

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

November 9, 2016
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair deVadoss, Commissioners Carlson, Barksdale,
Laing, Morisseau, Walter

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Hilhorst

STAFF PRESENT: Terry Cullen, Bradley Calvert, Department of Planning and
Community Development; Kevin McDonald,
Transportation Department

COUNCIL LIAISON: Not Present

GUEST SPEAKERS: Chair Janice Zahn, Commissioner Scott Lampe,
Transportation Commission

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

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

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

ROLL CALL
(6:35 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Laing, who arrived at 6:43 p.m., and Commissioner Hilhorst, who was excused.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
(6:36 p.m.)

There was agreement to amend the motion to move staff reports to the end of the agenda.

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

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCILS, BOARDS AND
COMMISSIONS – None
(6:37 p.m.)

PUBLIC COMMENT – None
(6:38 p.m.)

PUBLIC HEARING
(6:38 p.m.)

Comprehensive Plan Amendment: Vision Zero

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Morisseau. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and the motion carried unanimously.

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald said the Vision Zero Comprehensive Plan amendment was initiated by the City Council. The focus of Vision Zero is to move toward reducing the number of incidents on Bellevue streets that result in serious injury or death to zero. In December 2015 the Council adopted the Vision Zero ordinance that incorporated the Vision Zero ethic as part of Bellevue's transportation planning and prioritization. The Transportation Commission was directed to review the Comprehensive Plan policies with an eye on determining if any policies should be added or amended to implement Vision Zero.

Mr. McDonald explained that the Transportation Commission recommended policy amendments that are intended to provide policy support for additional and more comprehensive and programmatic efforts to help achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue's streets by 2030. The Vision Zero program began in Sweden and has spread around the world to both big and small jurisdictions and indeed entire countries. The state of Washington has adopted the principles as well. Vision Zero is becoming a best practice in jurisdictions that want to reduce to zero the number of serious injuries and deaths.

The fundamental determination of whether a vulnerable person is injured or killed is traffic speed. Where the transportation system can be engineered to encourage lower vehicle speeds, and designed with facilities that protect pedestrians from vehicles, injuries and deaths can be reduced. Vision Zero is an attempt to anticipate human error in the transportation system and it incorporates designs to protect the most vulnerable. Over the last decade in Bellevue, there have been 40 pedestrian-related injuries, 30 bicycle-related injuries, and more than 400 persons injured in cars as a result of accidents, and 15 of the overall injuries proved to be fatal.

The number of annual pedestrian collisions in Bellevue between 2004 and 2014 held fairly stable at around 40, with only a slight increase in the more recent years. The Commissioners were shown a chart indicating how Bellevue's statistics stack up against other cities, some larger and some smaller. It was noted that Bellevue is toward the low end in terms of the rate per thousand of population.

Having observed that the accident rates for Seattle, Spokane and Everett were much higher, Commissioner Carlson asked what the contributing factors are in those jurisdictions. Mr. McDonald said it would take some speculation to answer the question. He added, however, that Bellevue's lower rate may be attributable to the design of the city's transportation system. Historically Bellevue has done a very good job of engineering for safety.

Commissioner Walter asked how collisions with pedestrians was defined. Mr. McDonald said the available data is not in a format that can easily be parsed. The assumption is that the number relates to pedestrians hit by cars, but it could be pedestrians hit by bicycles.

Chair Zahn said the Transportation Commission has been discussing the need to partner with police and other sources to gather the data. Having Vision Zero embedded will allow for identifying the important components that need to be captured and housed in a searchable format. There is no call to collect data just for the sake of collecting data; the work should inform desired outcomes.

Commissioner Carlson suggested that with only about 40 pedestrian collisions annually, it would not be an exhaustive task to determine how many of them, if any, involve pedestrians hit by bicycles. Transportation Commissioner Lampe agreed that research could be put on the to-do list.

Chair Zahn said the Transportation Commission has also been talking about gathering data regarding near misses, those instances in which a collision very nearly occurred, using social media and other sources to get a sense of which intersections might be more dangerous than others.

Mr. McDonald said there are some 30 bicycle collisions annually in Bellevue. He shared with the Commissioners a chart comparing Bellevue with other cities and noted that the rate in Bellevue is fairly low by comparison in rate per thousand.

