

**BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING**  
**MINUTES**

October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

North Bellevue Community Center via Virtual – Zoom.

8:30am – 10:30am

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Gazel Tan, Hannah Kimball, Janet Jelleff, Diana Thompson, Berta Seltzer, Phyllis Smilen, Mary Fredeen, Gina Johnson, Abigail Brown, Desiree Leigh, Paul Bradley, Catherine Wong.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Beverly Heyden

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Dan Lassiter, *Bellevue Parks & Community Services*

Christy Stangland, *Bellevue Parks & Community Services*

Alex O'Reilly, *Human Services Manager, City of Bellevue*

**GUESTS:**

Terri Cleveland, *Fairfield Outreach Network Specialist*

Janis Hyne

**PRESENTER(S):**

Ryan Walker, *City of Bellevue Senior Planner*

**RECORDING SECRETARY:**

Betty Lee, *Bellevue Parks & Community Services*

**WELCOME AND ROLL CALL:**

The meeting was called to order by Gazel Tan and the roll call taken.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Janis Hyne – grateful to attend.

Terri Cleveland – Thank you for allowing to attend. Here to gather information and want to make connections and spread the word that there are affordable senior apartments available in King County and 4 other counties in WA.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

September minutes approved.

**PRESENTATION:**

*Ryan Walker, City of Bellevue Senior Planner.*

## 2022 City of Bellevue Parks & Open Space System Plan Update

- ❖ Parks & Open Space System Plan Introduction
  - 2,710 acres across 78 parks, community centers/rec facilities, and additional undeveloped open space.
    - 15 acres added since 2016 along with development and renovation of existing parks.
  - 1.5 miles of publicly accessible waterfront.
  - 98 miles of trails.
  - Schools provide additional programmed facilities and trails.
  
- ❖ Parks & Open Space Systems is part of variety of policy and planning documents. The comprehensive plan forms the basis for all the work in the city. The department strategic plan and other planning documents that hold the department vision within them. This plan is different from the recreation program plan which focuses on the programming elements.
  
- ❖ Within all these planning documents is Equity, a system of fairness, which forms the backbone of what is looking to accomplish. Equitable access is a right and fundament to our mission.
  
- ❖ What is the Parks and Open Space System Plan?
  - ~20 year plan, updated every 6 years. Conveys long-range guidance for acquisition, development, and enhancement based on community needs and holds the big ideas. It is a long-range guidance document, not a budget or regulatory document.
  
- ❖ Why is the plan created?
  - Assess and evaluate to meet the needs of residents.
    - Provide a guide for the future
    - Establish capital improvements priorities
  - Planning and accreditation requirements.
    - National Recreation and Parks Association (NPR) accreditation
    - WA Recreation and Conservation Office grants (RCO)
  
- ❖ Parks System Planning
  - Focus Areas
    - Open Space, greenways, wildlife corridors and trails
    - Parks facilities
    - Active recreation facilities
    - Urban Park systems
    - Waterfront access
    - Partnership opportunities
    - Historic, cultural and art resources
  
- ❖ Capital project objectives – what is of interest to acquire, develop, and/or enhance/preserve within each focus area.
  - Existing plan 2016 capital project objectives (selection)
    - Expanding multi-use trail and greenway trail systems, including wayfinding.
    - Add neighborhood parks in underserved areas.
    - Develop existing undeveloped park properties.

