

East Bellevue Community Council
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

August 6, 2019
6:30 p.m.

Lake Hills Library
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Chair Hummer, Vice Chair Walter, Alternate Vice Chair Gooding, and Councilmembers Dhananjaya and Kasner¹

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: None.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m., with Chair Hummer presiding.

2. **ROLL CALL/FLAG SALUTE**

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

Chair Hummer asked Vice Chair Walter to lead the flag salute.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Dhananjaya moved to approve the agenda, amended to move Agenda Item 11, Unfinished Business, to follow Agenda Item 4. Vice Chair Walter seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-1, with Councilmember Kasner dissenting.

4. **COMMUNICATIONS: WRITTEN AND ORAL**

Chair Hummer indicated that the EBCC cannot consider public comment on Puget Sound Energy's conditional use permit (CUP) application for the south Bellevue segment of the Energize Eastside project because the matter is not before the EBCC. A public hearing regarding the Development Services Department (DSD) Director's recommendation on the project was held on March 28 and 29, 2019 before the City's Hearing Examiner. All public comment, both written and oral, is now closed.

Ms. Hummer said the EBCC cannot consider public comment on the CUP application for the Puesta del Sol school project because it is a quasi-judicial matter in which the EBCC will act as triers of fact when considering the application in the future. She suggested that the public may

¹ Councilmember Kasner participated remotely via speakerphone.

submit written comments to the Deputy City Clerk, who will forward the comments to the appropriate staff or submit comments directly to Development Services.

Sandra Hughes asked for better communication regarding the change in the meeting location. She would like the EBCC meetings to have better attendance from the neighborhood.

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- (a) Completion of the East Bellevue Community Council's Review of the Year Ahead and Working Relationships

Kyle Stannert, Assistant City Manager, recalled the EBCC's retreat on July 16, which included a review of the EBCC's quasi-judicial role in a discussion involving Assistant City Attorney Catherine Drews. He said there was brief discussion regarding the issue of providing advance information on topics to the EBCC, and about the best venue for receiving that information, whether through a Board, Commission, or the City Council. Mr. Stannert encouraged the EBCC to identify projects and processes in which having an advisory role and advance information would be advantageous and of interest to the EBCC and its constituents. He said that would help staff to address new and emerging issues based on the EBCC's priorities.

Mr. Stannert said that five key items were identified at the end of the July retreat. One item reflected the theme of receiving advance information with presentations regarding future development. He recalled the suggestion from the EBCC for joint meetings with the City Council, Boards or Commissions regarding projects of interest, including improvements at Bellevue College, which borders the EBCC jurisdiction. The second topic of interest was affordable housing. Mr. Stannert said it would be helpful for the EBCC to learn about any options under consideration that might impact the EBCC jurisdiction.

The third topic addressed during the July retreat was project TFP-158. Mr. Stannert said the EBCC reached a consensus regarding the desired process to deliver a message to the Transportation Commission and to the City Council, and subsequently authorized an EBCC member to submit a letter and to provide public comment. He acknowledged that the EBCC ultimately felt its comments were not heard. Referring to state law regarding community councils, Mr. Stannert said the EBCC has a role to advise, consult and cooperate.

The fourth item reflected an interest in learning about better ways to support transportation projects in general, especially along congested major arterials (e.g., NE 8th Street, 148th Avenue). The fifth topic resulted in a general agreement among the EBCC members to establish an operating norm calling for a formal vote following a discussion and decision.

Councilmember Dhananjaya said it would be helpful to receive advance information on projects that reach beyond the EBCC jurisdiction and to create more of a partnership with other entities. Mr. Stannert recalled discussion during the retreat regarding the EBCC's role within its jurisdiction and with projects that border and potentially impact the EBCC area. He acknowledged the EBCC's interest in receiving information early in a process in order to be well informed at the time of a decision.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Mr. Stannert said that, while the EBCC has a clear authority role on land use matters, other issues not related to land use may be addressed by the EBCC if there is an impact within its jurisdiction.

Vice Chair Walter suggested focusing on matters and projects that the EBCC can influence. She would like the EBCC to have a broader perspective and to receive presentations on City projects that impact the jurisdiction.

Mr. Stannert said the EBCC meetings should focus first on the legally required business related to the EBCC's official role. If there is no such business, he acknowledged that educational and informative presentations pertaining to City-related matters could be appropriate and helpful.

