

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

January 27, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Moolgavkar, Vice Chair Malakoutian,
Commissioners Bhargava, Brown, deVadoss, Ferris,
Morisseau

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Thara Johnson, Emil King, Department of Community
Development; Kristina Gallant, Trisna Tanus, Department
of Development Services

COUNCIL LIAISON: Councilmember Barksdale

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER
(6:30 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Moolgavkar who presided.

Chair Moolgavkar stated that the meeting was being held remotely via zoom in order to comply with the Governor's emergency order concerning the Open Public Meetings Act, which prohibits in-person meetings.

2. ROLL CALL
(6:31 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
(6:31 p.m.)

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Vice Chair Malakoutian. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown and the motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None
(6:32 p.m.)

5. STAFF REPORTS
(6:32 p.m.)

A. Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Comprehensive Planning Manager Thara Johnson briefly reviewed the Commission's upcoming meetings and agenda items.

Ms. Johnson reminded the Commissioners that on January 13 the Commission conducted two public hearings, one relating to code amendments regarding the accessory dwelling unit provisions, and one relating to code amendments on Unit Lot Subdivisions. There was a fair amount of public testimony relating to the ADU Land Use Code amendment, and the Commission spent some time deliberating before providing an additional recommendation. Since then staff have entertained a fair amount of comment and a number of questions from the public seeking clarification on the intent of the Commission's recommendation. Staff have responded to the comments and have answered the questions. In order to provide clarity for the public record, she said the Commission made a recommendation on what was noticed, namely the ADU provisions relating to the three-year rule. In addition, based on the public testimony, the Commission provided an additional recommendation to the City Council, namely that the Council take up in the future and as a separate work program, some additional ADU amendments relating to studying the issue of detached ADUs and whether they should be allowed in certain zones, whether there should be flexibility relating to parking standards, and whether the owner-occupancy requirement should be removed. Those recommendations have been forwarded to the Council. The Commission did not, however, make any changes to what was noticed for the public hearing.

Ms. Johnson noted the inclusion in the staff report of the January 13 Commission meeting minutes. She said the Commission's vote on the Unit Lot Subdivision recommendation was actually 4-1 rather than 5-1 as shown in the minutes.

6. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS (6:39 p.m.)

Ms. Chris Buchanan with Downtown Action to Save Housing (DASH), a long-time property owner in Bellevue with over 250 units of affordable apartments for families and seniors. She said DASH participated on the affordable housing technical advisory group that worked to develop the Affordable Housing Strategy that was ultimately adopted by the Council in 2017. It is a relief to see the Council, the Commission and the staff working to implement the strategies and to remove barriers and impediments to the creation of more affordable housing choices for Bellevue residents. The work is very important. She encouraged the Commission to go beyond mere baby steps and to take bold actions to encourage all types of housing. The need for affordable housing vastly exceeds the supply. DASH has requested a Comprehensive Plan amendment to increase density on its Glendale and Evergreen Court properties. The properties are already encumbered by covenant against deed with housing affordability requirements that extend beyond 2050. They are both located with the walksheds of two future light rail stations, and they have access to the King County Metro Rapid Ride B Line. Increasing density on the sites is in alignment with the Affordable Housing Strategy. DASH wants to reinvest in the properties to add more affordable housing in line with the vision for an age-friendly affordable neighborhood providing the housing that working families and seniors desperately need.

Ms. Mallory Van Alma with the Housing Development Consortium, a non-profit membership association with nearly 200 organizational members in King County working to meet the affordable housing needs of families and individuals. She expressed her gratitude to the staff and the Commission for considering permanent parking reductions in areas within the city that are well served by transit. It is clear that the reductions would reduce the total cost of development for affordable housing projects given that a single parking space averages nearly \$60,000. With

the forecasted population and job growth, the city can expect a tightening market for available housing affordable to families at or below 80 percent of area median income. The change will better align the city's values of sustainability with its Land Use Code, encouraging a mindset shift from car dependability and toward transit. The Consortium supports the proposed parking reductions in affordable housing developments and for ADUs in transit corridors. The city should consider some mechanism to capture the value offered across the housing market for the reductions by ensuring a higher yield of affordable homes. The reductions will increase the value of some developments and there should be a way to translate that increase to a greater public benefit. The city should continue working with transit agencies and non-profits that provide transportation services. The residents of affordable housing developments should have access to subsidized transit passes to support their movements.

