

**BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
MINUTES**

March 5, 2015
8:30am

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-108

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Aznoff, Bill Cahill, Ethan Crawford, Jullie Gray, Jeanne Grote, Howard Katz, Arnold Kern, Bob Megargel, Eileen Rasnack, Berta Seltzer, Janet Zielasko

MEMBERS ABSENT: Hannah Kimball, Bill Merriman, Linda Salter, Mary Watkins

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Parks & Community Services Department

GUESTS: Sonia Doughty, Senior Services; George Twiss, Senior Services

RECORDING SECRETARY: Alex O'Reilly

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:30am by Chair Rasnack. Roll was taken and all members were present with the exception of Hannah Kimball, Bill Merriman, Linda Salter, and Mary Watkins.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 5, 2015

The minutes were approved unanimously.

Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan [PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION]

Erika Conkling, City of Bellevue Department of Planning & Community Development, was introduced to the group. She thanked the group for allowing her to present on the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Conkling stated that the Comprehensive Plan is the City's plan and vision for the future; it outlines what residents want the City to be. The Plan is there if residents have questions, then they can refer to it easily. Some new features include a Neighborhoods Element, policy updates and information about the Eastgate/I-90 project. Efforts were made to make it more usable and accessible.

There have been a number of changes in Bellevue since the Plan was last updated in 2004, including regional and city growth, light rail, and increased infrastructure demands such as for utilities and storm water. Planning for 2035 will take into account projected job growth increase of 51,800 jobs, and almost 16,000 more housing units. Despite these changes, the City wants to preserve the livability and maintain health and vitality in their neighborhoods. The Plan addresses the new growth in housing downtown as well as the need for affordable housing.

For Utilities and Capital Facilities, the Plan outlines how the City will provide cost-effective management of utilities and better link service targets and other standards to Functional System Plans.

In the Transportation Element of the Plan there is attention paid to how the City can address the mobility needs of a diverse community including age, culture and ability. This requires a number of travel options.

The Economic Element includes support for an innovation economy and in the new Education subsection recognizes the value of schools and secondary education. As far as infrastructure, mitigation of new power lines and undergrounding of existing powers lines was identified as a high priority for the City. The number one suggestion from the Bellevue “Best Ideas” initiative in 2014 was for high-speed, affordable internet access with more choices for residents of providers.

For Arts and Culture, the Plan supports arts that bridge cultures and communities and connect people to places; it also supports a regional and local approach to addressing the arts facility shortage and public art in the City.

Human Services Element focused on making human services more accessible by siting services near transit, providing homeless housing with services to respond to the increasing needs, and spotlights human rights needs and inequities.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element reiterated the goal to maintain Bellevue’s “City in a Park” vision, encourages linking transportation and parks, and the need for community gathering places.

In regard to the Environment and storm water, the Plan includes goals to provide good management of life cycle materials, improve the aquatic habitat, promote greener buildings and infrastructure, and set goals for preserving the tree canopy.

Ms. Conkling gave an overview of the many ways the City has done outreach to gather feedback from the public on the Plan, including targeted outreach to Youth Link members and residents of Sophia Way Women’s Shelter. The Council will be reviewing the Plan throughout April and May, and vote on it in mid-June.

Ms. Conking asked BNOA members for their questions and comments.

Questions and Comments:

- Mr. Katz commented that everything outlined in the Comprehensive Plan needs money to implement. In terms of the tree canopy, Mr. Katz stated that many trees are being taken down by developers, and Puget Sound Energy activities polluted Lake Bellevue. In terms of affordable housing, Mr. Katz stated that he thought that Wright Runsted got around building affordable housing in the new Spring District.

- Ms. Thompson asked if there were policies in place to prevent the tearing down of existing housing so that larger, more expensive housing could be built. Ms. Conkling stated that current codes allow this but the Comprehensive Plan update will look at the policies in place to maintain neighborhood character. However, the City must amend its codes to put limitations on that type of development. Ms. Thompson also asked if the current plan is addressing this issue now. Ms. Conkling replied that staff are looking at this issue. Ms. Thompson also asked if there is money to put wiring underground as the Plan states it is a big interest of residents. Ms. Conkling stated that policies support this but financing is an issue. Public and private partnerships are needed; currently new development must place their wiring underground.
- Mr. Megargel asked if there could be more benches for people to sit in the parks and around the City of Bellevue. Ms. Conkling stated policies support pedestrian amenities but the City could take a closer look at its policies to see if benches are included. Ms. Seltzer stated that EERC is doing a benches handbook that might be of interest to the City.
- Mr. Megargel also asked what the City would do with planning for the Farmers' Markets, perhaps having one more like a Pike Place Market in Seattle. Ms. Conkling stated that with there are policies to support local businesses and that may include Farmers Markets.
- Mr. Crawford asked if the City looks to the south, for example, Coal Creek, to coordinate its planning. Are there common requirements for builders? Ms. Conkling stated that what other nearby cities do is of interest to Bellevue. In transportation, there are concurrency plans that are developed. There is a policy in the Comprehensive Plan addressing development. Mr. Crawford stated that the City's new Economic Development Director gave a presentation at a recent Neighborhood Leaders meeting and talked about the need for robust economic development. Mr. Crawford stated that the BNOA was concerned that the City implement this vision wisely.
- Ms. Zielasko noted that it was unfortunate that there is a delay in policies that would prevent further decrease of the tree canopy in the City of Bellevue as major construction projects continue to increase now and trees are being cut down as a result of these projects. Mr. Katz added that the soon to start construction for Sound Transit East Link will result in more trees being cut down.
- Ms. Grote commented that the Farmers Markets are part of the discussions in the city's Special Events committee, of which she is a member. Currently, one of the markets is on private property (Crossroads Shopping Center) and the other is on church property. As such, the City does not have jurisdiction on non-public land, but the Special Events Committee would like some guidelines from the City for development of Farmer Market policies.
- Mr. Katz directed a question to Ms. O'Reilly. He stated that homeless people are still living on the railroad tracks and he would like the City to work with Sound Transit to do something for homeless people there.