Commissioner Laing asked if the data distinguishes between a bike hitting a car versus a car hitting a bike. Mr. McDonald said he did not know. He pointed out, however, that in either case the bicyclist would be unlikely to come out on the winning side.

Commissioner Barksdale pointed out the need to be clear about what defines an injury. Mr. McDonald agreed.

Commissioner Walter stated that all hospital admissions include an identifying code called ICD-10 which is very specific as to why the patient was admitted to the hospital. She said while it is not possible to obtain medical records, it might be possible to obtain the ICD-10 numbers which would be descriptive as to accident type.

Mr. McDonald showed the Commissioners a map indicating the dispersion of traffic fatalities in Bellevue over the last ten years. He noted that there was a cluster in the downtown and that the rest were scattered around the city. It is not readily known if the fatalities occurred at intersection locations or midblock locations; having that information would help in defining the problems and identifying solutions.

Commissioner Laing pointed out that accident data is kept by the state for every intersection. The data includes the number of accidents that have occurred at or around a given intersection, the nature of each accident, and whether there were injuries or fatalities involved. The information is used by developers in getting projects approved. Mr. McDonald said the value of Vision Zero from a programmatic approach will involve looking at incidents citywide and being strategic about how to address specific situations.

Chair Zahn said the traditional approach to traffic safety focuses on the three E's: engineering, enforcement and education. The programs and projects that fit those categories that are already in the city's Transportation Element are the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program, the Accident Reduction Program, traffic law enforcement activities, red light cameras, capital projects, development review, traffic signal operations, the Bellevue Street Design Manual, and the standards and best practices guidelines. In moving to a Vision Zero programmatic approach, it will be necessary to add three E's: encouragement, equity and evaluation. It is one thing to have data, it is another to evaluate it and really understand what it means and determine how it might inform decision-making actions around traffic safety. Encouragement involves incentivizing safe behavior and instilling respect for one another on the streets. Equity involves ensuring that safety applies to everyone, no matter what mode of travel they utilize, and where they live in the city.

Evaluation involves monitoring progress, adjusting strategies, and celebrating successes.

Mr. McDonald said the engineering element aimed at separating and protecting road user groups is intended to identify vulnerabilities. A person on foot or on a bike is more vulnerable to injury or death when hit by a car. The least vulnerable persons are those in cars. Well-designed facilities can provide necessary separation. The intent of engineering is to design systems to provide each user a defined space, essentially eliminating the consequences of inattention.

Commissioner Carlson asked if the approach would include turning two general purpose lanes into one lane for cars and one lane for bicycles. Mr. McDonald said any action of that sort would be an outcome of an engineering and policy decision. The action could be taken in a situation involving a limited right-of-way, but the Vision Zero approach generally does not imply the outcome.

Commissioner Lampe said one example is 116th Avenue NE. In association with the recent repaving work on that roadway, the two lanes north, one lane south and a center turn lane were converted to one lane in each direction, a center turn lane, and five-foot bike lanes on either side. Commissioner Carlson asked about the impact on congestion. Commissioner Lampe said a thorough and exhaustive analysis was conducted to make sure the current and proposed development along the roadway would not be significantly impacted. The approach will certainly be monitored going forward. Mr. McDonald added that the Council authorized repurposing of the right-of-way and at the same time directed staff to conduct an additional evaluation after one year, which is coming up soon.

Commissioner Barksdale said one approach would be to have streets designed solely for cars and other streets that also accommodate cyclists.

Commissioner Carlson said it has been his experience that when thoroughfares and arterials get too congested, cars begin to look for alternative routes, which are often residential streets where there are kids playing and people walking. The result could be that by doing things in the name of safety, some areas could be made less safe.

Chair Zahn pointed out that there is no one-size-fits-all strategy envisioned. To the degree that separation can be provided in order to protect the different user groups, it should be made part of the consideration. Where bike paths are shared with roadways, pedestrian and bicyclists are more at risk because there is only the perception of safety.

