CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

January 10, 2018
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:	Acting Chair Barksdale, Commissioners Carlson, deVadoss, Laing, Malakoutian, Morisseau
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:	None
STAFF PRESENT:	Terry Cullen, Trish Byers, Mike Kattermann, Department of Planning and Community Development
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Mayor Stokes
GUEST SPEAKERS:	None
RECORDING SECRETARY:	Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER
(6:35 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Commissioner Barksdale who presided.

2. ROLL CALL
(6:35 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Laing who arrived at 6:45 p.m.

Former Commissioner Stephanie Walter was invited to address the Commission.

Stephanie Walter: OK, good evening. I didn't have anything prepared to say until I was on my drive over here, so this is coming right off the cuff. I wrote down as a sat down. I came to the Commission with the intention of being as honest and honorable as I could be, and I think I've done that. Now I plan to go out the exact same way. I want you to know my story and I want you to know what the timeline was. In May I applied to run for the East Bellevue Community Council. I had seen strong female commissioners not be reappointed to a second term, and in order to extend my tenure with the city I ran for East Bellevue Community Council. Shortly after, I wrote a letter to Terry Cullen and to I believe the city attorney and I believe Mayor Stokes asking if there was any reason that I could not serve on both. I wanted to know. I would not have accepted the chairmanship had I known, had that decision been made. I was, um, not responded to for a couple of months. In August I met with Mayor Stokes and the question came up. And I said that I had read about the doctrine of incompatible offices, and it

was my interpretation, and that of an attorney relative of mine, that there was no issue. There's no case law. And so I felt comfortable moving forward. Ok? It became problematic. I was contacted by members of the public. I was contacted by other officials. It became about me and not about serving the city. So I decided to step down from the Planning Commission and from my chairmanship. I did it for what's best for the city. I did it to be honest and honorable. And I would now ask you, and you and you and you and you to all do the same thing. The citizens of Bellevue run Bellevue. You are answerable to the neighborhoods and the citizens of Bellevue, whether you're elected or appointed. So I stepped down for the good of the city, not for myself personally, not to draw attention to myself. I believe you all knew – needed to know the honest truth. And that's the best truth I can give you. So with that, I will sit in the gallery, maintain my composure. Really glad this isn't televised. Thank you all so much. I will miss you. I had a wonderful meeting with Commissioner Malakoutian – told you would get it right – and I think he is a wonderful addition to the Commission. I'll be here in the gallery. I'll be at Council meetings often. Thank you.

Commissioner Carlson thanked Ms. Walter for her stewardship as Chair and also for her many years of service to Bellevue. He said people who get involved even before coming members of a citizen panel, board or commission are the people who really make a difference. He said he never once doubted that anything done by Ms. Walter was done in order to best serve Bellevue and its citizens.

Commissioner deVadoss thanked Ms. Walter for her convictions and courage. He said she was a of huge value to him during his tenure as chair and her tenure as vice chair. He said he had always admired Ms. Walter for her sense of mission and her desire to serve the citizens of the community.

Commissioner Barksdale welcomed new Commissioner Malakoutian.

Commissioner Malakoutian said it was an honor to serve as a member of the Commission.

Mayor Chelminiak congratulated Ms. Walter on having been sworn in as a member of the East Bellevue Community Council. He said the appointment will allow her a new opportunity to have an effect on the city. The Commission is doing very good work and the Council is pleased. He said Ms. Walter's service was valuable and it was too bad things ended up the way they did. Good can come from bad, however.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
(6:35 p.m.)

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

4. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
(6:36 p.m.)

Councilmember Stokes thanked Ms. Walter for her work on behalf of the city. He said he had the pleasure of appointing her to the Commission and had enjoyed working with her. It is unfortunate that the circumstances surrounding her leaving the Commission became clouded with emotion. Ms. Walter clearly wanted to do both jobs but knew going into it that there were issues. There was a process undertaken that took some time, and it would have been good if it could have been worked out differently. Hopefully going forward Ms. Walter will be able to help build a good working relationship with the East Bellevue Community Council.

Councilmember Stokes welcomed Commissioner Malakoutian. He said along with the chair and vice chair, he reviewed the large list of qualified applicants and narrowed it down to just the one name. Commissioner Malakoutian brings different skills to the table and will be a great addition to the Commission.