Ms. Conkling thanked BNOA members for their input. She stated that there is still opportunity to comment on the Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission. There was a great turn out at the public hearing the night before. People can review the draft Plan on the City's website and/or check out a copy at the Service First desk and send staff additional comments.

BREAK

UPDATE ON HIRING PROCESS FOR NEW COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER

Alex O'Reilly shared a memo from Assistant Director of Parks & Community Services, Shelley Brittingham that outlines the hiring process and division of staffing duties until a replacement for Bo Du can be hired. Ms. O'Reilly will staff the BNOA meetings for the next few months and can answer some questions for members as they arise. In response to a question from Ms. Thompson, Ms. O'Reilly reported that Ms. Du had arranged for speakers for BNOA through July. Mr. Spratley from North Bellevue Community Center will staff the BNOA committees and help with support as much as possible. BNOA members asked some questions about how the community centers are organized within the department. Ms. O'Reilly shared that each community center has a manager, and they report to Ms. Brittingham. Mr. Katz asked if there was more money in the City budget this year to increase staff at North Bellevue Community Center which he believes is understaffed. Ms. O'Reilly stated that she would forward that question to Ms. Brittingham. They hope to fill the position by the end of April or May. If members have any questions or concern, they can email Ms. Brittingham.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Memory care (reported by Mr. Crawford)

Mr. Crawford and Ms. Watkins met with management staff from Tutta Bella Pizzeria to discuss opening an Alzheimer's Café in Crossroads Shopping Center at their newly opened restaurant there. There is one on the Eastside currently held at Issaquah's Tutta Bella Pizzeria from 2-4pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Mr. Crawford was pleased to announce that an Alzheimer's Café will be opening at Tutta Bella in Crossroads on May 5 from 3-5pm. Mr. Crawford stated that they will have a flyer shortly and that he will send a press release to all the neighborhood news publications to make sure it is covered. Mr. Crawford stated that having collaborations such as this with existing programs and other organizations such as the Alzheimer's Association and Overlake Hospital would be a good strategy rather than the BNOA reinventing them.

Mr. Crawford also mentioned the upcoming Art in the Park at Golden Gardens (3 week series) and the Focus on the Future Forum in Bellevue on April 3 will also address Memory Care as well as Behavioral Health.

Transportation and Housing Committee (reported by Ms. Grote)

This group meets the 4th Monday of the month at Bellevue City Hall in Conference Room 1E-110. At the committee's meeting on February 23 at 9am, Natasha Grossman from Bellevue FD CARES presented an update on the program. Also present at the meeting was Janet Lewine, housing planner with the City, who gave an update on the development of affordable housing in Bellevue, such as one by the Low Income Housing Institute across the street from the Marriott Hotel near city hall on 111th. Ms. Grote also stated that Crossroads Mall redevelopment includes moving the Bellevue Police Substation from its current location to a place more centrally located in the mall. The committee continues to work on updating the senior housing page on the ARCH website. Ms. Grote mentioned that the winter shelters on the Eastside are still open.

Ms. Gray stated that the Crossroads Retirement Center was sold and is being refurbished. The new owners will not accept residents on Medicaid which is a big loss. Now the only place that accepts residents receiving Medicaid is Evergreen Court.

Advocacy Committee (reported by Ms. Thompson)

Ms. Thompson reported on the status of the following bills:

State: HB 1186 Medicare Hospital Observation. Last year, members went to the State and spoke with Judy Clibborn and, along with Kirkland Senior Council, helped spur the bill in the State to require hospitals to give both verbal and written communication to patients that they are under hospital observation and the consequences of it. The bill hearing was Friday, Feb 6 at 10am. Ms. Carolyn Kelso, Ms. Kathy Iverson, Mr. Katz, Ms. Thompson, and Ms. Rasnack attended to testify for support of the bill. The bill must be passed out of the House by March 11.

