

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION  
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

September 9, 2015  
5:30 p.m.

Bellevue College  
Library Media Center, Room D106

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Kattermann, Erika Rhett, Chris Salomone, Department of Planning and Community Development; Catherine Drews, Patricia Byers, Development Services Department; Paul Bucich, Phyllis Varner, Utilities Department;

GUEST SPEAKERS: Wayne Carlson, AHBL; Ray White, Bellevue College

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.

2. WALKING TOUR OF FUTURE EASTGATE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) AREA

3. RECONVENE

After the walking tour and a short break, the meeting was called back to order at 6:54 p.m. by Chair Hilhorst who presided.

4. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present. Council Liaison Stokes was unable to attend.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Todd Woosley, PO Box 3325, spoke on behalf of the family that owns the Eastgate RV site. He said the family would like to have the opportunity to see the site redeveloped and he called attention to a letter previously submitted to the Commission regarding zoning changes. There are three specific things that are needed, first that residential use be a permitted use; that an FAR of 2.5 be allowed; and that building height up to six stories should be allowed. The residential use and the building height are specifically called out in the Eastgate/I-90 plan, and the FAR issue is up for discussion.

Commissioner Carlson asked how many people currently live at the RV site. Mr. Woosley said the site is effectively a temporary residential area with people living in RVs coming and going. As envisioned, the site could have between 300 and 400 new housing units in a combination of sizes.

Mr. Don Kramer, 1610 North 1st Street, Yakima, said he and his brother are the second-generation owners of the Eastgate RV Park. He said the site has approximately 104 RV sites and on average there are two to six persons staying in each RV. The site runs 100 percent full. The site used to go all the way to I-90. The RV use has been in place for 45 years and the desire is to see the site developed to a higher and better use. The preference is for housing.

Commissioner Carlson asked if the vision for the site involves condos, townhomes or apartments, or single family housing. Mr. Kramer said his preference is for single family housing. Smaller units would be more attractive to college students. Residential units would reduce traffic on the roadways.

Answering a question asked by Chair Hilhorst about whether the plans include several buildings and multi-use buildings, Mr. Kramer said everything is still in the planning stages, but an FAR of 2.5 will be needed in order to build the parking. Consideration has been given to including some retail on the ground floor level.

7. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCILS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

8. STAFF REPORTS

Mike Kattermann, acting Comprehensive Planning Manager, announced that Paul Inghram took a job with the Puget Sound Regional Council. He noted that in the interim he would be staffing the Commission along with Emil King, Dan Stroh and Chris Salomone.

Mr. Kattermann called attention to a letter in the Commission packet from City Manager Brad Miyake addressing the diversity initiative. He explained that in the coming months training will be given to all city staff and all of the city's boards and commissions regarding cultural competence.

Mr. Kattermann also drew attention to a letter from Arthur Sullivan with A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) in which he discusses the annual awards program and requests Commissioners to serve on the awards committee.

The Impact Hub in the Lincoln Center building has been chosen as the place for the Commission's annual retreat. It will be on September 30.

It was noted that the packet included several letters regarding the allowed FAR in the BR-MO zone along 116th Avenue NE north of the hospital district. A review of the BelRed area is part of the overall work program discussion staff is having with the City Council.

Commissioner Laing suggested it would be appropriate for the Commission to send a memo to the Council letting them know the Commission has over the past two years consistently heard from parties who are urgently awaiting the promised BelRed corridor look-back. Mr. Kattermann said the Council has been hearing from those same parties.

Mr. Kattermann informed the Commission that the city received an award for its community outreach efforts associated with the Comprehensive Plan update. The award is from the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Mr. Kattermann took a moment to thank Bellevue College for hosting the Commission meeting.

9. DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW

A. July 8, 2015

Commissioner Morisseau called attention to the second paragraph under the Roll Call on page 1 of the minutes and noted that in addition to being a structural engineer she is also a real estate agent.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walter and the motion carried without dissent; Chair Hilhorst and Commissioner Carlson abstained from voting due to their absence at the July 8 meeting.

B. July 22, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walter and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioner deVadoss abstained from voting due to his absence at the July 22 meeting.

Chair Hilhorst asked staff to provide the Commission with an update regarding where things stand relative to the parking code amendments for Old Bellevue, and how the issue of vacant sites and buildings is being addressed. Mr. Kattermann said an update would be provided at the next meeting.

10. STUDY SESSION

A. NPDES Development-Related Code Review

Legal Planner Catherine Drews introduced Wayne Carlson, consultant with AHBL, the firm hired to serve as the city's consultant in moving through the process of implementing the principles of low-impact development into enforceable standards and codes. She also noted Phyllis Varner, NPDES permit manager, and Paul Bucich, Assistant Director of Engineering Services, both with the Department of Utilities, were also present.