Ms. Pam Johnston pointed out that Affordable Housing Strategy C-2 allows for detached units in self-selected neighborhoods. That issue is of great concern to those in the Bridle Trails area. One of the recommendations of the Commission to the Council is directly opposed to that. She also noted that the parking standards for frequent transit service areas seems to be redefining transit-oriented development, which originally had a radius of a quarter of a mile. The text is not clear in regard to walking distances. The current numbers relative to registered ADUs are not clear; the Council is supposed to provide an annual report. She said she wanted to know what restrictions are in place for rental registrations. Affordability is not a direct consequence of no parking. She said she was concerned about persons with disabilities and the elderly not having proper access to the parking they may need. With regard to ADUs, if there is on-site space that has been maximized for the full structure already existing, it would seem that where an ADU is added, there should be something in writing that the person renting the unit is allowed to use the maximized space. She said she did not understand how the parking situation is going to interact with the 24-hour parking laws and asked if something in the permit process will trigger any restrictions, such as parking for residents only in a particular zone.

Ms. Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, voiced concern about the C-5 residential parking issue. She said it should be limited to transit nodes such as BelRed, Downtown and Eastgate, where there are transit and light rail services and the density to support transit usage. The frequent transit service shown on the map going through east Bellevue and Crossroads is really not frequent, and it will be quite a while before King County Metro increases its bus services in Bellevue. The buses in east Bellevue do not run when retail and service workers go to work and the routes are rather sporadic. It takes about ten minutes to go from Bellevue College to Fred Meyer by car, but 45 minutes to an hour by bus, and the bus does not run at night when a lot of people work. It would be discriminatory against lower-income people to reduce the parking because many are dependent on their vehicles to go to work. Increased visitor parking in the Downtown seems to go against the carefully crafted downtown livability plan, and it also sounds discriminatory by giving more parking to people who can afford to live in the new market-rate buildings and less parking to those who cannot afford to live there. The quarter mile radius according to state law should be adhered to and should not be increased to half a mile. The quarter mile radius should be more than just a regular radius, it should be according to walking distances rather than as the crow flies.

Mr. Jared Axelrod, local public policy and external affairs lead in Washington state for Amazon, spoke in support of the LUCA to establish lower minimum parking requirements for residential development with frequent transit service. Amazon believes all people should have access to housing they can afford. While governments at the local, state and federal levels have the capacity to implement more effective housing policies, they should work together with the private sector to address the challenges. Amazon will continue to use its position as a large

employer to support innovative housing affordability initiatives like the proposed LUCA. The cost to build parking is a significant cost driver for residential development, and it ultimately results in fewer affordable housing options. Right-sizing the parking requirements for residential development within proximity to transit not only brings the city in line with state law which establishes the lower parking minimums, it reduces carbon emissions and traffic congestion by promoting the use of high-speed transit and spurs more affordable housing options consistent with the city's Affordable Housing Strategy. Development that is proximate to transit, whether it is commercial or residential, is important to Amazon. The company is purposefully developing its office space in the Downtown in part due to the proximity to transit. Amazon employees are frequent transit users and the company provides Orca passes to them all in addition to running its own shuttle service to areas throughout the region. More than half of the Amazon employees in Seattle walk, bike or take transit to work, and more than 70 percent commute via mode other than a single-occupant vehicle. The proposed LUCA will make Bellevue an even better place to live, work and play.

Mr. Christopher Randals, 15421 SE 4th Place, spoke as the founder of Complete Streets Bellevue, an organization that is working toward sustainable and equitable communities through investments in walking, biking and transit infrastructure. Although the topic of discussion does not directly align with those missions at first glance, it is important to note that land use planning and transportation are but two sides of the same coin. How neighborhoods and communities are planned has a profound impact on how transportation systems are structured, and vice versa. Bellevue is a growing city that is facing many challenges, including affordability, sustainability and equity, and the city is lucky to have leadership at all levels of city government to craft plans that will ensure the city will grow in a manner that will address all of the issues responsibly. The city's Affordable Housing Strategy, though not enough to meet the rising demand, is an excellent start and has an plethora of initiatives to get the city on the right track. The city's Environmental Stewardship Plan, updated in 2020, sets ambitious targets for reductions to greenhouse gases emissions and vehicle miles traveled that are bold but attainable and necessary to face the challenges presented by climate change. The proposed action to reduce the parking minimums for affordable housing units in frequent transit areas provides an excellent opportunity for the Commission to advance the values put forth by the city's plans. The action will help to create tighter knit neighborhoods that can be better sustained by the increased walking, biking and transit infrastructure networks needed to meet the sustainability goals. By saving construction costs and space, the action will allow for the creation of more affordable options to welcome incoming community members. The LUCA should be approved.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – None
(6:59 p.m.)