- Expand community center locations.
  - Develop and enhance various sports fields.
  - Expand off-leash dog areas.
  - Focus on urban parks expansion and enhancement.
  - Acquire and/or develop identified waterfront access locations.
  - Look for partnerships to create parks and expand facilities.
- Built Environment
    - About 53% of households own their home.
    - Of housing units, over half are multi-family.
    - Density is increasing with infill development in many neighborhoods.
- Walkable access (level-of-service)
    - Goal: Ensure that 100% of Bellevue residents are within 1/3 mile of a park, open space, or trail by 2050.
      - Currently about 73.5% of residents that meet these criteria.
- ❖ Public Outreach
    - Many ways to participate
      - Surveys
        - Submit feedback (web or direct to staff)
        - Attend a meeting
- ❖ System Planning Opportunities
    - Remain a City in a Park with increasing urbanization
    - Meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population
    - Inspire civic engagement
    - Enhance our parks to reflect contemporary trends
    - Respond to the needs in our community
- ❖ Project Timeline
    - Spring 2021 – Project initiation.
    - Summer 2021 – Inventory, initial meetings.
    - Fall 2021 – Public outreach, mapping.
    - Winter 2022 – Draft plan for review.
    - Spring 2022 – Plan adoption.
- ❖ We want to hear your big ideas!
    - Your feedback will help us create a better park, trail, and open space system.
    - In your experience, what is working well in Bellevue’s Park Trail, and Open Space System?
    - Alternatively, what elements might be considered for improvement or attention?
    - How can we make parks more welcoming for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds?
    - Are there parks where we need easier or safer access?

## Q&A Session

Q: Is there a map of all the parks available to the public? It has been difficult to find this for outreach.

A: Yes, on the website – Parks and Trail Guide. Available at some community centers.

Q: What does it take to get a project in the system plan? For instance, if North Bellevue Community Center (NBCC) needs a playground, how can we make that get on the books?

A: Need input from community and staff. Hearing from the community and identifying the need will be the first step. Currently there's an objective in the plan for NBCC but it is relatively broad and calls for additional facilities. We can look at refining that and see what it might need. There's no hard and fast rule how an objective gets in the plan but looked at as a big idea that comes out of the planning process and from there it moves into budgeting and gain traction and more specificity over time.

Q: Concern for restrooms, lighting and parking for access and usability. What role does the Parks Department play in the disappearing tree canopy? How does Parks Dept. respond to a homeless encampment in COB parks?

A: Restrooms/parking highlights a need to examine where restrooms are across the board - this plan will set out a goal for this concern. Tree canopy – looking at the health of the tree canopy and where it could be enhanced, due to be completed in early 2022. Homeless encampment – the City of Bellevue works with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator and the policy department as needed when there are encampments.

Q: What does it mean to “hear from the community” in order to get a project in the system plan?

A: Write letters, round up people to voice their needs, attend meetings.

Q: Would love to see more mobility access including parking, restroom facilities - especially for older adults. Broad platformed or paved access for wheelchairs and walkers. How long is the current deferred maintenance going to last? What is the city doing about encampments in trails and parks? We have not had productive response from the city's homeless coordinator.

A: Deferred maintenance – hoping this changed through time. Have less renovation needs that can be met and new projects coming onboard and how they will be maintained. Certainly looking at options on how to meet highest priority goals with the current funding.

Q: Any plans for adult fitness equipment which will include access for altered mobility?

A: Not sure if it's in the current plan but it has been discussed as this is becoming more popular.

Q: (comment) The printed pamphlets are needed in addition to having it online for community outreach need at multiple venues. Please consider the importance of keeping undeveloped land. Tree canopy studies, how many trees are going to be cut down before developing a new plan? Please protect our trees from being cut down in order to build big houses.

Q: Trails map – can there be a marking on the map to show what trails are accessible to what degree? Are exercise equipment being considered for future parks plan?

A: Exercise equipment is starting to make a come-back especially during Covid times. There is a potential addition through a private partnership that may be occurring in the future in downtown area.

Q: In regard to the trail in Woodridge, you have no way of knowing what area it leads to after you enter the trail. Wondering if there's a way access more detailed trails info while on the trail, perhaps with a QR code or signs that show you where you're heading.

A: Wayfinding is mentioned in the current plan but needs to be looked at closer for enhancement.

Q: Have there been a consideration to look at demographics and seeing that certain services and offerings should be relocated to an area that is closer to the target audience? It would be great for older adults to have services at a walkable distance without a need for transportation.

A: Yes, demographics are one of the first analysis that happens over time. Updates to the plan will look at where the trends are pointing, where there's an increase in older adult population, where might be increased youth, etc. Over time, facilities should be located within the areas in need and that is the intent of the Parks Plan.

Q: Concern for senior citizens sharing park trails with wheeled recreational vehicles. Will there be indications where people are free to walk without fear of getting hit by fast moving recreation vehicles?