Chair deVadoss said he would prefer to focus on harmonizing the various travel modes rather than on separating and protecting. He also commented that when the first Vision Zero was envisioned in Sweden 20 years ago, the notion of a self-driving car was only a dream, and the idea of drones for transportation was science fiction. Now self-driving cars are real, and drones for transportation are the dream. The assumptions made around cars need to be fundamentally re-imagined. It will soon be possible to say it is not cars that are a danger to bicyclists and pedestrians, and the focus will need to be on harmonizing the various modes.

Commissioner Lampe said the Transportation Commission was directed to determine whether or not any updates, revisions for additional policies were needed in the Transportation Element to incorporate Vision Zero. The conclusion reached after a great deal of study was that four new policies were needed, and two existing policies needed to be revised. The proposed new policies were: TR-A, strive to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue streets by 2030; TR-B, develop a programmatic approach to Vision Zero that integrates components of

Education; Encouragement, Enforcement; Engineering; Equity; and Evaluation; TR-C, design and manage streets to foster safe and context-appropriate behavior of all roadway users; and TR-D, strive to provide separation between motorized vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, as feasible, reasonable and appropriate to the context.

Chair Zahn noted with regard to proposed policy TR-D, the level of separation required may be very small given the specific context.

Mr. McDonald informed the Commissioners that the Transportation Commission is currently working on a group of objectives collectively known as multimodal level of service. He pointed out that policy TR-D was drafted specifically to address safety, but in looking at multimodal level of service for pedestrians and bicycles, some of it will be defined in qualitative terms rather than quantitative terms. Much of the quality of the experience for people walking or riding a bicycle will be determined by the speed and volume of traffic. Separating pedestrians and bicycles will help achieve the Vision Zero outcomes by making pedestrians and bicyclists more comfortable, which in turn will encourage more people to walk or ride.

Commissioner Barksdale pointed out that along Coal Creek Parkway, where the traffic moves very quickly, there is a dedicated bike lane but no physical protections for cyclists. He said anyone who has ever tried riding down that roadway would understand why physical separation would improve safety. Commissioner Walter said the same is true on the Lake Hills Connector.

Commissioner Lampe said the Transportation Commission proposed revising existing policy TR-53 to read "Maintain and enhance safety for all users of the roadway network, regardless of demographics and geography;" and revising existing policy TR-55 to read "Maintain a collision reduction program to identify high collision locations, evaluate and prioritize potential safety improvements and implement recommended changes."

Commissioner Carlson said he assumed the city already reaches out to all demographics. Chair Zahn said the Transportation Commission had a lot of debate and offered many permutations when drafting the policy language. The proposed language represents a compromise that acknowledges that while the word "all" should encompass all, sometimes a little more emphasis is important. Mr. McDonald added that the policy as proposed will help the city focus and prioritize where there may be demographic groups or individuals who may need special attention, or specific geographic areas of special concern.

Commissioner Laing suggested that the policy should not say "regardless of demographics and geography" but rather should give emphasis to certain people within user groups and on certain areas of geography, such as school zones. Chair Zahn said that approach was one of the options discussed by the Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Barksdale called attention to the language of proposed policy TR-D and suggested the phrase "reasonable and appropriate to the context" should be used in policy TR-53 as well.

Commissioner Carlson suggested that less is more and that "all" means all.

Commissioner Laing reminded the Commissioners that during the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan, the Commission sought to remove to the extent possible limiting phrases wherever there was a reference to "all." He suggested that the essence of proposed policies TR-C and TR-D are already in the Comprehensive Plan in multiple forms. He called attention to

existing policy TR-21 and noted that it calls for ensuring that the transportation system infrastructure in Bellevue provides mobility options for all modes and accommodates the mobility needs of everyone, including underserved populations, which is essentially the same as the proposed revision to Policy TR-53.

Commissioner Walter asked if the language specific to demographics and geography could be housed somewhere other than in policy. Mr. McDonald said the Comprehensive Plan includes narrative and text boxes that serve to amplify the policies. He said that approach would be one way to provide context without amending policy language.

There were no members of the public wishing to address the Commission during the public hearing.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and the motion carried unanimously.

STUDY SESSION (7:38 p.m.)

