

East Bellevue Community Council
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

January 8, 2019
6:30 p.m.

Lake Hills Clubhouse
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Vice Chair Walter and Councilmembers Dhananjaya, Gooding, and Kasner

ABSENT: Chair Hummer

STAFF: Toni Pratt, Senior Land Use Planner, Development Services Department (DSD)
Randa Kiriakos, Senior Development Review Engineer, Transportation
Department
Michael Shovlin, Sergeant, Police Department
Sean Nichols, Fire Prevention Officer, Fire Department

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m., with Vice Chair Walter presiding.

2. **ROLL CALL/FLAG SALUTE**

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

Vice Chair Walter asked Councilmember Gooding to lead the flag salute.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Kasner moved to approve the agenda. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

4. **COMMUNICATIONS: WRITTEN AND ORAL**

David Hoffman, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), spoke about electrical outages in Bellevue and throughout the Eastside. He said an outage occurred on December 16, 2018 in Lake Hills along 148th Avenue SE at SE 20th Street after a vehicle hit one of PSE's transmission line poles serving the Phantom Lake Substation. He noted that approximately 4,000 customers lost power and the Phantom Lake substation remained without service for nearly 15.5 hours. Mr. Hoffman said PSE's proposed transmission line project to connect the Phantom Lake and Lake Hill Substations would likely have prevented or shortened the outage.

Fiona Cofield said the organization 300 trees is opposed to Puget Sound Energy's plans to remove 300 trees along 148th Avenue and NE 8th Street to install new transmission lines. She encouraged the use of updated technologies including self-healing grids and enhanced monitoring systems. Ms. Cofield said the City of Bellevue needs to sell six properties to enable PSE to build the transmission line project. She said 300 trees will ask the City to not sell those properties. Ms. Cofield encouraged the EBCC to support the organization's position and to continue to support efforts to retain and expand Bellevue's tree canopy.

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

6. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR:** None.

7. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:** None.

8. **PUBLIC/COURTESY HEARINGS**

(a) Courtesy Hearing: Puesta del Sol Elementary School

Vice Chair Walter introduced discussion regarding the Puesta del Sol Elementary School project.

Toni Pratt, Project Manager, said the Bellevue School District proposes to demolish the existing Bellewood Elementary School located at 301 151st Place NE to relocate Puesta del Sol Elementary School from its current location at 3810 132nd Avenue SE to that site. Ms. Pratt welcomed members of the architectural and design team present in the audience. She said there will be an additional public meeting regarding the project. She noted that individuals listed to speak tonight will become parties of record and will receive notification of the City's decision at the end of the process.

Melissa DeVita, Deputy Superintendent for the Bellevue School District, described the significant growth in the school district and the lack of future elementary school sites in south Bellevue. Relocating the Puesta del Sol school from the south end will leave that site for a future elementary school to serve population growth. Ms. DeVita said the school district has a number of properties in areas of Bellevue north of I-90 to accommodate future facility needs.

Ms. Pratt said the Bellevue School District submitted a conditional use and critical areas land use permit application in late November. The project is handled as a Process III application due to the location of the school site within the EBCC's jurisdiction. The Director of Development Services will make a recommendation to the Hearing Examiner, who will review the application and provide a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council's decision will ultimately be forwarded to the EBCC for approval or disapproval.

Ms. Pratt noted that she provided handouts for tonight's meeting summarizing the process and the decision criteria applicable to the project. She said the Bellewood school site targeted for the future Puesta del Sol school is currently subject to a concomitant agreement, which was originally used to place special conditions on the site. At that time, there was a change in zoning

from open use to a residential district (R-5, five units per acre). The concomitant agreement required the school district to continue to allow a pedestrian connection from 150th Place NE to NE 4th Street. Ms. Pratt said there was an interest in creating a pedestrian connection across private property to link to 148th Avenue. However, the connection was not completed and the property has not been developed.