8. STUDY SESSION
(6:59 p.m.)

Consulting attorney Trisna Tanus noted that the baseline objectives for the proposed Land Use Code amendment are to conform the Land Use Code with the provisions of RCW 36.70A.620, and to support the city's Affordable Housing Strategy and the Transit Master Plan. She noted that the first two components of the LUCA were presented to the Commission on January 13.

Senior planner Kristina Gallant stated that currently developers in the Downtown have the option of providing a parking study as evidence of a lower parking demand for their property. The challenge with the process is that the final decision is tied to design review, and because that approval comes later in the process, it can present problems for projects going out for financing.

The issue, however, is that by removing the decision from the design review process and having it occur sooner, opportunities for public comment that are normally incorporated in the process for departures from the standard zoning could be limited. Departures in an ideal world should only be necessary in exceptional cases, so by right-sizing the parking requirements in line with what the market is demanding, it is hoped that the demand for parking departures will be eliminating, thus eliminating an administrative burden. While there is no clear cut answer for moving the decision forward due to considerations for public comment, there are options that could be considered to allow further reductions through objective performance measures. Examples from other cities include providing amenities like dedicated car share spaces or transit passes in exchange for a parking reduction. The relatively tight timeline for accomplishing the objective of the LUCA precludes the time necessary to further study and consider all options. The recommendation of the staff was to maintain the current process.

With regard to the Downtown visitor parking requirement, Ms. Gallant said the current requirement is one space for every 20 residential units. The requirement was adopted in October 2017 as part of the Downtown Livability Initiative. Very few residential projects have been built to completion under the current code so there are no completed projects to refer to and study to assess performance. For that reason, the recommendation of staff was to maintain the current requirements and monitor performance over time. Staff also included in their recommendation including a “not to exceed” provision to allow for some targeted reductions to visitor parking in cases where the additional visitor parking on top of the minimum parking in areas with frequent transit service would exceed the established minimum.

Ms. Gallant said the Council also directed giving consideration to additional incentives for affordable housing. The proposal is to allow for additional flexibility for permanent affordable housing in areas that have transit stops with service of at least four times each hour, and future light rail stops. As proposed, for all permanent affordable housing at up to 80 percent of area median income, the minimum parking requirement would be reduced to 0.5 spaces per unit. The current market-rate multifamily development requirement is to have 0.75 spaces per unit. The proposal would allow for a deeper reduction to 0.25 spaces per unit for small, very affordable units at up to 60 percent of area median income.

With regard to parking minimums for ADUs, Ms. Gallant noted that RCW 36.70A.698 removes the ability of the city to require off-street parking for ADUs located within a quarter-mile radius of frequent transit stops, which are defined as having service at least four times per hour and future light rail and bus rapid transit stops.

By way of follow-up from the study session on the first two components of the LUCA, Ms. Gallant noted that some additional details were included in the agenda memo, including some additional findings in support of the proposed parking ratios. She allowed, however, that there is no recent comprehensive study specific to Bellevue parking utilization. The King County Right Size Parking Project serves as a good resource. That countywide study looked at parking utilization in different types of developments in different locations and yielded a predictive model based on the findings. Looking forward, the model predicts utilization of 0.86 spaces per unit in Downtown Bellevue. A comprehensive study from Denver was also provided with data collected in March 2020.

Ms. Gallant said a question was asked during the first study session about addressing future changes and mitigating them. She agreed that there is a lot of uncertainty when it comes to bus service, thus the LUCA will include a provision to make sure that approvals will be based on the most up-to-date service information at the time of the application. Increasing density in areas

with frequent transit service will help to support ridership by increasing the overall number of riders. Light rail service will be less subject to change and that will help to reduce uncertainty for a number of areas.

The post-Covid-19 world will undoubtedly be different. There will likely be both short-term and long-term changes, but no one knows for sure what they will be. There are findings from Sound Transit looking at ridership data over the summer that show increases in ridership as things began to open again. Sound Transit also conducted a survey of riders in September looking at attitudes around transit after Covid-19. About half of the respondents indicated they expect to use transit about the same as they did before, if not more. Only 13 percent indicated they were not planning to use transit. That data, coupled with the fact that Bellevue continues to see strong office development and leasing activities, can be interpreted as a projection for increased ridership and demand.