Commissioner Laing voiced his appreciation for the effort of the Transportation Commission relative to the issue. He allowed that there is overlap in every element of the Comprehensive Plan and as such was not overly troubled by the proposed revision to TR-53. According to Wikipedia on the topic of Vision Zero, roads in Sweden are built with safety prioritized over speed or convenience. Basically Vision Zero treats the relationship between safety and efficient mobility as a zero-sum game. In other words, one cannot have improved safety without some level of congestion. Policy TR-2 calls for striving to reduce congestion and improve mobility; that same concept is carried through some of the discussions of the land use policies in the Land Use Element. He suggested revising proposed policy TR-D to read “Strive to provide separation between motorized vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists as feasible, reasonable and appropriate to the context without diminishing mobility for any transportation mode.” The Commission has been clear about not wanting a Comprehensive Plan that prefers one mode of transportation over any other. The Transportation Element is focused on multimodal mobility. The policy should outline Bellevue’s Vision Zero, not Sweden’s Vision Zero, which should continue to strive to reduce congestion while also striving to reduce serious injury accidents and deaths to zero.

Commissioner Barksdale commented that currently there is a certain amount of congestion on 116th Avenue, but cyclists cannot ride along the roadway. Even though congestion is not limited, one mode of transportation, specifically biking, is adversely impacted. In some areas there are bike lanes that end and do not connect routes; making the connections might impact cars but would enhance transportation for other modes. Commissioner Laing said one possible outcome of the project to restripe 116th Avenue NE could be the taking of bikes from other areas and concentrating them on 116th Avenue NE, and making the whole system work better. He said the language he proposed was not intended to call for sharing the limited right-of-way, rather on avoiding system failure overall in striving to accommodate one mode over another.

Chair Zahn suggested the question to be answered is what is meant by “reasonable and appropriate to the context.” It is possible that anything more than a de minimum amount of impact would not be reasonable. Commissioner Carlson said in that case, the extra words would serve as clarification.

Commissioner Laing commented that context is everything, and without it “feasible, reasonable

and appropriate” means nothing. The city may say it is feasible to restripe a roadway to put in bike lanes based on the fact that it has the money and enough paint. The action may not, however, be reasonable and appropriate to the context. Vision Zero is supposed to be metric driven; the goal is zero traffic deaths. No dependent variable should be added in. The language used should be consistent with existing policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

A motion to revise the language of proposed policy TR-D to have it read “Strive to provide separation between motorized vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists as feasible, reasonable and appropriate to the context without diminishing mobility for any transportation mode” was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson.

Commissioner Morisseau pointed out that the data that will help the city make certain decisions is simply not there yet. She asked if there is room for flexibility in the proposed language to adapt for whatever the data eventually says.

Chair Zahn suggested revising the language of TR-D to read “...appropriate to the context while maintaining adopted level of service standards for all modes.” That way whatever levels of service get adopted based on the data, the language would not need to be revised.

Commissioner Laing accepted the suggestion as a friendly amendment.

The motion carried unanimously.

A motion to strike from policy TR-53 the clause “regardless of demographics and geography” was made by Commissioner Carlson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walter and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Walter asked if consideration has been given to improving bicycle facilities in the city. She noted that bike lanes and paths are always the last to be cleaned of debris, which means riders must often move into traffic lanes, and existing bike facilities are not always designed to be safe. Mr. McDonald said the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative, which the Commission has recommended to be funded to the tune of \$6.7 million in the biennium will move things in a positive direction relative to bicycle facilities.

Chair Zahn said the Transportation Commission has discussed existing bicycle facilities that are in need of maintenance. Part of the funding will be focused on that area. The funding will also further the goal achieving at least two east-west and two north-south connected bicycle corridors to provide for continuity, and the goal of serving those who are interesting in riding but are concerned about safety.

A motion that the Planning Commission recommendation on the Vision Zero Bellevue Transportation Commission policy recommendations, as amended by the Planning Commission, be transmitted to the City Council with a recommendation that they be adopted as amended, was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barksdale and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to amend the agenda to move staff reports and approval of the minutes to follow the study session was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and the motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Cullen reminded the Commissioners that the annual retreat was scheduled for November 16, beginning at 4:45 p.m. at the First Congregational Church on NE 2nd Street. The event will begin with a tour of the new facility which the church is encouraging the public to use. The church will be hosting the homeless shelter that same evening starting around 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Carlson announced that he would be out of town and unable to attend the retreat.