Carlos Sierra, Sierra-Martin Architects, said the new Puesta del Sol school will be compatible with the neighborhood and designed for safety. He described the layout of the site, including access points.

Nell Lund, Senior Ecologist and Wetland Scientist for The Watershed Company, described the natural areas on and adjacent to the school site. The property to the north of the site is owned by the City of Bellevue and the property to the west is privately owned. The private property owner did not grant permission to access his property. However, his lawyer sent a copy of the owner's wetland consultant's report to The Watershed Company.

Ms. Lund described the wetlands on and near the school site. She noted that wetlands are rated as Category 1 through 4, with 1 being the highest quality wetland. The largest wetland, Wetland A, is rated Category 2, with a 110-foot buffer and the City-required a 20-foot building setback. Wetland B, located on a mowed lawn, is rated as Category 4 and does not require a buffer due to the size of the wetland. Kelsey Creek, located off the school property, is a salmon-bearing stream that requires a 100-foot buffer. The streams nearest point is approximately 150 feet from the school site.

Ms. Lund described the mitigation sequencing for the site to avoid or minimize impacts. She said the school project provides the opportunity to improve the site's condition, and The Watershed Company proposes a combination of wetland buffers and wetland enhancements. The project impacts are limited to the buffer. Ms. Lund provided a map depicting potential pedestrian and vehicle connections. The project includes a garden area and a path to allow opportunities for outdoor activities and learning.

Matt Palmer, Gibson Traffic Consultants, said the Bellewood school has been used as a swing school since 2002 while other schools were rebuilt. The school will have a maximum capacity of 650 students. The traffic study included four intersections along Main Street as well as additional intersections within the area.

Mr. Palmer described the site layout and the plans for the road configuration adjacent to the school and for pedestrian and parking facilities. He said 151st Place NE is not currently wide enough to provide parking and sidewalks on both sides of the street. The street will be upgraded to allow 28 feet of pavement between curbs, which will be converted from rolled to vertical curbs. Parking will be allowed on one side of the street. There will be an 8-foot sidewalk on the west side of the street. Mr. Palmer noted that most of the students ride the bus to the school.

Jason Romine, Sierra Martin Architects, described the two community meetings held to date. On May 31, 2018, the design team reviewed the overall characteristics of the site and the project schedule, and then opened the floor to hear from the community. The project team heard

concerns about vehicles potentially speeding into the north entry point, as well as about potential parking issues and traffic backups along 151st Place NE.

Mr. Romine said seven site options were identified for further exploration. During the July 19, 2018 community meeting, the design team provided more details regarding the options. The alternatives were evaluated based on four criteria: 1) safety operations, 2) neighborhood concerns, 3) environmental concerns, and 4) cost and schedule.

Thomas Wadkins, Sierra Martin Architects, provided a summary of the site circulation options. He noted that Option 1 maintains the current site circulation, with all traffic entering from the northeast and exiting to the south. Option 2 reflects bus and staff traffic entering and exiting from the north, and parent traffic entering and exiting from the south end of the site. Option 3 reverses the usage of the north and south access points. Option 4 eliminates the separation of the parking lots to allow parent traffic to enter from the north and exit to the south. Bus traffic enters and exits at the south access point. Option 5a involves environmental impacts and cost concerns, and reflects a full mixing of the traffic types. Option 6 is essentially the reverse of Option 1.

Ms. Lund commented on the environmental impacts related to the options. Option 5a connects to 148th Avenue and would require an easement from the neighboring property owner. Development in that area would impact wetlands. Option 5b includes an easement that would disrupt the existing trail and stream. Ms. Lund said the preferred alternative is Option 2, which avoids direct impacts to wetlands and streams. The impacts are limited to the buffer areas.

Mr. Palmer noted that Option 2 received the highest scores for separating bus and parent traffic. He said the site will have 108 parking stalls, plus additional parking available on the parent loop and along the bus loop for events, for a total capacity of 151 vehicles. He said the site design will accommodate a longer queue of vehicles within the site to avoid road impacts.