5. STAFF REPORTS
(6:47 p.m.)

Mr. Cullen wished the Commissioners a Happy New Year and took a moment to welcome Commissioner Malakoutian.

Mr. Cullen noted that the packet included a calendar of Commission meetings for 2018 and a 2018 wall calendar. With regard to the latter he said he would make it available in Excel format to allow the Commissioners to plug in dates and events. He pointed out that he had included on the schedule the Bellevue School District breaks and said that while no Commission meeting conflicts with the winter break, there is a conflict with the spring break in April. Accordingly, the date of the first meeting in April was moved to the first Wednesday of the month. He also commented that the meetings in November would be on back-to-back weeks, with one of the meetings being the annual retreat, and that there would only be one meeting in December. Given the projections that the year will be full and active, the Commissioners were asked to keep in mind that additional meetings may be added to the calendar.

Mr. Cullen pointed out that according to the adopted Commission by-laws, in the event of the resignation of the chair or vice chair, the Commission shall expeditiously select a new officer to fill the vacancy. He said he would set the election of a new chair as soon as possible.

Mr. Cullen provided each Commissioner with a copy of Roberts Rules of Order. He suggested carving out a couple of minutes of each meeting to talk about a section of the rules.

The Commissioners were informed that a short course on local planning, which every Commissioner is required to take, was coming up the evening of January 17 in Renton.

6. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS
(6:55 p.m.)

Ms. Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, said she was present as a private citizen and not as a member of the East Bellevue Community Council (EBCC). She said Councilmember Stokes attended the January 9 meeting of the EBCC and all newly elected members were officially sworn in. The body took action to approve Complete Streets. She pointed out that the very first presentation on Complete Streets that was given to the Transportation Commission was about the only time it was made clear that adoption of Complete Streets was needed in order to qualify certain awards from various other jurisdictions. Complete Streets was a Comprehensive Plan amendment and as such followed the formal process, but given that the city had already received

a $500,000 grant, it was a bit like having the cart before the horse. There were no real significant changed circumstances. In the spirit of transparency, things should not happen that way again. She said she was also very sorry to see former Chair Walter have to leave her position on the Commission and said it would have been good to have had more transparency in the process. The EBCC will, however, benefit from having her as a member.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – None
(7:00 p.m.)

8. STUDY SESSION
(7:00 p.m.)

A. East Main Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Land Use Code Amendment and Legislative Rezone

Senior Planner Mike Kattermann said staff would be working with the Commission over the next few months on the East Main Comprehensive Plan amendment, Land Use Code amendment and rezone, with an eye on having a recommendation for the Council by the end of the year.

Code Development Manager Trish Byers said process for addressing East Main will be different from Eastgate and downtown livability in that the Comprehensive Plan amendment, Land Use Code amendment and rezone will all be done together. In the past each element has been addressed sequentially rather than concurrently. The concurrent approach was used successfully in 2009 for the Bel-Red amendments. It certainly takes less time, and because each involves talking about essentially the same issues, addressing them individually is often confusing for the public.

Mr. Kattermann said the East Main Comprehensive Plan amendment was initiated by the Council on September 13. The amendment has been put on the Commission's calendar earlier in the year than usual in order to wrap it up by the end of 2018. Other Comprehensive Plan amendments will be brought before the Commission on the normal timeline. The process will conclude with a final review public hearing for all of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan amendments, including East Main. The East Main amendment is focused on the primary transit-oriented development area which is bounded by Main Street on the north, SE 6th Street on the south, 112th Avenue NE on the west and 114th Avenue NE on the east, as well as the secondary transit-oriented development area, which is bounded by SE 6th Street on the north, SE 8th Street on the south, 112th Avenue NE on the west and 114th Avenue NE on the east.

Mr. Kattermann noted that the East Main CAC process included a great deal of public engagement over the course of about 20 months. The plan that came out of that process is available on the project website. An appendix that goes with the plan has all of the technical studies and background documents, and it is available on the same site. The list of stakeholders includes nine parcel owners and the Surrey Downs, Bellecrest, Downtown and Bellefield neighborhoods. The Commission's meetings will of course be open to the public, and there will also be both online and in-person open house events, all of which will be followed up by a formal public hearing.