Ms. Gallant sought from the Commission a recommendation to set a February 24 public hearing date on the proposed LUCA, and to at the same meeting develop a recommendation to forward to the Council. April 5 has been tentatively scheduled as the date for introducing the topic to the Council, with Council action slated for April 26. The interim official control is set to expire on May 18, extension of which would require an additional public hearing.

Commissioner Brown pointed out that a very large portion of the community does not have access to frequent transit service. She noted the Lakemont community has a number of large apartment complexes, an associated lack of parking and no access to transit within a mile. If the city is going to be providing certain benefits for people who are within a set distance from transit, there should be a discussion of the equity issues in terms of access.

Commissioner deVadoss commented that there are two topics being conflated in the discussions: affordable housing, and with respect to sustainability the topic of moving people away from owning automobiles and toward using public transport. On the topic of affordable housing, the fundamental issue is equity or the lack thereof, and the growing levels of inequality. It is worth pausing to try to understand that the problem is worse than the symptoms. With regard to the problems driving equity or the lack of equity and higher levels of inequality, so long as the federal reserve is able to maintain interest rates at zero percent, or otherwise manipulate them, and so long as the federal government is able to print money, and as long as big corporations, particularly those based in the Seattle area, find ways to minimize their taxes in terms of what they pay back to the state and the country, what local communities will be able to do is but a drop in the ocean. What must be found to address the topic, but the problems lie well beyond the limits of the city. Big companies and eventually the federal reserve will attempt to fix the underlying issues driving inequality in significant ways.

Continuing, Commissioner deVadoss said with regard to sustainability, or rather the topic of driving people away from owning an using automobiles, it is fundamentally unfair and an exhibit of implicit bias and discrimination for the city to force the issue in terms of affordable housing. If the city wants to drive people away from automobiles and toward rapid transport, it should first go after those in the highest tax brackets, the one percenters and the elite, to see if they can be moved away from their automobiles. It is not fair to say those who want to make a living should have an option taken away from them. The issue reeks of bias and unfairness.

Commissioner Ferris said she appreciated the comments made by Commissioner deVadoss. She agreed that there are big problems associated with affordable housing and said the city will not be able to solve the issues. Whatever the city does will end up being only a drop in the bucket

from the overall perspective. But things are where they are and the city should do all it possibly can. With regard to parking departures and Downtown visitor parking and the recommendation of staff to retain the current provisions, she asked when the topics will be raised again in light of additional data. She also noted that determining a quarter mile or half mile radius without taking into account walkability would be a mistake. The walkability element needs to be included. Ms. Tanus said there is a departure process in the Downtown for both residential and office. She said in the opinion of staff it makes more sense to look at the issue comprehensively than just residential with frequent transit service. The need to right-size parking for office was raised with the Council. Given the level of analysis that will need to be done, leaving the current regulations in place makes sense for the near term. She said there has been no specific timing outlined for the work, but it could potentially become a work program in 2022. The same applies to the Downtown visitor parking component which was updated in 2017. Staff normally wants to see a five-year development cycle to gain an understanding of how the regulations are being implemented and used before seeking to make any changes.

Ms. Gallant said she understood the issue of determining a radius from the perspective of drawing lines on a map. She explained, however, that the approach is used in the proposal is driven by the state regulations. There is some latitude given that allows for determining where a straight radius cannot be appropriately applied. The language used is that where there is a physical impediment that makes it necessary for someone to walk more than half a mile on legal rights-of-way, it can be determined that frequent transit service is not actually available.

Commissioner Bhargava said he appreciated the effort on the part of the city to try and create incentives aimed at driving up density closer to transit stations and frequent transit service to increase the utilization of transit systems. He said he had discomfort, however, with tying together the reductions in parking requirements to permanent affordable housing and the implication of how those needs of the people who live in those units should be considered.

Chair Moolgavkar said she also understands the economics of affordable housing having worked in the industry. She said parking can be a huge driver of expense. She voiced concern, however, with the unintended consequences of limiting people who can least afford to be limited. She said she would like to have a better understanding of that issue. There is always the concern that units with less parking will be constructed, only to later see transit services curtailed or discontinued. More understanding is needed with regard to the mechanisms for providing those people with service in the future should something happen to their transit service.

