jensen recently attended an alarm association meeting in Hillsboro, Oregon, which requires all alarms to be registered. Mayor Stokes said that makes sense to him, because a non-monitored alarm can potentially cause a false alarm response.

Responding to Councilmember Robertson, Lt. Petracelli said the registration of non-monitored alarms will provide contact information for the Police Department to use to help determine

whether an alarm is a true emergency. In further response, Chief Mylett said he will provide information on the current number of false alarm calls related to non-monitored alarms.

Ms. Robertson said she is not in favor of expanding the program to include non-monitored alarms while the City is trying to refine the program.

Responding to Councilmember Slatter, Lt. Petracelli said it would be possible, during a false alarm response, to impose a fine for failing to register an alarm, even if the City does not require an initial registration fee.

Ms. Chin said that, under the current program, an alarm owner could be charged \$100 for the first false alarm and \$125 for failing to register. However, with the first false alarm, there is the option to take a class and to have the \$100 waived.

Mayor Stokes restated that a majority of the Council supports a one-time registration fee. He said many cities have a fee and essentially the same program.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak suggested moving forward to direct staff to prepare a draft ordinance based on the evening's discussion. However, he noted that the Council might not ultimately support expanding the program to include non-monitored alarms or changing the registration fee requirement.

Mr. Chelminiak said he would consider a graduated fine schedule as suggested earlier by Councilmember Robertson. Ms. Robertson requested information on other cities' fine schedules.

(c) Economic Development Quarterly Update (January-March 2016)

City Manager Miyake introduced the Economic Development Plan quarterly update.

Chris Salomone, Director of Planning and Community Development, said there has been strong progress under the Economic Development Plan. He observed that there has been an emerging cultural change in the business community and within the City organization due to the economic development programs and activities.

James Henderson, Economic Development Director, said the action plan matrix in the meeting packet highlights the status of programs and ongoing activities. He recalled the adoption of the Economic Development Plan in July 2014, which identified direct strategies and foundational strategies. The three program areas are business attraction, business retention and expansion, and NextGeneration Bellevue. Mr. Henderson highlighted the year-to-date summary of the three program areas.

Jesse Canedo, Economic Development Manager, said the major accomplishments for the first quarter were the GeekWire Startup Day in Bellevue and participation in the State's trip to the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona. A number of Bellevue-based companies attended the latter event. Ongoing initiatives from 2015 include the Tourism Master Plan, economic development branding and marketing material development, and the Startup 425 Entrepreneur Center. The

City hired a branding and marketing consultant, and the startup center will initially be in Lincoln Center with the Impact Hub program.

Mr. Henderson said the City assisted four companies in relocating to or opening a new office in Bellevue. REI is negotiating a headquarters campus that will bring 2,000 jobs to the Spring District in 2020. Huawei, a large company in China, is leasing one floor in the Plaza Center building for its research and development center. Mr. Henderson thanked Councilmember Lee for his leadership in working with Huawei since last summer.

Mr. Henderson described activities related to business retention and expansion including 18 company visits and providing technical assistance to 19 companies. He thanked Abdy Farid in the Transportation Department for his support to Bellevue Honda to help solve a difficult right-of-way issue.

Mr. Canedo provided an update on NextGeneration Bellevue. Nine new companies (13 jobs) were initiated at the Impact Hub. Startup 425 will provide a number of entrepreneur support services.

Mr. Henderson highlighted the regional collaboration with a number of organizations, including the new initiative of the business community called Challenge Seattle led by former Governor Gregoire.

Mr. Canedo highlighted the City's priority initiatives for 2016: Tourism Master Plan, branding and marketing development, Startup 425 center, Power of Play event at Meydenbauer Center in May, Select USA Summit, and the University of Washington Global Innovation Exchange. Mr. Henderson will attend the Select USA Summit in June with the Economic Development Council of Seattle-King County and Eastside partners. Mr. Canedo said Councilmember Slatter and Mr. Henderson will participate in the Seattle Metro Chamber of Commerce's trip to China.

Councilmember Robinson said she appreciates the performance measures and updates. Responding to Ms. Robinson, Mr. Canedo said the Startup 425 web site will be implemented this summer.

Councilmember Slatter thanked staff for the presentation and their hard work. She noted the language in the mission statement and questioned whether initiatives and programs are the same items. Mr. Henderson said the three main programs are business attraction, business retention and expansion, and NextGeneration Bellevue. Each program contains initiatives which might be specific to that program area or shared with another program area.