Councilmember Kasner encouraged attention to affordable housing because while certain policies might not affect East Bellevue today, they could in the future. He said a second issue relates to the EBCC's role as an elected body. He suggested that the EBCC should be included in all of the training and information provided to the City Council, Boards, and Commissions.

Responding to Mr. Stannert, Mr. Kasner expressed an interest in learning about how an issue or policy is to be processed by the City. As an example, Mr. Kasner noted an interest in more information regarding the 2009 Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan and any updates to the plan.

Mr. Kasner indicated that, if the City develops a transportation master plan, he would like the EBCC to be involved early in the process to develop its own plan that can be presented to the individuals working on the master plan.

Councilmember Dhananjaya noted his interest in information on the potential impacts of light rail, including the Overlake station, on East Bellevue traffic patterns (e.g., 148th Avenue).

Councilmember Kasner requested an update on the status of designating the road behind Bellevue College as an arterial. He said that changes and activities at the college affect East Bellevue first and foremost.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. Stannert suggested a later discussion about whether the clarity of status item relates to the EBCC's advisory role or to the request for advance information. Ms. Hummer said she believes it is an important issue. She recalled that a diversity and cultural awareness training scheduled for the EBCC was cancelled. She said the EBCC was not informed about ongoing opportunities to enroll in the training. She would like the EBCC to be able to demonstrate a unified presence at meetings and other forums.

Mr. Stannert summarized the Chair's interest in achieving clarity about the resources that can be extended to the EBCC in terms of training and opportunities provided to other elected and appointed bodies. He noted that the City Council, Boards, and Commissions do not necessarily receive the same opportunities or invitations.

Vice Chair Walter observed that the EBCC does not know what it does not know. She said she self-identifies the EBCC as both an elected and advisory body.

Councilmember Dhananjaya said it would be helpful to be invited to events related to issues affecting East Bellevue and the overall community, especially if the City Council, Boards, and/or Commissions are invited to those events or meetings.

Mr. Stannert indicated that if the EBCC is invited to an event to be attended by City Councilmembers and/or Board and Commission members, staff will explain the EBCC's role and opportunity. Mr. Stannert said the same practice is followed with the City Council.

Vice Chair Walter noted that City Councilmembers are invited to the neighborhood walks held throughout the community. She would like EBCC members to be invited to neighborhood walks and project openings within their jurisdiction. Chair Hummer expressed an interest in creating greater visibility of the EBCC within the community.

Chair Hummer expressed concern about the traffic impacts related to the redevelopment of the Sears shopping center site on 148th Avenue NE and to the REI headquarters project in the BelRed area. She expressed an interest in more involvement related to parks, roads, traffic, and development. She requested periodic updates on Kelsey Creek improvements and single-family room rentals.

Ms. Hummer noted Councilmember Kasner's reference to creating a future transportation master plan and observed that the process would be an opportunity for joint meetings. Ms. Hummer said it would be helpful to receive information and to clarify the EBCC's role before going to those meetings. She noted that parks, rights-of-way, urban boulevards, and the Lake Hills Greenbelt are significant priorities for East Bellevue. She expressed an interest in a joint meeting with the Human Services Commission or with planning staff regarding the City's affordable housing initiatives. Other topics of interest include economic development (i.e., neighborhood and community businesses), home-based businesses, and the future transit hub at Bellevue College.

Vice Chair Walter said it would be helpful to receive information on projects that affect East Bellevue, even if they are controlled by other agencies or entities. There are also projects and problems that the City can mitigate in some way (e.g., synchronized traffic lights, traffic revisions, etc.). She said it depends on whether the EBCC's role is as a distributor of information or a driver of potential solutions.

Councilmember Dhananjaya spoke in favor of receiving the information through a City department and not necessarily from an outside organization or agency.

Chair Hummer said that, according to their rules and procedures, the EBCC can assign committees, even if just one member, to serve as liaisons to the Boards and Commissions.

Councilmember Gooding suggested that information in the meeting minutes of Boards, Commissions, and other groups would be helpful to the EBCC.

Mr. Stannert said that, under the Council-Manager form of government, the City Council sets policy for the City. The budget is the largest policy document produced by the City, and additional policies are reflected in resolutions, ordinances, and other documents. The City Manager is responsible for hiring the staff needed to implement those policies, and the City Council is not updated on every issue and project underway by staff.