Vice Chair Malakoutian agreed with the need to give more consideration to the parking departure issue before making any changes. It is a good approach to require developers to conduct a parking demand analysis before permitting a reduction in the amount of parking.

Commissioner Ferris said she would like to see some additional information on what the parking demand is at existing affordable housing apartments. She pointed out that few such affordable developments are in areas with frequent transit service.

A motion to advance the proposed LUCA to a public hearing on February 24 was made by Commissioner Brown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferris and the motion carried unanimously.

B. 2021 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments: Threshold Review
Geographic Scoping Study Session

(7:30 p.m.)

Ms. Johnson noted that under the new schedule for the submittal of Comprehensive Plan amendments, submittals were due in September. By that date two applications were received and the Commission received an overview of them in December. She said both applications were before the Commission for consideration of the geographic scope and to set a threshold review public hearing date.

Senior Planner Nicholas Matz said expansion of the geographic scope of Comprehensive Plan amendments is considered where nearby properties that are similarly situated and have shared characteristics. Where the geographic scope is expanded, the noticing requirements are also expanded. In reviewing the proposed amendments, the Commission will consider whether they meet the eight threshold review criteria.

Mr. Matz said the privately initiated application for 15 Lake Bellevue proposes a map amendment from BelRed-General Commercial (BR-GC) to BelRed-Office (BR-OR-2) for a 2.8-acre site, and seeks an amendment to Policy S-BR-96 for maximum building height allowances. The DASH Glendale privately initiated application proposes a map amendment from Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) to Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) on two parcels that collectively total 7.5 acres. In addition the Northeast Bellevue and Northwest Bellevue city initiated Great Neighborhoods work program items will be before the Commission during 2021.

Mr. Matz said the recommendation of the staff regarding the Lake Bellevue application was to not expand the geographic scope. The site is an existing 36,500 square foot building constructed partially over Lake Bellevue, and a 35,000 square foot surface parking area. The applicant is negotiating for the purchase of 9 Lake Bellevue, which is immediately to the west. The adjacent property is similarly constructed in terms of its location, and the applicant has verbally indicated to staff a desire to expand the application to include that site. It is the conclusion of the staff that there is no way to limit the expansion of the geographic scope to anything less than all ten of the properties designated BR-GC. Each of the properties are similarly situated in regard to the application and the concern of staff is that expanding the scope would result in an unintended consequence of the geographic scoping process. Such an areawide analysis of all sites is only appropriate for the subarea plan process. The position is reinforced around the different definitions of the BR-GC and the BR-OR-2. It is legitimate to bring forward a site-specific amendment that asks for a different designation, which is what the proposed application does, but the BR-GC and the BR-R-2 are fundamentally different in their allowed densities and land use purposes and to expand the scope could trigger unintended consequences.

Mr. Matz reminded the Commissioners that the application property is located within the Bel-Red subarea and the Wilburton land use project area. He noted that the existing environmental review has raised concerns about transportation ecosystems and water resources impacts, and expanding the geographic scoping for the application would require the Commission to address the same questions for all of the properties but without the ability to reach a conclusion about what the larger site expansion would mean.

Commissioner Morisseau asked if the other BR-GC property owners have been notified about the proposed amendment, and she asked if the Comprehensive Plan has any specific policy that delineates the boundaries of a geographic scoping. Mr. Matz said it is rare to encounter situations where the geographic scope should not be expanded simply because there is no clear limit for where to stop it. There are potential impacts associated with a much larger analysis given the environmental concerns already in hand. The annual plan amendment process is designed to look at singular sites with reference to the city's Comprehensive Plan policy. Expanding without a

clear notion of where to stop multiply commensurately and they become unpredictable in terms of being able to reach a conclusion about whether any expansion should be done. Including all of the BR-GC properties would substantially increase the resources needed to complete the work, work that would be better addressed through a work program such as a subarea plan review or the Wilburton project. Launching one of the decision criterion conclusions will set up the other ones for an inability to give good information about the consequences of the larger area being amended. All other property owners have been noticed, though not about geographic scoping and the potential for including their properties in the application.