Mr. Cullen noted that the Commission will meet twice in December on the 7th and the 14th. He said at both of those meetings the primary order of business would be downtown livability.

With regard to the move toward fully electronic Commission packets, Mr. Cullen said it has been a challenge for a variety of reasons.

Commissioner Walter asked if receipt of the packet electronically on tablets owned by the city will mean any personal notes made by Commissioners will become public records. Mr. Cullen said he would put that question to the City Attorney, but said it was his understanding anything put on city property will become public record. He added that hard copies of the packets will no longer be made available. The costs of purchasing tablets and switching over to all electronic packets will be offset in just three months of not having to print hard copies and have them delivered to the Commissioners.

With regard to an item raised at the October 26 Commission meeting by Commissioner Walter in regard to Eastgate, Mr. Cullen said the question was whether or not what was adopted by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council truly reflected the intent of what the Commission had wanted to do, specifically with regard to transient lodging. Transient lodging as a type of use is reflected in the EG-TOD as adopted as allowed through an administrative conditional use permit. He said during his review of the records he discovered that the intent of the Commission was in fact to allow the use through a conditional use permit, not through an administrative conditional use permit.

Continuing, Mr. Cullen noted that at the February 24 study session three references were made to transient lodging and/or homeless shelters. The first one was from Chair Hilhorst who noted that while a hostel might be a good fit in the zone, a homeless shelter may not be. The response from Code Development Manager Patricia Byers was that requiring a conditional use permit might be the way to go for homeless shelters in that it would certainly allow for addressing all the impacts. Immediately following that exchange, Commissioner Laing noted that Seattle requires a conditional use permit for homeless shelters even if they are located in an industrial area, and went on to say that one of the impacts that should be considered is the queuing that often is associated with the use given that the shelter is not generally open 24 hours per day, which can be addressed through a conditional use permit. He also said hotels and motels should be permitted uses, to which the Commissioners agreed.

On April 27, during a discussion about the EG-TOD, contained in a long discussion about different uses, Ms. Byers suggested that hotels, motels and transient lodging should be permitted uses on the residential use chart. Chair Hilhorst said the argument previously made by the Commission was that transient lodging could include a homeless shelter, which is why a more stringent permitting process would be in order, particularly in what is intended to become a neighborhood. Ms. Byers agreed to retain the requirement for administrative conditional use for the use. That is what the minutes reflect of the discussion, and is an accurate reflection of the audio recording.

Mr. Cullen said in speaking with Ms. Byers, it was agreed that she misspoke. Regardless, what she said is what got picked up and included in the use tables. On June 22, the public hearing was held at Bellevue College and the issue was contained in a very large document in the use tables. There are three places where the identification is made for the EG-TOD. He said he could see clearly how the error occurred and how it got continued even though it was not the Commission's intent.

Mr. Cullen said he then conferred with Bob Hyde in the city's legal department about how to fix the error. Mr. Heid said there are two paths that can be taken, either of which would be acceptable. Informally, the Commission could raise the issue with the Councilmembers as the Commission's recommendation is brought before the Council. There have been conversations with various Councilmembers in which the issue and the research has been brought up, and apologies have been made. The more formal approach would be to open the issue again before the Commission, make the change, and then retransmit the package with the corrected language. Someone who voted for the amendments would need to make a motion to reconsider. That motion would need to be approved on the strength of a two-thirds majority vote. If approved, the amendment as correctly expressing the intent of the Commission would be proposed and voted on, but only a simple majority would be needed for approval. No additional public notice or public testimony would be required to make that happen.

Mr. Cullen asked the Commission to indicate a preference for which approach to take, and said the issue would be placed on the Commission's December 7 agenda. There was supposed to be a second study session by the Council on the Eastgate topic on November 14, but that has been postponed without a date certain, so action by the Commission on December 7 should fit with the timing.

Chair deVadoss thanked Mr. Cullen for his detailed analysis and explanation. He said the mistake that was made was made honestly and there is no need for staff to apologize.