In initiating the Comprehensive Plan amendment, the Council developed 11 guiding principles. Mr. Kattermann said they were included as Attachment B in the Commission packet. The first four principles have to do with context relative to other ongoing or adopted plans for areas surrounding the study area and call for reviewing the framework for what was done in the

downtown, recognizing the fact that East Main is a gateway and should have an iconic design, and keeping focused on the area as appropriate for transit-oriented development. Principles 5 through 7 are specific relative to floorplate and stepback height, and non-motorized connections. Principles 8 through 11 are foundational in terms of public input and building on the work of the CAC; adhering to the schedule; paying attention to the CAC vision and guiding principles; and ensuring consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Byers stated that the Comprehensive Plan is the vision and aspirational policy document for the city. It focuses out 20 years. The Land Use Code implements the Comprehensive Plan in that it addresses how the policies are delivered on the ground. The specific details are housed in the development standards and the design guidelines.

The Comprehensive Plan establishes growth centers in the downtown, Wilburton, Bel-Red, Crossroads, Factoria and Eastgate. East Main is not a designated growth center but it is important relative to transit-oriented development given that it will house one of the six light rail stations in Bellevue associated with East Link. Each of the growth centers is unique. The downtown has regional stature and importance in the four-county regional plan. The South Bellevue station and park and ride will have no transit-oriented development associated with it.

Commissioner Carlson asked what can happen inside the station areas that cannot happen outside them. Mr. Kattermann said station areas are typically defined as a quarter- or half-mile radius around each station, which roughly equates to a five- to ten-minute walk. Where transit-oriented development is anticipated near a station, it is earmarked to occur within the quarter-mile circle. The East Main area is specifically defined. No changes are recommended to the single family areas to the west in accord with the specific direction given to the CAC by the Council. The area around the Wilburton station will have its own character given its context. The 120th and 130th stations were studied as part of the Bel-Red plan and while similar in terms of the intensity of development, there will be some distinctions between them.

Mr. Kattermann said the overall station area planning objectives for East Main included better integrating the light rail station with the neighborhoods, facilitating station access, and optimizing the benefits of the investment in light rail. Public outreach has been critical throughout the process.

Ms. Byers said transit-oriented development is predicated on having a walkable neighborhood within the walkshed. It includes a mix of dense housing, office, retail and other amenities. A gathering place for pedestrians is very important given how active the pedestrian realm is in transit-oriented developments. Photos of transit-oriented developments were shown to the Commissioners along with a plan outline for the Capital Hill area of Seattle where the light rail stations are. Mr. Kattermann noted that the Capital Hill plan creates public space on the interior, provides permeability through the site both east-west and north-south, incorporates development with the station entrances, and is adjacent to Cal Anderson Park. The mix of uses includes community services, neighborhood retail, a permanent farmers market, bicycle parking and lots of pedestrian amenities. Those qualities and characteristics are the same as what is envisioned for the East Main station area.

Mr. Kattermann also shared with the Commissioners a rendering of what the East Main transit-oriented development could look like, along with a rendering from a massing study that was done as part of the CAC process. He stressed that the renderings represented concepts only and not the vision for the area. The CAC's guiding principles, which were established by the CAC itself, call for the area to be complementary to the adjacent neighborhoods and the downtown,

and a new neighborhood with high-quality development that is walkable and livable. The CAC was clear about wanting to see services included that will serve the surrounding neighborhoods; creating a place rather than a project that will be attractive to people with public spaces, trees and greenery; addressing noise from the freeway and traffic concerns; creating smaller, walkable blocks; and designing the area to allow for sunlight but also to maintain privacy.

Commissioner Morisseau referred to the rendering from the massing study and asked if the building height shown of 295 feet is what the CAC considered. Mr. Kattermann allowed that the CAC looked at building heights of up to 300 feet but not over the entire site. Primarily the taller buildings would be allowed along Main Street as part of a transition to the downtown. Commissioner Morisseau asked if during its deliberation the CAC was aware of what was happening relative to downtown livability and the proposed building heights and how the East Main area fits in with the wedding cake outline. Mr. Kattermann said the CAC was aware of what was being proposed relative to downtown livability, but the downtown livability process was not finalized when the CAC completed its work. What the CAC proposed is comparable and compatible with what was being proposed relative to downtown livability. The CAC was clear about not wanting to see the East Main area as an extension of the downtown.