Commissioner Morisseau asked if the Lake Bellevue area is part of the Wilburton subarea, and how the subarea plan update work overlaps with the proposed application. Mr. Matz said Lake Bellevue is within the study area of the Wilburton project and it has been identified as being part of that study, but it lies within the BelRed subarea. Should the Wilburton land use project Comprehensive Plan amendment be launched in 2021, the considerations reached will not be accomplished before the Commission will have to reach a conclusion about the Lake Bellevue Comprehensive Plan amendment during the annual amendment process. It is possible a conclusion could be reached during the annual plan amendment process that would disrupt the intent of the Wilburton project and what it is considering for the area.

Commissioner deVadoss commended the staff for the excellent staff report on the proposed amendment. He said it is clear from both the text and from the comments made by Mr. Matz that any expansion of the geographic scope will be an all or nothing proposition. That makes the application fundamentally flawed and as such the issues should be addressed as part of subarea planning.

Commissioner Ferris allowed that the issue of geographic scoping is complicated. She said all of the adjacent properties are similarly situated. She asked if any action to expand the geographic scope could be limited to only those parcels that are part of Lake Bellevue. She noted that there are a lot of environmental issues to be addressed and she asked if considering all the properties collectively as a whole would be more likely to yield a decision based on the overall impacts. She also asked if any decision made just for the subject property would then serve as precedent for the other property owners could come back later and claim. Mr. Matz suggested there were three options available to the Commission: 1) not expanding the geographic scope; 2) adding 9 Lake Bellevue for purposes of consideration as the applicant's property given their indicated intent to purchase the property; and 3) to include all ten of the BR-GC properties. If the third option is selected, the bounds of the purpose of the annual plan amendment review process will be exceeded. The conclusions reached may result in larger impacts, and that type of outcome should happen in a broader framework of the subarea plan process. Any conclusion reached in regard to the subject property will in fact serve to set a precedent for other property owners to claim for themselves through the city's annual plan amendment process.

Commissioner Brown noted the particular environmental sensitivity of the area and said an Office designation sounds like it would have less of an impact than General Commercial. She asked what the density differences are between the two designations. Mr. Matz said the BR-GC has an FAR of 1.0 and a 45-foot height limit. The designation is generally intended for a wide variety of business activities that provide goods and services to other businesses and the general public. That is essentially what is happening on the site currently. BR-OR-2 has an FAR ranging from 1.0 to 4.0 and height limits ranging from 45 feet to 125 feet. The residential designation provides for a mix of housing, office and retail uses, with office as the predominant use. The BR-OR-2 district is located within a node but outside of the node's core in a far less dense area. If approved, the proposed amendment would result in a significant increase in the density of

commercial or office development that would be available around Lake Bellevue. Commissioner Brown said if that is going to be done, it should be done as part of the subarea plan amendment process.

Commissioner Bhargava said the Comprehensive Plan amendment process does look at properties in isolation, but in such a situation where there are other properties that are similarly situated, it would seem prudent to think about eventual outcomes and what the fabric would look like if all of the properties were to come in asking for the same treatment. He asked what rationale could serve as the basis for denying the other properties the same treatment should the 15 Lake Bellevue proposed amendment be approved. Mr. Matz said the conclusion of the staff was that because it cannot be said where any expanded geographic scoping should end, expansion should simply not be started. The answer to the question that would be sought by subsequent property owners would be found in the subarea plan process, or in the Wilburton project process. Whatever is done for 15 Lake Bellevue will inform the other property owners about what they can expect over the next couple of years. The Wilburton work has already defined the expectation for the 15 Lake Bellevue analysis that will be presented for threshold review. It would do the same for other sites within the area as well.

Vice Chair Malakoutian asked if it could be said with strong confidence that, should all of the ten properties come forward with applications, they would not pass threshold review because by virtue of failing Criterion C, the proposed amendment does not raise policy or land use issues that are more appropriately addressed by an ongoing work program, and Criterion D, the application can reasonably be reviewed within the resources and time available for the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment program. Mr. Matz said that certainly could be the Commission's finding. There is sufficient difference between BR-GC and BR-OR-2 to suggest that there would be a bucket of new density that has not been looked at in either Wilburton or BelRed, so both of those decision criteria would come into play. Vice Chair Malakoutian suggested that Commission would actually be doing the applicant a favor by not expanding the geographic scope because expanding the scope would set up the process to fail.

(8:04 p.m.)

Ahead of moving to the discussion of the DASH Comprehensive Plan amendment, Commissioner Ferris recused herself and left the meeting.