A: Because trail systems expand through time, there are certainly more populated trails over time. It was discussed that there could potentially be separate paths for different uses. For existing trails with shared paths, it will take a long time separating the uses. Please provide input on specific areas of concern.

Q: Is there a place where one can find out about what's going on with certain parks in the city?

A: Yes, there are in-progress plans and studies on the website but it needs to be updated with most current information.

**SPECIAL VISIT by Alex O'Reilly** Retiring at the end of October after more than 24 years of dedicated service with the City of Bellevue. BNOA appreciates all that she has done for the City of Bellevue and older adults and wishes her well.

**HUMAN SERVICES:** (*Christy Stangland*)

- Lindsay Masters will be coming next month and will hopefully talk about 1590 capital funding.
- Closing the Human Services Consumer Survey today, thank you for helping with outreach, received 114 responses.
- Debbie Lacey from Eastside for All and someone from CISC will be attending the joint Human Services Commission meeting on Oct 26<sup>th</sup> and presenting on hate crimes and bias incidents. Christy had a "community conversation for the needs" update with both of them and it was an incredibly impactful presentation. Meeting will be posted on the human services website, please think about attending or reading the notes after it's posted.

Question for Christy – Would like to confirm phone numbers for older adults resource website for programs such as Bellevue Fire Cares, home repair, utility discount, etc. The numbers just ring for a very long time until you can leave a message. Is there an easier way to reach those places? How can we confirm information? Where can people pick up printed resource information?

A: 211, East King County Resource Guide. Community Connections website is currently offline due to outdated information. The Human Services number is available for questions and can give referrals. Due to Covid restrictions, printed materials were not distributed as much as usual but still available through community centers and Human Services website.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** *Members were asked to read the following committee report minutes before the meeting for discussion:*

**ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

1. Discussion of meetings with legislative assistants. Attendees: June, Kathy, Diana, Karen, Barbara, Desiree, Abigail, and Gina. Federal agenda and Karen's dental story emailed to assistants of Rep. Smith and Senators Cantwell and Murray. Karen's dental story also emailed to Eleanor of Rep. Schrier's office, who Diana met on behalf of EHSF. Kathy shares that Medicare Advantage now mandates dental coverage up to \$1500/yr. Diana mentions that Kaiser is adding dental coverage. Group discussed experiences with meetings, most positive with Rep. Smith Asst., Marvin Eng, and Sen. Murray office assistant. Diana feels the needs of BNOA were heard but challenges exist with getting agreements and bills passed and spending approved.
2. Federal issues discussed: Options include cutting federal spending limits and increasing individual state coverage. Karen discussed voting rights bill which hasn't passed.
3. Diana announced WA State Senior Citizens Lobby Virtual Conference, Thurs. Oct 21, 0900-1600. Diana encourages attendance, anticipates a valuable meeting. Kathy states event is long but very interesting, City of Kirkland may cover cost of KSC attendance. Prominent local politicians typically in attendance, schedule varies.
4. Local issues impacting older adults: KSC and BNOA partnering to address middle income housing supply as a local issue with Joint Housing Commission. Desiree suggests that increased general engagement needed, for example, on infrastructure needs. Abigail emphasized need for local advocacy with local leaders, provided Silver Cloud shelter hotel example. Kathy suggests starting with Planning Commission outreach to determine upcoming city plans. Diana mentioned example of parking reductions within ¼ mile of transit as state law which may not reflect the mobility needs of older adults. Barbara encourages writing letters and reaching out to local leaders (planning commissioners, city managers, council). Bellevue and Kirkland have council-manager form of local governance with city manager and staff having significant control of city operations. Karen and Kathy express a general feeling of frustration and apathy with current system.
5. Next month, discuss legislative agenda. Abigail to address King County supportive

housing plan including former Silver Cloud Hotel location at 2122 152ND AVE NE, Redmond (borders Bellevue). Diana will cover state legislative issues featured at Senior Lobby Day.