Mr. Sierra spoke about the challenges and opportunities for the school site. He spoke about creating outdoor learning environments and separating bus traffic from parent traffic. He presented images of the school, which includes an outdoor amphitheater and library. The building is limited to two stories to maintain consistency with the scale of the surrounding neighborhood.

Randa Kiriakos, Senior Development Review Engineer, City of Bellevue Transportation Department, described the access to the site. She noted that offsite improvements are required to serve the school site and to provide adequate public facilities. She said the Transportation Department is reviewing the proposal to ensure that it meets the minimum requirements for site access, including emergency vehicle access, and for pedestrian facilities.

Ms. Kiriakos said the Bellevue School District evaluated seven traffic alternatives with different access options. The preferred alternative separates parent traffic from bus and school staff traffic. Staff and school buses will enter and exit the site through access at NE 4th Street and 152nd Avenue. Parents and visitors will access the school from 151st Place NE. Ms. Kiriakos highlighted the improvements required at each access point, street lighting enhancements, potential extension of the sidewalks, safe walkway routes, and the traffic analysis. She said the

project does not meet the criteria for installing speed humps in the neighborhood. The project must provide adequate public facilities along 151st Place NE, including the proposed roadway widening and wider sidewalk. Ms. Kiriakos described emergency access to the site. She noted the enhanced mid-block crosswalk with flashing beacons.

Ms. Kiriakos said the Transportation Department has started its review of the project, and more information is needed to evaluate the performance of the school district's preferred alternative.

Sergeant Michael Shovlin, Bellevue Police Department, spoke about getting in and out of the school and neighborhood in the case of an emergency. He noted that the Police Department coordinates with the Transportation Department to enforce parking and traffic regulations around schools. He said officers will be in the area immediately before the school opens and during the first couple of weeks of the school year. He noted the benefits of the enhanced crosswalk.

Sean Nichols, Fire Prevention Officer, Bellevue Fire Department, spoke about emergency access along 151st Place NE and the challenges associated with the existing school site.

Vice Chair Walter temporarily left the meeting.

Councilmember Gooding thanked Ms. Pratt and the guests for the presentation.

At 7:57 p.m., Councilmember Kasner moved to open the Courtesy Hearing. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

Mindy Leffler expressed concern regarding vehicles that are speeding along 151st Place NE and parents' cars lining up in the street in front of the school. She said that, during the time the site has been used as a swing school, her mailbox, landscaping and vehicle have been damaged by vehicles on different occasions. She expressed concern regarding emergency access to her home, which is often blocked due to parents dropping off and picking up students. She is frustrated that the architect addresses only the safety of the students on site. She has contacted the Bellevue School District annually about her concerns for 17 years, and they have never been addressed.

Eckart Schmidt said he lives adjacent to the school. He said the second community meeting on July 19 was not properly noticed for the public, and residents found out about it after it occurred. He spoke against the elimination of street parking, the widening of a residential street, and the removal of the landscaped median. Mr. Schmidt said residents would like the City to update the original analysis for the use of the school site before it issues a new Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the redevelopment of the school. He said a concomitant agreement obliges the school to show a good faith effort to design access to the school in a way that will minimize traffic impacts.

Hildegard Schmidt expressed concern that the neighborhood received late notice regarding the school project. She said she opposes widening the street and eliminating landscaping. She objected to the proposed two-way traffic patterns and parking limitations. She has been disappointed in the Bellevue School District's lack of responsiveness to residents' concerns.

Bal Simon expressed concern regarding the loss of street parking as well as construction and noise impacts.

Robin McGhee noted that she formerly worked for the school district for 18 years. She concurred with the comments of the previous speakers. She said the impacts on her street are unacceptable. She is concerned about restrictive parking and about widening their street into a thoroughfare.