Commissioner Carlson said the shelter issue is of great consequence to the potential success of the overall Eastgate development. He said if the facility is to be allowed, it should be done right. He recommended a standalone meeting or public hearing on its status. The more formal approach should be taken.

Commissioner Laing concurred. He said the issue is of such significance that the formal process of voting to reconsider and then making the change should be followed.

Chair deVadoss and Commissioner Walter agreed as well.

DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW

A. September 14, 2016

Mr. Cullen noted that he had been directed to listen to the audio recording and to make some changes. He said Commissioner Walter had suggested that her comments in regard to the homeless shelter were more robust than what was reflected in the draft minutes, and he said after listening to the recording he found that to be true and added more detail to page 18 of the minutes.

Commissioner Walter suggested that "What happens if there someone has a mental health

issue...” should be revised to say “What happens if there were someone with a mental health issue...” “With regard to the last sentence on the page, she asked to have it revised to read “Commissioner Walter does not agree with some of the policies in place in Seattle that may have drawn homeless people to the city...”

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Walter. The motion was seconded by Chair deVadoss and the motion carried without dissent. Commissioner Barksdale abstained from voting because he had not attended the meeting.

B. October 12, 2016

Commissioner Barksdale asked staff to listen to the audio recording to clarify the exchange outlined in the last paragraph on page 6 of the minutes. Mr. Cullen said he would do that and bring the minutes back for approval on December 7.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Wilburton Commercial Area -- Project Overview

Community Development Program Manager Bradley Calvert said the Wilburton Commercial Area is a companion piece to the Wilburton Grand Connection project. Taken together, it is about the re-visioning of the land use, urban design and transportation elements for the study area.

The Commissioners were shown a map of the original Wilburton special opportunity area, which generally was the area bounded by NE 8th Street, 120th Avenue NE, Main Street and I-405. Mr. Calvert noted that as the project has evolved, opportunities to include other areas have been taken, namely northward to NE 12th Street and eastward to 124th Avenue NE, and southward to the Wilburton trestle. The study area does not extend to and will not impact the residential neighborhoods to the east. Within the study area are elements of the Grand Connection, East Link, and the Eastside Rail Corridor.

The consulting firm of NBBJ was selected to address the land use and urban design portion of the work. The firm brings to the table some unique opportunities to visualize the project, including design computation, a process that gives database/mathematical ways of looking at height, form, density, employment and residential numbers. They will conduct some economic analysis as well. One of the Council principles for the project is to define a unique market niche for the study area. That will entail capitalizing on context and infrastructure while complementing the existing suite of assets.

Mr. Calvert said the consultant selection was made in October. The Council is in the process of appointing a Citizen Advisory Committee; the first meeting of the CAC will be either in December or January. The timeline calls for identification of a preferred land use and transportation alternative for the area by September 2017, with a final report to be assembled by February 2018, after which the necessary Land Use Code and Comprehensive Plan amendments will kick off.

An Urban Land Institute national advisory panel was held in May. The seven experts came in for a full week and their goal was to bring a fresh perspective and new ideas for what the area could be, and to assist in developing a vision for growth and innovation. They also were asked to identify precedents to look to for inspiration and ideas. They ultimately provided

recommendations relative to design, policy and implementation. During the process, briefings were conducted and the study area was toured. Various stakeholders were interviewed, and the panel held a two-day charrette-style work session. On the final day, the group delivered its report.

The recommendations were handed down prior to the study area being expanded. Their recommended buildout for the area was 5000 residential units: 1500 townhomes/condominiums and 3500 apartment units. The panel estimated those units would house some 9500 residents. The panel also anticipated about five million square feet of office space, 310,000 square feet of retail space, and 1500 hotel rooms, along with 25,700 jobs in the study area. The panel clearly believed there is room in the study area for substantial growth and the ability to grow into an urban neighborhood.