Mr. Matz said the DASH property is located within the Wilburton subarea and in the Wilburton study area. He said the recommendation of the staff was to not expand the geographic scope. The sites to the north and east of NE 8th Street and 124th Avenue NE are bounded on the north and west by properties in the BelRed subarea that are fully developed with multifamily designations. A separately owned triangular-shaped property wedged between the two parcels is designated Professional Office. The unique ownership of the site, its inclusion in the Wilburton study area, and the applicability of the affordable housing policy to the site compared to other adjacent multifamily-designated properties, is an indication that there are no other similarly situated properties that would warrant a geographic expansion.

Commissioner deVadoss thanked the staff for the detail in their summary of the proposal. He said he was confused by the proposal in that it seems to be at odds with the mission of DASH, which is focused on affordable housing. He asked why they wanted to trade off housing to build retail and services. Mr. Matz said the NMU zone is the only non-BelRed and non-Downtown zone that allows for maximizing the housing potential of a designated property given that it is measured in floor/area ratio rather than units per acre. The NMU features a mix of uses and

includes a ground floor retail requirement. The intent of DASH is to provide a mix of affordable units and market-rate units in keeping with their mission. The NMU will give them access to more residential capacity and density than any other district outside of BelRed and the Downtown.

Commissioner Brown asked if she was correct in thinking that granting the proposed amendment would allow DASH to put more total units in the same space than they are allowed under the current designation. Mr. Matz said the proposal would allow DASH to take advantage of its proximity to the light rail station and the Wilburton study area conclusions about the potential density in residential areas. The site was included in the Wilburton study area boundary for the express purpose of anticipating the residential densities contemplated for Wilburton.

Commissioner Morisseau said it was her recollection that the applicant came to the Commission a few years ago with the same or a similar request and the suggestion was made that they wait until the Wilburton subarea work was completed. Mr. Matz said their application was not withdrawn at that time, rather the Commission recommended and the Council directed that both properties be included in the Wilburton work program.

Commissioner Ferris rejoined the meeting.

Mr. Matz noted that how community engagement was accomplished was outlined in the staff memo. He said public comments come in throughout the process in line with the established engagement waypoints. Through January 9, two comments regarding the DASH proposal had been received, both of them favorable. He noted that no comments had been received to date in regard to 15 Lake Bellevue.

Commissioner Brown asked staff to provide at a future meeting any additional data about the distinction in environmental impacts between general commercial and office/retail for 15 Lake Bellevue.

A motion not to expand the geographic scope of the 15 Lake Bellevue Comprehensive Plan amendment was made by Vice Chair Malakoutian. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferris and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion not to expand the geographic scope of the DASH/Glendale Comprehensive Plan amendment was made by Vice Chair Malakoutian. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioner Ferris abstained from voting.

With regard to the real time auditing, Commissioner Morisseau said she would like to see the Comprehensive Plan amendment process for 15 Lake Bellevue be more cohesive than just focusing on the one specific site. The notion of geographic scoping for the area is difficult to accomplish in a single meeting. She said she did not feel as though she had enough information to make a fully informed decision. Staff should allow time in the schedule to allow the Commission to ask for more information on geographic scoping.

Chair Moolgavkar echoed those comments. She noted, however, that the Commission's schedule for the year is fully packed and the Commission will be asked to make a lot of decisions in fairly constrained timelines. The Commission is also encouraged to ask for more data, though it cannot be said up front if decisions would be different if additional data were in hand.

There was consensus to set March 10 as the public hearing date for both Comprehensive Plan

amendments.

9. OTHER BUSINESS – None
(8:25 p.m.)

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
(8:25 p.m.)

A. January 13, 2021

A motion to approve the minutes as amended by the suggestion of Ms. Johnson was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morisseau and the motion carried unanimously.

11. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - None
(8:26 p.m.)

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None
(8:26 p.m.)

12. ADJOURNMENT
(8:26 p.m.)

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Morisseau. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferris and the motion carried unanimously.

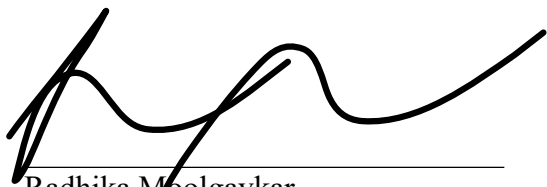
Chair Moolgavkar adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.



3-1-2021

Thara Johnson
Staff to the Planning Commission

Date



3-1-2021

Radhika Moolgavkar
Chair of the Planning Commission

Date