Heather Fryling questioned why the crosswalk is on the opposite side of the street from the proposed sidewalk. She said that access to her house is often blocked due to school traffic. She expressed concern regarding impacts to the adjacent wetland.

Xochitl Palomino said she shares the previous speakers' concerns about the school project. She is concerned about the decline in the neighborhood's quality of life and the potential negative impact on property values.

Leonard McGhee spoke about living through a number of uses of the Bellewood school site. He believes the current redevelopment proposal is unfortunate. He opposes plans to widen the street. He noted that Police and Fire vehicles have never had any issues with emergency access on 151st Place NE. He believes the site is not appropriate for a school in which the majority of students are commuting from other areas.

Leeviana Gray expressed concern that the school project will negatively affect her property value. She spoke about the importance of street parking and a safe traffic and pedestrian environment.

Anthony Stabile expressed concern about parking impacts as well as traffic impacts that can block access to his home for himself and delivery trucks.

Allen Dunn expressed concern about the proposed street widening, the elimination of sidewalks, the loss of street parking, and car speeds along 151st Place NE. He said cars will drive even faster on a wider street. He commented that the intersection of Main Street and 151st Place is very dark, which contributes to his safety concerns.

Councilmember Kasner moved to extend the meeting until 9:00 p.m. Councilmember Gooding seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

Anna Wenzel said she shares her neighbors' concerns regarding the school-related traffic. She questioned whether this is the appropriate location and a large enough site for the Puesta del Sol school. She noted that the school is not a neighborhood school but draws students from across Bellevue.

Mark Hajos suggested a dedicated access to the school. He suggested that the City should reconsider the traffic impacts.

Adam Droker spoke about having one of the best schools in the neighborhood, noting that his children attend Puesta del Sol school. He favors the idea of a dedicated road. He believes the

Bellevue School District is doing a good job overall of shepherding taxpayers' dollars. However, he is frustrated about the lack of communication regarding public meetings. He hopes to see a cost-effective solution that works for the neighborhood.

Fiona Cofield said she previously attended Puesta del Sol Elementary School. She noted that the new building will have two stories. She expressed concerns regarding privacy, quality of life, and parking impacts. She suggested that the school is south Bellevue's problem, and she noted that more space is available in the Factoria area. She opined that the City is favoring the school district's plans and failing to protect neighborhoods. She noted that she lives near 156th Avenue and might not be affected by the new school. However, she is frustrated that residents have not been notified about a number of projects in East Bellevue in recent years. She expressed concern regarding student safety.

Tracy Ritzau spoke about cars speeding along 151st Place NE and expressed concern about two-way traffic. She noted traffic congestion on Main Street, which makes it difficult and sometimes unsafe to access buses.

Steven Stapelman said he does not want the planners to give up on the north access option connecting to NE 6th Street, which has 80-90 percent less traffic than any other location. He suggested that the wetlands would not be affected by that access point.

At 8:38 p.m., Councilmember Gooding moved to close the Courtesy Hearing. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

Councilmember Dhananjaya thanked everyone for their participation and comments. He expressed concern that the study of traffic impacts was focused on the school site and not the adjacent streets and residents. Mr. Palmer said they conducted a traffic analysis at the intersection of 148th Avenue and Main Street. He said the school traffic does not affect the evening rush hour. However, he acknowledged that the intersection's level of service is diminished somewhat during the morning peak traffic period. The primary movement most negatively affected is the left turn from southbound 148th Avenue onto Main Street. Mr. Palmer said an additional analysis of other intersections is underway.

Mr. Palmer noted there will be sidewalks on both sides of 151st Place NE. However, one will remain as a six-foot sidewalk and the new sidewalk will be eight feet wide. Responding to an earlier public comment, Mr. Palmer said the crosswalk is on the east side of 151st Place and Main Street due to plans for an eastbound left-turn pocket from Main Street into the school site. The design avoids a conflict between pedestrians and the vehicles making left turns.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Mr. Palmer noted that the majority of students currently attending Puesta del Sol Elementary School live in south Bellevue, with a large number living in Newport Hills. Mr. Palmer said the Bellevue School District is considering the addition of a bus to expand service to students from south Bellevue.