Referring to recurring comments by the EBCC about its advisory role, Mr. Stannert said that for some issues, it is unclear who the EBCC would be advising. He said that much of staff's work will not be elevated to the City Council level for a long time into the future, if at all. He suggested that if the EBCC's primary objective is to learn about issues before the City Council that will later go to the EBCC, a joint meeting is not necessary because EBCC members can attend or view the Council meetings. Mr. Stannert said he is hearing an interest in a general awareness of major projects and issues that impact East Bellevue.

Councilmember Dhananjaya said that, as an example, he would like the EBCC to receive information about projects in other areas of Bellevue that will have traffic impacts in East Bellevue. The EBCC could then provide feedback to the City. Mr. Stannert stated his understanding that Mr. Dhananjaya is requesting that the EBCC be considered a stakeholder for projects that affect its jurisdiction.

Moving to the topic of joint meetings, Mr. Stannert said the purpose of the Boards and Commissions is to be advisory to the City Council. He questioned the EBCC's objective in suggesting joint meetings with Boards and Commissions. He said the City Council is the body to determine whether it would like the EBCC to have an advisory role on a particular issue.

Vice Chair Walter recalled that the EBCC disagreed with the City Council regarding certain provisions in the homeless services Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA). She said the EBCC's input to the City Council was summarily dismissed, and the EBCC has been mischaracterized as obstructionist.

Ms. Walter suggested that regulations for home-based businesses, specifically child care and assisted living type care, would be good candidates for the EBCC working more closely with the City Council. She said it is important to distinguish between the EBCC's advisory role versus an EBCC member speaking as an individual.

At 7:50 p.m., Chair Hummer declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 7:53 p.m.

Councilmember Kasner said that elected officials are not allowed to take the Bellevue Essentials course. He said that four of the five EBCC members have completed the class, and he would like the fifth person to be able to take it as well. Mr. Stannert said he would follow up on that issue.

Councilmember Kasner suggested displaying photos of the EBCC, as elected officials, at City Hall. He expressed concern regarding the relationship between the EBCC, City Council, and the City.

Mr. Stannert noted that state law applicable to community councils uses the language “advise, consult and cooperate.” He acknowledged Mr. Kasner’s interest in greater cooperation between all entities.

Councilmember Dhananjaya expressed concern about the lack of understanding that the EBCC members are elected officials. He opined that they are selectively treated as elected officials by the City.

[Agenda resumed.]

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

6. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Hummer noted that design review for the Islamic Center of Eastside permits has been approved and no appeals were submitted. The building permits are under review, and the clear and grade permit is ready to be issued. The right-of-way permit was issued, and the utilities extension permit is nearly ready to be approved. The main building permit needs revisions, and a number of other permits are required (e.g., mechanical, plumbing).

Ms. Hummer said that Puget Sound Energy (PSE) continues to work with City staff on the final administrative permit necessary to begin construction of the Lake Hills transmission line project. As previously committed to the EBCC, PSE will provide an update on the timing of the vegetation removal before the work begins.

Ms. Hummer noted the EBCC’s interest in the Puesta del Sol school permits and in having a second courtesy hearing before the EBCC regarding the project.

Ms. Hummer read from RCW 35.14, which outlines the powers and duties of community councils/community municipal corporations. She said that the EBCC has authority over Comprehensive Plan Amendments, zoning changes, conditional use permit (CUP) special exemptions or variances, subdivision ordinances, subdivision plats, and planned unit developments (PUD).

Chair Hummer recalled that the EBCC voted to move the next meeting to September 10 because the City Council will meet on September 3 due to the holiday. Mr. Stannert noted that staffing will not be available for an EBCC meeting on November 5.

Following a brief discussion, Ms. Hummer said the EBCC will discuss the date of the November meeting at its October meeting.

7. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:** None.

8. **PUBLIC/COURTESY HEARINGS:** None.

9. **RESOLUTIONS:** None.

10. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None.
12. **NEW BUSINESS:** None.
13. **CONTINUED COMMUNICATIONS:** None.
14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None.
15. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- (a) Summary Minutes of the June 4, 2019 Regular Meeting

Vice Chair Walter moved to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2019 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:13 p.m., Chair Hummer declared the meeting adjourned.

Karin Roberts, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

/kaw