Ms. Slatter said she has heard interest from the community in the City providing assistance to grow individual businesses, beginning with their start in Bellevue and continuing through their development. Mr. Henderson said the mission statement language to "develop and implement sustainable programs..." is meant to send a message that the City's programs are in place to be carried out over the long term. In order for a City to attract businesses, it needs to establish a reputation and to be able to communicate the benefits of being located in the community. Mr. Henderson said the business community supports the City's efforts as well.

Councilmember Lee commended staff on their work. He noted an upcoming trip of City representatives to Sweden and Denmark and suggested that economic development opportunities be explored there. He asked staff to let Councilmembers know if they can be of help.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak thanked staff for the report and their good work, including with the Cities of Kirkland and Redmond. He said the Puget Sound Regional Council Economic Development District is beginning to update the regional economic development plan. He noted the movement of businesses within the region including Expedia from Bellevue to Seattle and REI from Kent to Bellevue. He suggested that, when a business grows and moves to another part of the region, perhaps the City should assist the Bellevue property owners in attracting new businesses to fill their buildings. He said this would send an important message about regional cooperation versus competition.

Mayor Stokes said he and the Deputy Mayor discussed a number of related issues in developing their presentation for the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA). Mr. Stokes thanked Mr. Salomone, Mr. Henderson and Mr. Canedo for their leadership and work in the economic development program. Mr. Stokes said the City's involvement with Challenge Seattle will help Bellevue's efforts. He observed that what is good for the region is good for individual cities.

(d) Briefing on the results of the Grand Connection Visioning Charrette

Mayor Stokes said the next agenda item reports on the weekend charrette related to the Wilburton Grand Connection project, which the Council initiated approximately three years ago.

City Manager Miyake said the next two items address development activity related to the Wilburton area. He introduced Dan Stroh, Planning Director and Bradley Calvert, Community Development Program Manager, to provide the presentation.

Mr. Stroh said there is a great deal of excitement in the community about the Grand Connection project. He said a number of Councilmembers attended at least a portion of the three-day charrette event held over the weekend. He said the 80 professionals who participated in the charrette donated their time. He thanked the Bellevue Arts Museum for co-sponsoring this event with the City, and he thanked John Su for providing the space. Mr. Stroh recalled that the Council approved the contract for the major urban design consultant work for the Grand Connection.

Mr. Stroh said the last agenda item is seeking Council direction about whether to expand the boundaries for the Wilburton Commercial Area Study. This area is on the east end of the Grand Connection. He said staff is preparing for the Urban Land Institute national panel on the Wilburton planning effort. Mr. Calvert said the ULI panel is scheduled for May.

Mr. Calvert said the Grand Connection visioning charrette was part of the Bellevue Arts Museum's Louis Kahn: The Power of Architecture exhibit. The three-day charrette involved 80 participants including architects and other design professionals. Eight teams developed their concepts for an overall identity for the Grand Connection, placemaking ideas, and alternatives

for crossing I-405 to the Eastside Rail Corridor. The designs included art, recreation, connectivity and sustainability.

Urban design roundtable discussions were held with Charles Montgomery, author of *Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design*. Balmori Associates conducted stakeholder focus group meetings on Saturday morning. A public open house was held Saturday evening to view the teams' work.

Mr. Calvert displayed and described some of the drawings and ideas generated during the charrette. Next steps are refinements of the boards and the creation of a book, and potentially a display, of the designs. Most of the participants were local, and all were regional.

Mr. Calvert said the consultant team for the Grand Connection Visioning process is Balmori Associates, Herrera, Knippers Helbig, and Mobility in Chain. He provided examples of projects by Balmori Associates in other cities. Open houses will be held as their work continues throughout the year.

Mr. Calvert said staff will be coordinating events and interview times with the Council related to the ULI National Panel on May 15. An open house on the Grand Connection Sequence 1 (Meydenbauer Bay to Meydenbauer Convention Center) will be held in May. The Wilburton Land Use and Urban Design Study request for proposals (RFP) will be released by the early third quarter of 2016.

Councilmember Wallace commended staff on a fantastic event. He attended portions of the charrette on Friday and Saturday. He said the City received significant professional expertise and creativity through this event. Responding to Mr. Wallace, Mr. Calvert said Balmori Associates will use the information generated by the charrette. They will be looking for elements that can be implemented incrementally.