Councilmember Kasner expressed concern that a number of residents who attended the community meetings did not receive notification about tonight's EBCC meeting. He said the

City reviews and processes the permits. However, the school is the Bellevue School District's project. Mr. Kasner noted that the permit application is quasi-judicial for the EBCC, and council members are not allowed to communicate with the public outside of a public meeting.

Councilmember Kasner recalled that there were concerns about traffic impacts when the Odle Middle School was rebuilt. He said the Bellevue School District, the City, and the residents worked together to identify a solution. He said the Puesta del Sol school will be a jewel in the neighborhood for 30-50 years. He said it is important for everyone to work collaboratively. Mr. Kasner said the families of Puesta del Sol students were not notified of tonight's EBCC courtesy hearing.

Mr. Kasner proposed that cars enter from 148th Avenue and exit via NE 4th Street. He would like a solution that provides a second access point from Main Street to the back side of the property, with ingress and egress via Main Street. He noted the need to build on past studies to properly complete the project. He believes the school will be an asset for the neighborhood into the future.

Mr. Kasner reiterated that EBCC members are not allowed to have private conversations with the public because council members will consider the application as a quasi-judicial matter. He thanked everyone for coming. He believes there is a solution that would be acceptable to the community. He encouraged further collaboration between all parties.

Vice Chair Walter noted that the comments tonight will become part of the Hearing Examiner's public record. She encouraged interested individuals to sign up to receive project updates via email. She noted that the City Council will make a decision regarding the Hearing Examiner's recommendation, and the EBCC will ultimately take action to approve or deny the City Council's decision. She concurred with Councilmember Kasner's suggestion that everyone work together toward a positive solution.

9. **RESOLUTIONS:** None.

10. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None.

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

(a) Update on SE 16th Street Speed Limit Radar Signs

Councilmember Dhananjaya reported that he sent an email to the City voicing the EBCC's concerns about potential locations for speed limit signs. The City responded, stating that when considering a street for traffic calming measures, a series of roadway characteristics are analyzed to help determine the ranking of the requested location. In addition to SE 16th Street ranking high as a location for installation, the City also noted that the request for signs along SE 16th Street came directly from area residents.

Vice Chair Walter requested the City's data related to ranking SE 16th Street as a high priority for speed limit signs.

Councilmember Dhananjaya moved to extend the meeting until 9:15 p.m. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

12. **NEW BUSINESS**

(a) EBCC Retreat Discussion

Vice Chair Walter requested input from the council regarding a future EBCC retreat.

Councilmember Kasner said he is in favor of holding a retreat. However, he was not prepared to discuss it that evening.

Ms. Walter noted a consensus to schedule the topic for discussion during the February meeting.

13. **CONTINUED COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None.

15. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

(a) Summary Minutes of the November 6, 2018 Regular Meeting

Councilmember Gooding moved to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2018 Regular Meeting.

Councilmember Kasner recalled that approval of the November 6 meeting minutes was delayed pending a request for clarification. Deputy City Clerk Roberts noted the proposed additional language highlighted in the minutes in the meeting packet, as requested by Chair Hummer.

Mr. Kasner accepted the revision but noted that he accepted the original language of his comments as well.

Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

(b) Summary Minutes of the December 4, 2018 Regular Meeting

Councilmember Gooding moved to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2018 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

Vice Chair Walter said she received an email from Jurassic Parliament transmitting brief guidelines for holding successful meetings. She noted that the Chair is the servant of the group, and the group is the final authority. All members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations. To ensure this, no one may speak a second time until everyone is given the opportunity to speak once. Courtesy and respect are required at all times, and the group will process one thing at a time.

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:07 p.m., Vice Chair Walter declared the meeting adjourned.

Karin Roberts, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

/kaw