The panel proposed breaking up the district into four segments. They saw the northwest quadrant focused on health and wellness with uses such as medical office, senior care facilities, and workforce housing for the medical employees. The area to the northeast was singled out as a technology and innovation district, though possibly not immediately given the existing small-scale buildings. Some of the smaller buildings could over time be repurposed into artist lofts or co-working spaces. The T2 area, which is short for trail/transit-oriented development, was considered by the panel to be the heart of the study area. It should have a central open or green space where the Grand Connection and the Eastside Rail Corridor meet to serve as a significant meeting place. Mid-rise/mixed use buildings would be appropriate in the T2 district, along the lines of the Spring District or Olympic Village in Vancouver, BC. The district should be a true urban neighborhood that cultivates creativity and entertainment. The area of south of SE 4th Street, dubbed SOFO, was seen as the panel as the appropriate spillover/catch-all uses that do not go into the T2. The auto dealerships could be reoriented into a more consolidated fashion with a vertical format.

Mr. Calvert said the panel focused on permeability, specifically the east-west non-motorized connections between the neighborhood and the Eastside Rail Corridor, and making them truly part of the transportation network in the study area. The panel mentioned often the need to expand the Grand Connection to connect with the botanical garden. The panel was adamant about Wilburton not being just east downtown. They provided case study examples showing that trying to move in that direction could result in fragmented, non-cohesive growth. The panel also proposed changing the street character, highlighting specifically 116th Avenue NE and the need to really play up the non-motorized connections. As the area redevelops, it will not be necessary to create more streets, but it will be necessary to create permeability within the blocks.

The panelists called for what they termed practical urbanism by which they meant to get out there and try things. They suggested spaces should be claimed and various approaches should be tried out, especially before big investments are made. Implementation should involve adopting a hybrid form-based code that is focused on design more than on uses; that could require simplifying the use codes for the area. A complete street policy for the area should be both adopted and enforced. Street-based businesses should be enabled. The Grand Connection should be turned into a green necklace enhanced by tech and natural vegetation. The work to upzone the area should be done gradually with an eye on preventing overbuilding and fragmented development. The panel also suggested that the workforce housing in the district should be aimed at between 50 and 80 percent of the area median income.

Mr. Calvert said to date 13 of the 15 members of the CAC have been appointed. The focus has been on finding people with diverse interests who can also wear multiple hats. The group will

include representation from the Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, Arts Commission, Human Services Commission, and the Parks and Community Services Board. There will also be business interests, representation from the Chamber of Commerce and the Bellevue Downtown Association, and six local residents. Commissioner Barksdale and Commissioner Wu from the Transportation Commission will serve as co-chairs.

Mr. Calvert said one issue that was very quickly raised was where the property owners fit in. Putting them on the CAC proved to be a challenge in terms of representing so many different interests. The decision was made to run a simultaneous process that will involve workshops with the property owners and the CAC. The intent is for the CAC to create something that is visionary, and for the property owners to help keep things pragmatic given the market realities.

Enliven Wilburton was a process carried out in partnership with King County to test practical urbanism. Gehl Institute, a placemaking firm out of Copenhagen, was brought in to conduct workshops, look at projects and provide feedback. A café event was held on 450 feet of the existing Eastside Rail Corridor. The track was lined with plywood and outdoor grass carpeting, and along the rails were posters showing ideas and concepts for the Grand Connection, the Eastside Rail Corridor and the Wilburton study area. REI provided food and Bellevue Brewery provided beverages. There was a live band as well and the turnout was good. People were asked to write down what they imagine the space to be. Similar events are in the planning for the downtown for key events along the Grand Connection.

Mr. Calvert said the land use and urban design work is geared up to begin during November. The transportation and environmental consultant will be on board in December, and the CAC will begin meeting either in December or January. Their final report is expected in February 2018.

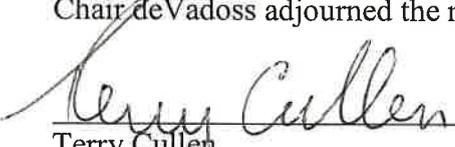
Commissioner Barksdale voiced strong support for the approach to the project and said he looked forward to serving on the CAC.

PUBLIC COMMENT
(8:57 p.m.)

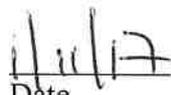
ADJOURN
(8:57 p.m.)

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walter and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair deVadoss adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m.



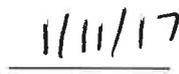
Terry Cullen
Staff to the Planning Commission



Date



John deVadoss
Chair of the Planning Commission



Date