Councilmember Wallace encouraged the City and Balmori Associates to use the talent and enthusiasm of Bellevue residents and professionals going forward.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak said the charrette produced great designs, including the re-design of the Pedestrian Corridor. He looks forward to seeing how Balmori incorporates the designs into its work. He said the charrette produced a great vision for the future Grand Connection.

Councilmember Lee said he attended parts of the charrette. He was impressed with the participants and their hard work. He especially liked the whale concept, which represents Bellevue's history. Mr. Lee said he wants to be sure that the final design represents all residents and the community's values and vision. He said the Grand Connection will define the city for the next 100 years.

Councilmember Robinson said she is excited about the project, which will be transformative for the city. The east-west Grand Connection will connect to the north-south Eastside Rail Corridor. She looks forward to seeing how the project moves forward.

Councilmember Slatter said she attended the charrette presentations on Saturday. She said she was highly activated, informed, and engaged. She noted that no budget was given to the teams

but the purpose was creative thinking, taking Bellevue's history and character into consideration. She was moved by their approach and believes the community will be as well. Ms. Slatter questioned whether the charrette designs could be placed on view for the public. She said each presentation provided a story to describe the concept.

Mr. Calvert said the design concepts and accompanying narratives will be compiled into a book.

Ms. Slatter said the Space Needle and Empire State Building are iconic features for their cities, and the Grand Connection could serve that role in Bellevue. She sees this as a way to recognize nature, innovation, and connections throughout the community. She looks forward to seeing the public's input into the project as well.

Councilmember Robertson said she is enthusiastic as well, and she likes the idea of the project becoming Bellevue's iconic feature.

Mayor Stokes said he spoke to the group on Thursday at the beginning of the charrette. He said there was good energy from participants and others from the community. He recalled that the Council began talking about the Grand Connection concept during planning for Meydenbauer Bay Park. He said the connections will lead to neighboring cities as well.

Mr. Stokes said he and Mr. Stroh walked all over Denver in 2012 on a Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) trip. Denver has an impressive pedestrian system that connects to gathering spaces, buildings, transit, neighborhoods, and different views of the city. He believes the Grand Connection can be even better.

Mayor Stokes said it is important to have an ongoing collaborative effort between staff and the Council. He said Deputy Mayor Chelminiak and Councilmember Wallace are the Council leads on this project, and both are very enthusiastic about it when they are out in the community. Mr. Stokes said REI is attracted to relocating to Bellevue due to a number of features including the Grand Connection, Eastside Rail Corridor, bike trails, and other local amenities.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak said it would be great for visitors to City Hall, including members of the State Legislature and County Council, to be able to see a display about the project. Mr. Wallace concurred and suggested displaying the drawings as well.

Mr. Wallace recalled a charrette in 2004 to consider design elements for the Downtown. He suggested reviewing that information as part of the Grand Connection process.

(e) Wilburton Commercial Area Study Boundary

Mr. Calvert described the Wilburton Commercial Area Study boundary. He said the City has received two requests for expanding the study boundary to include two properties on the southern border. He noted the list of pros and cons in the meeting packet regarding whether to include the Eastridge Corporate Center and Lexus of Bellevue. He suggested that, if the two are added, it might make sense to add two adjacent parcels as well.

Mr. Calvert requested Council direction about whether to expand the geographic scope of the Wilburton Commercial Area Study. Staff's recommendation is to not expand the study area's boundaries, in part because the boundary was expanded once in the past. Mr. Calvert said the Eastridge Corporate Center currently provides a buffer between what will potentially become a more urbanized area and the Wilburton Hill Park. Mr. Calvert said one option for considering a change to the redevelopment pattern of those properties would potentially be through a development agreement.

Responding to Mayor Stokes, Mr. Calvert said staff recommends against extending the boundary to the Lexus site, in part because it would be the only parcel south of Main Street.

Councilmember Lee said he is not convinced that adding the sites would make the study area too large. He observed that they present opportunities and potential benefits. He acknowledged the need to maintain a buffer to the neighborhood. He believes the buffer and transitional areas could be effectively addressed later in the study and design process.

Councilmember Wallace spoke in favor of expanding the study area boundary to include the Eastridge Corporate Center and Lexus of Bellevue. He said the Eastridge site provides an opportunity to connect the Wilburton area to the Botanical Garden in a deliberately planned manner. He said buffers and transitional areas typically need to be addressed with any project.