Mr. Kattermann said the CAC detailed strategies to achieve the desired character for the East Main area. Those strategies included creating a unique niche that is distinct from the downtown that includes a mix of uses, but no big box stores or corporate campuses; variable building height and FAR limits utilized in conjunction with a bonus system; a multimodal environment focused on pedestrian connections and amenities; specific design guidelines; taller buildings along I-405 and Main Street with stepped down buildings along 112th Avenue NE; out of sight parking that is either underground or wrapped with uses; and active street frontages. The CAC talked about building placement along 114th Avenue NE to help attenuate noise from the freeway, balanced with visual permeability; safe design focused on visibility and lighting, as well as allowing for "eyes on the station" to improve security; a non-motorized internal network connected with the external; and optimizing access to and use of the light rail station.

Mr. Kattermann invited the Commissioners to participate in a walking tour of the area starting at 4:30 p.m. prior to the February 14 Commission meeting. At that meeting the Commission will be presented with a full set of draft policies. Once the policy work is completed, the focus will turn to developing code language.

Commissioner Barksdale asked about pedestrian access to the East Main area from the Surrey Downs neighborhood. Mr. Kattermann said access will be through the new part at the north end of the neighborhood. Additionally, a study will be pursued regarding a pedestrian overpass crossing 112th Avenue NE in the vicinity of SE 6th Street.

Commissioner Barksdale asked if consideration had been given to prioritizing for shared rides or any sort of centrally located parking that would allow people to drive to the area and then get around on foot quite easily. Mr. Kattermann said no parking for the light rail station will be created because is it not an area where it would be desirable to have people drive to and park before accessing the train. There are plans to create drop-off areas on both sides of 112th Avenue NE, north of the station on the west side and just south of the station on the east side. A pedestrian crossing will be installed as part of the light rail project and there will be a traffic light.

Commissioner Morisseau asked what the logic was behind not wanting park and ride opportunities for the East Main station given how close the site is to the freeway. Mr.

Kattermann said the park and ride station at South Bellevue will be large and is intended to draw the focus of drivers coming from the freeways. The intent is to avoid drawing additional traffic into the East Main and downtown areas where traffic is already congested. The East Main area is intended to focus on transit. The only other park and ride lot associated with light rail in Bellevue will be at the 130th station.

Commissioner Barksdale noted that the East Main station area is near the southernmost portion of the Wilburton study area. He said the Grand Connection will serve as the primary method for pedestrians and cyclists to cross I-405, but asked if anything will be done to optimize the crossing at Main Street. Mr. Kattermann said the strategies in the East Main plan talk to the Main Street crossing. The strategies talk about extending the treatment of Main Street similar to what is in Old Bellevue.

There was agreement to poll the Commissioners offline in relation to finding a date for a walking tour of the East Main station area.

B. Guiding Principles

(7:54 p.m.)

Mr. Cullen reminded the Commissioners that the guiding principles had been on the Commission's agenda numerous times. The principles were set for a vote at the Commission's retreat, but time prevented that from occurring. The notion of establishing guiding principles came from former Commissioner Walter and Commissioner deVadoss after the 2014 Commission retreat. The Commission was encouraged to reach a decision relative to the guiding principles.

Commissioner Laing said the catalyst for the guiding principles in 2014 was actually the Shoreline Master Program adoption process. The reality is that the Commission at that point had a very antagonistic relationship with staff. The staff did their professional best to bring materials and recommendations to the Commission, and the Commission would then chew them up and make a recommendation to the Council. Where the staff did not agree with the Commission, the staff would put their original work before the Council along with the recommendation of the Commission. The Commission has not been in that relationship with staff since the 2014 retreat and particularly not since Mr. Cullen has been on board. He allowed that the proposed guiding principles have value even though there was a lot of angst that went into creating them.

A motion to approve the guiding principles was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss.