Mr. Carlson explained that LID, the acronym for low-impact development, is a stormwater and land use management technique intended to mimic the natural hydrology of sites. The issue incorporates the land use principles of clustering, minimizing vegetation loss and impervious surface area loss, and best management engineering practices such as bioretention, permeable asphalt, porous concrete, green roofs and cisterns. There is an NPDES permit that requires integrating the principles and best management practices (BMPs) into the code. During the pre-European period in the Northwest, very little stormwater actually ran off sites; it primarily was infiltrated or evapotransported. With urbanization came runoff and the inevitable scouring of streams. Over the years the stormwater requirements for both flow control and treatment has been ratcheted up by the Department of Ecology.

Ms. Drews said the LID principles are one of several conditions that are part of the City's NPDES stormwater permit. The deadline for incorporating and adopting LID principles into

code amendments is December 31, 2016. Incorporating LID BMPs is a separate action that is being addressed by Utilities. The intent of the revisions is to make LID principles the commonly and preferred approach to site development. The revisions will be devised to minimize impervious surfaces, reduce the loss of native vegetation, and reduce stormwater runoff in all types of development situations. There will be no focus on retrofitting; the principles will apply only to new development and redevelopment.

Continuing, Ms. Drews said a document has been written to guide the process. Called *Integrating LID Into Local Codes, A Guidebook for Local Governments*, the guide was prepared by the consulting firm AHBL for the Puget Sound Partnership. She stressed that there are no metrics provided, so each jurisdiction is allowed the flexibility to determine the most appropriate standards.

Mr. Carlson said each jurisdiction operating under the permit has its own unique zoning codes, subdivision regulations and engineering standards. The decision of the Pollution Control Hearings Board was that they should all be harmonized with the Growth Management Act (GMA) in ways that make sense to each jurisdiction. There is less flexibility with the BMPs given that they are based on engineering feasibility rather than land use principles.

Ms. Drews said the LID principles take more of a holistic view of sites ahead of development or redevelopment. Sites that are undeveloped may present opportunities to use the principles in ways a site in the downtown may not. In every case, the BMPs that are feasible will need to be utilized. The LID principles have in part already been incorporated by the city; specifically, the Western Washington Stormwater Management Manual has been adopted.

The project began with a meeting of all development review staff and staff from Utilities, Parks and Transportation. The initial focus was on an opportunity analysis to identify areas to look at first. There were seven meetings in all during which there was clear consensus that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work. There was also consensus that supporting growth in urban areas is appropriate and in line with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, and that balancing environmental benefits with economic development goals will be important.

While the project is being undertaken in order to comply with the NPDES permit, it happens to support other Council programs and goals, including the newly adopted tree canopy goal of 40 percent, the goal of reducing greenhouse gases, aiding in salmon recovery, and furthering the city's reputation as a city in a park. All city departments are working together to make sure everyone is on the same page.

The Council has given a green light to starting the conversations in four areas: 1) looking at how to use LID earlier in the site design process; 2) reducing impervious surface coverage; 3) preserving and enhancing the tree canopy; and 4) improving options for cluster development.

Mr. Carlson said one thing staff highlighted is the fact that storm drainage concepts are sometimes shoehorned in at the end of the design process as opposed to integrating a deep understanding of the soils and site hydrology early on. He shared with the Commissioners photos of a LID cluster development in Pierce County called Meadow on the Hylebos where the landscaped areas were used for stormwater management purposes, all without having to reduce the number of units. By managing runoff in bioretention facilities distributed throughout the site, the need for a detention pond was eliminated.

Commissioner Laing asked if the work program will include the GMA density goals as part of the analysis. Ms. Drew allowed that it would be as part of balancing competing needs. Prior to

1990 there were no requirements to treat stormwater. The initial steps included vaults, pipes and retention ponds and everyone thought that was the way to go. Since then it has been learned that that approach is less than ideal and results in stream scouring. The LID approach is focused on slowing the water down.

Commissioner deVadoss asked if there has been any review of cities comparable to Bellevue to determine what others have done or plan to do. Mr. Carlson said information has been collected from all area cities as well as others. The collected data includes matrices of impervious surface cover and things related to site design and clustering. Commissioner deVadoss noted from the documentation use of the term “preferred and commonly used approach” and asked what the proposal is for making certain actions the preferred and commonly used approach. Ms. Drews said that is exactly what will be determined through the process. Mr. Carlson pointed out that the phrase was pulled directly from the NPDES permit. Ms. Drews pointed out that all 85 jurisdictions subject to the permit requirements are facing the same issues. Some jurisdictions have stepped ahead so it will be possible to see what conclusions they have reached.