6. Other: June Palon discussed walking issues along Lake Ave W., Kirkland, with impaired access to downtown Kirkland and loss of trees. Diana proposes a walk day at Bellevue Botanical Garden for persons with Alzheimer's Disease, Dan states this event will likely occur in the spring.

### **OUTREACH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

- Gazel, Desiree and Diana attended 2-day Dementia Friendly Washington workshop, strong connection to our interest in providing additional outreach resources to caregivers, even though this is a bad time to attempt providing "in person" activities and caregiver respite. NBCC is in an excellent position to expand on "dementia friendly" activities. Would collaboration with Old Friends Club be a good starting point?
- Recruiting for several open positions on BNOA -- only 4 applications so far, need at least 8. Agreement to put notices in Bellevue Essentials program newsletter (Julie Ellenhorn), Neighborhood News (Mark Heilman), and City of Bellevue public service announcement. How about posting on NextDoor? Deadline extended to October 17.
  - ❖ There's an all-day seminar online by WA Senior Citizen's Lobby regarding issues that are affecting seniors that will be presented to the legislature. Diana will email everyone information on how-to register, will cost about \$30 to attend.

### **HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION MINUTES:**

- Speaker for BNOA from ARCH not yet secured, Christy will reach out to Lindsay Masters. Affordable Housing summit on 9/23, Gazel will forward link. Holden of Bellevue, no one visited grand opening.
- ARCH website carries many senior options that are not affordable, many prices outdated, is it a viable tool today? How do new affordable units make their way onto the website? How do people find out and get in line for affordable senior units? Should BNOA continue to play a role in this website?
- Should we think about a platform for advocacy for "middle" housing position for older adults? would it be viable? who would be our target audience? who would help/support us? Human services from each City? ARCH ? How about Tom Minty and Mindy Garner as "mentors" for senior focused affordable housing efforts? Do placement agencies and non-profit referrals play a useful and effective role in helping seniors find affordable housing?
- KSC is updating their senior services directory. Anything can go into the print version of the directory, but only not-for-profit organizations and services can go onto the city's website.
- Let's line up a speaker to update BNOA on the DASH-Evergreen Court redevelopment project.
- Who is target audience for a community van service? Redmond and Kirkland efforts have not fared well, how will/could Bellevue be different? Would data and feedback from Crossroads Connect be of help?

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORT:**

### **Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative:**

- Nothing to report.

### **WA SENIOR LOBBY, AGING AND DISABILITY:**

- Eastside Human Services Forum: There is a lot of support trying to get children's hearing aids covered by insurance in WA.

### **COMMUNITY MEETINGS:**

- Affordable Housing Forum – Gazel sent information, please read before next month's meeting and bring your questions to ARCH.
- Abigail and Janet attended Bellevue Essentials on transportation – surprised a lot of people who presented made it seem like there was *not* a shortage in bus service. Their focus seemed to be on future plans and current advancement, not much on current issues.
- Dementia Friendly WA expanding possibilities – Desiree enjoyed the breakout rooms and was glad to see Gazel and Diana attend.
- Dementia Action Collaborative decided to do an update on their plan for Alzheimer's and dementia.

### **NEW BUSINESS: (Dan)**

- Linda Forshaw and Bill Merriman resigned.
- Recruitment – currently have 8 applicants. There are 9 openings, need to cover up to 15 voting members. 4 positions open for new voting members, interviews are set for October.
- Gazel would like everyone to please give some thought on: How do we know and represent the needs of older adults? How do we solicit input?
- Thank you, Christy, we have head of ARCH coming next month. Be ready with questions. Two lists – one that BNOA has been updating from 2018-2019. It doesn't show some of the newer communities or changes that have been happened. The list that contains prices of older adult communities have not been updated since 2011. How many affordable units is the Eastside lacking and what progress have ARCH made to erasing that deficit? Please review the website, come up with questions, and decide on what we want to talk to her about.
- If members submit questions to Dan within 2 weeks, he will send them to her.
- Joyce Nichols, Director of Intergovernmental Relations have retired. Now we have Lacey Jane Wolf and Dan will be meeting with her to speak about BNOA, who we are and what we do, and how we can have more involvement with her position. *Meeting adjourned at 10:43am*