If the Council chooses to not expand the study area boundary, Mr. Wallace would like the Council to move up on its agenda the topic of the appropriate requirements for achieving a contract (development agreement) rezone. He believes this would be beneficial for potential redevelopment on a number of sites in Bellevue.

Councilmember Robertson said one goal previously discussed by the Council is to move through planning updates more rapidly. She said the City has an aggressive planning work program and a significant workload for staff. She said the Council can address ways to make processes more streamlined and shorter in duration. She expressed concern that expanding the study area boundary conflicts with those goals. However, the Council's goals also include encouraging and supporting redevelopment and investment in the community.

Councilmember Robertson expressed concern about prioritizing new items above items already in the planning queue. She suggested the City can meet the goals of both promoting redevelopment and investment as well as having a streamlined planning process through a contract approach, as mentioned earlier by Councilmember Wallace. Ms. Robertson said the Council has discussed an interest in establishing a development agreement process. She believes such an approach would allow the City to meet both of those goals. Ms. Robertson said she would prefer using the City's public outreach and staff time to establish a development agreement process instead of changing the priority of projects already underway.

Councilmember Robinson said she appreciated Mr. Wallace's comments. She would like to see a thoughtful redevelopment of the area with a cohesive design. It seems the best way to do that would involve adding the parcels as requested.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak said he is undecided on this issue. He observed that redevelopment often includes upzones. If it occurs on one property, the next property might want to upzone as

well. He said it is important to maintain appropriate transition zones. He noted that the Wilburton study and the Grand Connection project are two of the most critical planning efforts over the next several years. He likes the idea of creating a streamlined process for the Council to work with specific sites through development agreements.

Mr. Chelminiak asked whether there is another way to deal with these properties until the City determines what is right for the area. He questioned whether it would cause more or less staff time to add them to the study now versus handling them individually in the future.

Mr. Stroh said the concept of an alternative mechanism approach would require a site-specific process. He said it would allow greater flexibility but he was not certain whether it would save staff time. He said including the properties in the study area potentially sets the expectation for a land use change. He said more staff work is needed to analyze an alternative mechanism approach and to consider its feasibility and effectiveness.

Mr. Stroh concurred that this is likely the most significant planning effort for the City over the next several years. He said Main Street and the topography appeared to be natural boundaries for the study area.

Mr. Chelminiak said transitional areas are important. He said he recently drove through the Crossroads area and had a level of regret about the size of a development allowed along 156th Avenue. He could support adding the two parcels to the Wilburton study area. However, he does not want to create the expectation that the properties will automatically receive increased FAR (floor-area ratio) and building heights. Mr. Chelminiak said the contract/development agreement approach might be the best way to allow redevelopment that meets certain transition area criteria.

Mayor Stokes agreed with Mr. Chelminiak that adding the parcels to the study area should not be interpreted as approval for more intense development. He suggested working on creating a streamlined process for individual development agreements. Mayor Stokes observed that the two parcels should be included in the study to evaluate the potential benefits and opportunities.

Responding to Councilmember Slatter, Mr. Stroh said Main Street was viewed as a logical boundary for the study area near the Lexus dealership. For the area east of 116th Avenue, staff saw the Home Depot store as a natural boundary, largely due to the change in topography south of the store.

Ms. Slatter noted that the Eastridge Corporate Center representatives mentioned their proximity to transit. She questioned how that fits with the objectives of the Wilburton study. Mr. Stroh said the primary transit focus for the Wilburton area study has been the connections to the NE 8th Street/Wilburton station and the Downtown station, and not to the East Main Station.

Ms. Slatter said she is interested in discussing the potential for development agreements to handle future requests. She questioned the impact of adding the two parcels to the Wilburton study now. Mr. Stroh said it would bring some additional stakeholders into the process. However, he observed that it would not add significant staff time to the study process.

Ms. Slatter noted Councilmember Robertson's concern about prioritizing new items at the top of the list of established priorities, and questioned whether the requests are fair. Mr. Stroh opined that it is fair for a property owner at this stage in the process, before moving to the ULI panel review, to ask to be included.

Mayor Stokes suggested further discussion to determine how the two parcels could be added to the study area. He observed that it would be more efficient to add them to the study than to address them separately. However, he would like to discuss creating a development agreement/contract process for certain situations.

5. Continued Oral Communications: None.

Mayor Stokes declared the meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Kyle Stannert
City Clerk

/kaw