Mr. Bucich said he has been involved with LID for 20 years. The biggest challenge involves helping people understand what it is and what it is not. He noted that the Meadows development represents only one application of the LID principles. Another approach would be to divide a site in two, put a 30-story highrise on one side and leave the other side for discharging stormwater. At the time the Pierce County development was built, there were questions as to whether or not anyone would buy units with much smaller yards. The fact is the properties were all sold and fully occupied in a very short period of time, which in part is a reflection that what people want and how they use their properties has changed. The development includes a lot of pervious surfaces which allow stormwater to flow directly into the ground.

Commissioner Barksdale asked how LID fares when it comes to cost and maintenance. Ms. Drews said a condo project recently came to the city that needed, but was denied, access to a private detention pond. Instead of pumping stormwater uphill to a city system, the developer installed injection wells, which allow the runoff to flow into the soil, and save a great deal of money in the process. Mr. Bucich added that there are several studies showing that the use of LID techniques is less expensive than the standard stormwater treatments. There are no catch basins and no pipes. On constrained sites it may be necessary to place a concrete vault underground, but on less constrained sites ponds can be constructed at the loss of one or more building sites. There are maintenance costs associated with the standard approach to treating stormwater runoff and they are well known. LID is fairly new to the Northwest but Florida has been implementing the principles for more than 25 years and typically the maintenance costs have been found to be less than the traditional approach.

Mr. Kattermann commented that the construction techniques are just as important as the end product. In a typical development project, sites are often scraped and regraded, an approach that takes away much of the natural drainage ability of the site. Implementing LID principles can mean far less site scraping, the result of which is the retention of more of the natural vegetation and soils that function in a natural state.

Commissioner Laing said one option would be for cities to create regional stormwater collection and treatment. He urged the Commissioners to research the Cooper Crest subdivision in Olympia. The low-impact development came online in the mid-2000s and is a textbook example of how good ideas do not always work. The development underscores why a one-size-fits-all approach does not work. Other options for reducing runoff include jurisdictions reducing right-of-way widths and the amount of required paving; and the state approving different pavement types and standards. Under Land Use Code 20.20.010, Bellevue allows a 35 percent structure

coverage and 50 percent impervious surface coverage; that may or may not be sufficient to meet the new NPDES permit, and the Commission will need to know that answer. Ms. Drews agreed that a single approach will simply not work in all circumstances. She emphasized the project is not looking at BMPs. Utilities is busy mapping the city to find out exactly where the best infiltration soils are and which areas have soils that resist infiltration, all with an eye on avoiding a Cooper Point situation, a development that came online when much of the science was still new.

Mr. Carlson said new information is coming to light all the time, and the mistakes made by some of the early pioneering projects have proved to be excellent learning tools.

Commissioner Carlson asked what about Bellevue's current structure keeps LID principles from being implemented already. Ms. Drews said the land use development code does not facilitate cluster development. The planners have identified the need to make changes to the planned unit development code to allow for better clustering. In most cases, all that is needed is a tweak here and there, not a full rewrite of the Land Use Code.

Ms. Drews said the schedule calls for updating the Transportation Commission on September 10, the Parks and Community Services Board on October 15, and holding public workshops on September 30 at City Hall, Lewis Creek Park on October 6, and the Northwest Art Center on October 15.

## B. Bellevue College Update

Mr. Ray White, Bellevue College Vice President for Administrative Services, said his particular responsibilities range from capital to the grounds and maintenance, in addition to all auxiliary services, food services, the bookstore and the child care center. He commented that Bellevue College is currently celebrating its 50th year while facing big changes. The four-year programs now offered by the college represent only two percent of all the programs offered. Bellevue College President Dr. Rule has been seeking to develop a number of partnerships with other educational institutions, and the college is now able to offer a four-year degree in computer science.

Mr. White said the college spent the last year reinventing its strategic plan. The result is a five-year rolling plan that will be reviewed, updated and added to annually. The plan's goals are to be exceptional in delivering innovative and high-quality educational opportunities; to educate students to be global citizens and the next generation of leaders; to affirm equity and social justice for all; to be a vibrant and interactive community partner; to create effective support systems as part of becoming a large college; and to provide a nurturing and productive workplace in which the human potential can be cultivated. All planning done by the various departments must align with the overall strategic plan, including all academic planning.

An architect has been engaged to begin the process of developing a new campus master plan. The current plan was created in 2008 and brushed up in 2011. The community will be engaged as part of the update process. The hot topic is housing and the firm Perkins+Will has been retained to address it. The college is well positioned to receive federal funding to improve the connection between the transit center and the campus. Of the 7000 to 8000 students who visit the campus daily, 60 percent come from outside the district and need transportation options.