Commissioner Morisseau pointed out that she was unable to attend the last Commission retreat but forwarded to staff a memo regarding what she wanted to see happen in regard to the guiding principles. She said she did not see in the minutes of the retreat any mention of her memo, and said she also did not know if her memo had been sent to the other Commissioners. Mr. Cullen said the memo was not discussed at the retreat because time did not allow for a discussion of the agenda item. He said he did not recall whether or not the memo had been forwarded to all Commissioners. He proposed taking action on the guiding principles as presented and addressing the issues raised by Commissioner Morisseau at the January 24 meeting of the Commission. Commissioner Morisseau concurred.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. Planning Commission 2018 Draft Work Program

(8:06 p.m.)

Mr. Cullen provided the Commissioners with a broad overview of the 2018 draft work program. He noted that if everything plays out as expected, the Commission will have a very busy year. The bulk of the year will be taken up with Comprehensive Plan amendments. He stressed that the plan amendment cycle takes a full calendar year and is time sensitive; everything that starts in 2018 must end in 2018. The deadline for privately initiated Comprehensive Plan amendments is January 31, thus it cannot be said what those amendments will be and how they will impact the work program; a truer picture of the work program will be available at the Commission's first meeting in February. There will be four, possibly five, Council-initiated Comprehensive Plan amendments.

Continuing, Mr. Cullen explained that the amendment cycle typically entails two steps. The first step, which usually is completed by mid year, is called the threshold review. Final review is the second step and takes up the remainder of the year. The important distinction, however, is that the two-step process only applies to privately initiated plan amendments. Council approval is required for threshold review, and once approved, the amendments are added to the work program for the final review process that ultimately culminates in a public hearing and recommendation to the Council. Publicly initiated plan amendments are automatically added to the work program, thus no threshold review is required. The East Main station area amendment has been initiated by the Council. The Bel-Red lookback is expected to be initiated in late January or early February. The Grand Connection design guidelines amendment has already been initiated. The anticipation is that the Council will in February initiate an amendment related to affordable housing that affects surplus city owned lands, non-profit lands and faith-based lands. The Wilburton commercial area plan amendment, if it is ready in time, may also be initiated by the Council. Some of the plan amendments will have code amendments running in parallel to them, and some will see code amendments following later, but each plan amendment carries with it the potential for controversy.

Mr. Cullen said typically the work program is designed to have the publicly initiated plan amendments presented to the Commission near the end of the year. That approach, however, does not work, particularly in regard to transportation issues. The intent is to start the homework earlier and thread it all the way through the year, giving the Commission time to ask the questions and understand the issues ahead of final review and the public hearing. He said the hope is that the Bel-Red discussion will begin on February 14 and that shortly after that the other amendments will be programmed in. Staff is committed to ask the Commission during the scoping process what types of information will be needed to help inform a decision.

The Commissioners were informed that at the January 24 meeting, staff will review with the Commission the plan amendment process. Information about the post-project survey will be weaved in, and the idea of possibly making amendments to the plan amendment process will be introduced. Whatever is done in that regard, however, will not affect the 2018 plan amendment cycle. A dynamic audit of the process as it is carried out in 2018 will help to inform the question of where things work well and where they do not work well. At the end of the year, the audit will inform the notion of whether or not a code amendment will be needed, and if so, what it should entail.

9. OTHER BUSINESS – None

(8:17 p.m.)

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(8:17 p.m.)

A. October 4, 2017

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioner deVadoss abstained from voting.

B. October 11, 2017

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morisseau and the motion carried unanimously.

C. November 1, 2017

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morisseau and the motion carried unanimously.

D. November 8, 2017

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioner Morisseau abstained from voting.

11. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

(8:20 p.m.)

Ms. Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, said she appreciates the insightful questions the Commission has. It is evidence of the engagement the Commissioners have as citizen leaders. She said she attends various commission and board meetings in order to make those groups aware of the East Bellevue Community Council and to carry back as much current information as possible. She said she appreciated Commissioner Laing bringing the Eastgate Land Use Code amendment to the East Bellevue Community Council and said she was impressed by the amount of research done on the topic by Mr. Cullen.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

(8:27 p.m.)

13. ADJOURN

(8:27) p.m.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Barksdale adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Terry Cullen
Staff to the Planning Commission

3/1/18
Date

Jeremy Barksdale
Acting Chair of the Planning Commission

2/28/18
Date