Federal: House Bill (HB) 876 Medicare Hospital Observation. This bill in Congress was stalled for several years but recently had some action. The bill was passed out of committee on February 11. Ms. Thompson stated that she will be talking to staff from Rep. Adam Smith's office to obtain more information. There are some key differences between the State bill and the Federal bill dealing with this issue, including when it would take effect (State: July 2015; Federal: 12 months after it is passed); length of time for required notice (State: 24 hours; Federal: 36 hours); and who would write the rules associated with the legislation (State: DSHS; Federal: Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services). There was some discussion at the recent BNOA Advocacy Committee meeting about whether or to discuss the Federal bill with State staff, and it was decided by the committee that it was not the BNOA's responsibility to do so.

State: House Bill 1499 Prosecuting Certain Crimes Related to Seniors. This bill was sponsored by Rep. Roger Goodman. Ms. Thompson suggested that members could go online to the State Legislature website and type a message to support this bill.

Several members of the BNOA and Kirkland Senior Council attended the WA Senior Lobby in Olympia on February 26 and met with East King County legislators. Mr. Katz spoke with Governor Inslee and Senator Steve Litzow about the medical observation bill.

Outreach Committee (reported by Ms. Thompson)

Ms. Thompson reported that the Overlake Active Senior Fair will be held on May 16 from 10am-3pm at Westminster Church and asked members if they wanted to participate. Ms. O'Reilly stated that Mr. Spratley could reserve a table for the BNOA. Ms. Seltzer asked if there was a budget to pay for the table at Westminster. Ms. O'Reilly stated that she would ask Ms. Brittingham and report back to the group. Chair Rasnack asked if there were enough members to volunteer on the day of at the table. Mr. Crawford suggested that another option if the BNOA could not have their own table was to collaborate with another group such as Overlake Hospital to share some of the BNOA materials. There were three members available to work shifts that day. If we collaborate with someone else, three people would be sufficient. Ms. O'Reilly stated that she would relay this information to Ms. Brittingham, and that Ms. Thompson could also email her with the details.

Ms. Thompson shared that there is a radio show on Sunday mornings on KIXI on older adult issues. She stated that it might be a good opportunity for the BNOA and Kirkland Senior Council to talk about their groups on one of the shows, and also bring experts to the table about other issues, such as elder abuse, medical observation, and scams and frauds involving seniors. Ms. O'Reilly brought some guidance from Ms. Brittingham stating that it was appropriate for the BNOA to be highlighted on the show related to its activities, but on legislative issues, BNOA members could not state that those were the positions of the City of Bellevue. After some discussion, BNOA members concluded that they would be in favor of Ms. Thompson contacting KIXI about a show highlighting the BNOA, but not securing speakers for the show host on other topics related to older adults.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS REPORTS

Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative (reported by Ms. Grote)

Ms. Grote reported that EERC is working on its final draft of its Bench Cookbook, a document that will help the community understand how to site benches in key places so people with mobility issues can have a place to rest. She also reported that King County Metro fares increased as of March 1, 2015, from \$1.00 to \$1.25 for seniors and people with disabilities. Metro is also working on its long-range plan. Ms. Grote mentioned that there will be a Community Mobility Travel Training Conference in Issaquah March 31 and April 1.

Eastside Human Services Forum (reported by Alex O'Reilly)

Ms. O'Reilly stated that the Forum was in the process of planning their annual June event. She will let the BNOA members know when the date and topic have been decided.

Aging & Disability Services (reported by Ms. Seltzer)

Ms. Seltzer shared that ADS was currently developing its four-year Area Plan. As part of that work, ADS staff hold forums to bring information about upcoming trends and issues that affect older adults. This year, the "Focus on the Future" Forums will be held in Snohomish County on March 6, in Pierce County on March 30, and in King County, April 3 in Bellevue at City Hall. Ms. O'Reilly stated she would send an email with more information about the Bellevue event in the next few days with information about who will be the panelists. BNOA Chair, Ms. Rasnack, will be the moderator for the Bellevue event.

Ms. Seltzer also stated that she and staff from the City of Seattle Human Services Department met with City of Bellevue staff this week to request that the Bellevue City Council sign a letter to State legislators related to funding for Medicaid case management. The allocation from the State for this program has not grown while the number of people needing this service has continued to increase. The State budget request is for \$14 million, which would be matched by federal funds.

Timebank (reported by Ms. Grote)

The Timebank's next potluck meeting will be on March 12 at North Bellevue Community Center. The Timebank potlucks rotate amongst Kirkland, Redmond and Bellevue.

Washington Senior Lobby (reported on during Advocacy Committee Update)

Staff Report/Upcoming Agenda Items

Ms. Thompson asked that at the next meeting there could be a discussion of other speakers to invite to future BNOA meetings. Ms. O'Reilly stated that that topic could be added to the April meeting agenda.

Mr. Katz stated that Ms. Du was going to follow up on the absence of one of the newly elected BNOA members, and asked Ms. O'Reilly to check on what the outcome was of that inquiry.

The next meeting is April 2 at 8:30am in Conference Room 1E-108, with a presentation by Sarah Shifley from the State Attorney General's Office.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35am.