The campus has three main entrances, with the main entrance marked by a Shell gas station. The north campus is out by the baseball field and is tucked in beside the child care center, and the south entrance is dimly lit and not a pleasant walk. The belief is that entrances could all be

greatly improved. There is also a need for improved signage on the campus. The focus is on first improving the main entrance to facilitate pulling off the main road out of traffic, talk to public safety personnel through an intercom, and use digital signage to know where to go and where to park. An architectural rendering of what the main entrance might look like was shared with the Commissioners. The school is talking with the city about taking over the custodianship of the corner property fronting on 148th Avenue SE.

Mr. White said plans are being made to improve the sports fields, including lighting for the baseball field, and putting in both lighting and artificial turf on the soccer field. The sports fields are rented out as a source of income. The overall annual budget for the college is \$100 million, of which \$24 million comes from taxpayer funds. The balance of the budget is made up through a variety of means, including charging for parking, hosting weddings, renting out the sports fields, and bookstore sales.

With regard to student housing, Mr. White said the college is moving as fast as it can to bring units online. A three-phase approach has been drawn up in which the first phase will develop 350 beds in an apartment-style building having a mix of units with between two and four bedrooms. The first units are set to come online in March 2017. The other two phases likely will follow very quickly and will have an equal number of beds. The buildings will include some retail uses along with live/learn spaces and a large dining hall. Depending on the demand, the third building may look more like a dormitory.

Commissioner deVadoss noted his support for Bellevue College and said he was very glad to see it is growing. He commented that while investments in housing and transportation will be critical, it will also be important to conduct capacity planning to make sure the anticipated growth can be accommodated. Mr. White said Bellevue College is still a community college and the four-year degrees it is now able to confer has little to do with the institution's overall growth. The prime factor in projecting growth is the economy. Bellevue College is primarily a commuter school. The school has enjoyed a steady 2.5 to 3.0 percent annual growth rate, except during the recession when the number of students rose dramatically. The creation of desirable programs and degrees can also drive demand. The physical campus has the ability to expand into the areas currently used for surface parking.

A motion to extend the meeting by 30 minutes was made by Commissioner Walter. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Carlson asked if consideration has been given by the college to construct student housing where there is currently surface parking. Mr. White said projects have to pencil out. Structured parking can cost up to \$30,000 per space, and that means it is currently not feasible. Additionally, a large number of students do not have cars of their own.

Commissioner Walter commented that many students are currently traveling to the campus in cars. If housing were available to them, they would not need a car to get to classes, but they might need a car to go to their jobs and to do other things. Mr. White said the planned campus housing is not specifically for international students, but in fact the number of units to be developed would accommodate all of them, most of whom are currently in home stays or nearby apartments, and very few of whom have cars.

Chair Hilhorst said the Commission was previously informed that the college has been buying houses around the campus and she asked if that is where the three development phases will be located. Mr. White said several homes have been purchased in the Sunset Ranch area. Some of the buildings will be removed, but the housing will in fact be constructed initially on what is now

a parking lot. Later development phases will utilize the purchased properties.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner deVadoss, Mr. White said he would look into sharing the results of the feasibility study with the Commission. The study was done by former Commissioner Hal Ferris who was charged with keeping rents as low as possible. The board, however, has directed charging full market rate for the units. The savings generated from construction types and operations will be used to create housing scholarships to benefit students unable to pay the market rate.

Commissioner Walter said she welcomes having housing constructed on the campus.

### C. Eastgate Land Use Code

Ms. Drews was asked to comment on how well the single room rental ordinance is working. She said several complaints have been filed and staff are working through them to determine which should be carried forward to enforcement so a precedent can be set. She said she is working with code compliance officers on training issues and enforcement tools. Staff are seeking a designated resource from the city attorney's office to focus on the enforcement process for the ordinance. Public information handouts are being developed, and resources are being dedicated to send one code enforcement officer to specialized training in Florida. A process and the proper documents will be developed for anyone wanting to apply to become the functional equivalent of a family.

Chair Hilhorst asked how many complaints have been filed and Ms. Drews answered that the number is close to 100, which could include multiple complaints concerning the same property.

Commissioner Walter asked what the training in Florida will entail. She was informed by Ms. Drews said the training will be specific to code enforcement in situations where single rooms are being rented in homes in single family areas.

Chair Hilhorst asked if to date the Director has had to step in to determine if a group is functioning as a family or single housekeeping unit. Ms. Drews said there have been two inquiries to date. Direction has been provided but no follow-up has been required.

## 11. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Don Kramer, 1610 North 1st Street, Yakima, clarified that he has misspoke during the first petitions and communications. He said the vision for his property is multifamily, not single family. With a higher FAR, buildings on the site could be taller, leaving more of the site open to implementing LID principles.

## 12. ADJOURN

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

Chair Hilhorst adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.



Michael Kattermann  
Staff to the Planning Commission

11-18-2015

Date



Michelle Hilhorst  
Chair of the Planning Commission

11-18-2015

Date

\* Approved as corrected, October 28, 2015

