

City of Bellevue
Wilburton Commercial Area
Citizen Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

April 5, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-108

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeremy Barksdale, Sarah Chong, Shari Einfalt, Glen Griswold, Jay Hamlin, Matt Jack, Chris Johnson, Debra Kumar, James McEachran, Andrew Pardoe, Daniel Renn, Alison Washburn, , Lei Wu

MEMBERS ABSENT: Don Weintraub

OTHERS PRESENT: Bradley Calvert - *Department of Planning and Community Development*, Kevin McDonald- *City of Bellevue*

RECORDING SECRETARY: Audio Recording, transcribed by Bradley Calvert

1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Co-chair Barksdale.

Co-chair Barksdale asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Mr. Pardoe motioned to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Renn. The agenda was unanimously approved.*

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Co-chair Barksdale asked if there was a motion to approve the February 1, 2018 meeting minutes.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Mr. Renn motioned to approve the minutes from the February 1, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jack. The minutes were unanimously approved.*

Co-chair Barksdale asked if there was a motion to approve the March 1, 2018 meeting minutes.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Mr. Pardoe motioned to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. McEachran. The minutes were unanimously approved.*

3. Communication with Boards, Commissions, Stakeholders, Public, and

Meeting Updates

Co-chair Barksdale stated that he wanted to welcome Mayor Chelminiak to the meeting. Mayor Chelminiak stated that he wanted to thank the Committee for the work that they had done, and that the Committee processes have proven to be transformational for the city. He stated that it was wonderful that residents could come together to create a vision for the city that the City Council could work with. Mayor Chelminiak stated that he was thrilled with the work they had done. He stated that the Wilburton Commercial Area project was one of the highest priorities for the city, and that it represented an area that is going to transform the city. Mayor Chelminiak stated that along with the Grand Connection it would move mobility forward for the city.

Mr. McEachran stated that he wanted to thank Mr. Calvert for bringing a presentation to Human Services Commission on the Committee work to date. He stated that he believed Mr. Calvert should be renamed to the “Wizard of Wilburton.”

4. Public Comment

Bill Finkbeiner stated that he was impressed with the Committee’s thoughtfulness, discussions, and effort they have put into creating the vision. He stated that the process has been inspiring. Mr. Finkbeiner stated that he wanted to encourage the Committee to be bold as they make their final decisions regarding height and density. He stated that the infrastructure investment made in the study area was second to none in the region. Mr. Finkbeiner stated it was a unique place, and could make Bellevue better.

Panfilo Morelli stated that he wanted to thank the Committee to be able to collaborate with them to create the vision for the Wilburton Commercial Area. He stated that they support Alternative Two and that they are looking forward to working with the city on the next steps. He stated that he wanted to thank Mr. Calvert and the Committee for their work.

Bob Pishue stated that he represented Kemper Development Company. He stated that this work was a very important decision for the city. Mr. Pishue stated that the Committee’s letter that stated to prioritize “people over cars” has made people upset. He stated that per the City’s budget survey, the top concern was traffic congestion. Mr. Pishue stated that traffic congestion was a concern for 44 percent of respondents, with affordable housing second at 15 percent. He stated ending NE 6th Street at 116th Avenue NE was not considered under all alternatives. Mr. Pishue stated that some people have questions have yet to be answered and that they should be done before making a decision.

Chris Buchanan stated that she represented DASH Housing. She stated DASH was founded 25 years ago by the Bellevue Downtown Association to ensure workforce housing in Downtown Bellevue. Ms. Buchanan stated that DASH owns just under 800 units of affordable housing for working families, seniors, and individuals. She stated that they own two properties across the street from the study area, Evergreen Court – affordable housing for seniors, and Glendale Apartments – affordable housing for individuals and families that make less than 50 percent AMI. Ms. Buchanan stated that they would like to add more affordable housing to their property and have asked the City for consideration for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment. She stated that the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process requires them to be on their own to ask for a change. Ms. Buchanan stated that one of the things she has learned is that more homes, for more people are possible when they do not have to work alone. She stated that she is requesting that the Glendale and Evergreen properties be considered as part of their study

area. Ms. Buchanan stated that she had been following the Committee's discussion regarding housing. She stated that they would like to be part of that plan. Ms. Buchanan asked the Committee to please consider the properties as part of their overall plan.

Todd Woosley stated that he represented Hal Woosley Properties and was a member of the Transportation Commission, but did not represent the Transportation Commission in regard to his public comment. He stated that he wanted to thank the Committee for all of their time and effort. Mr. Woosley stated that this was the first time where he has seen all alternatives offer an opportunity to redevelop under a new system and he believed that was a positive. He stated that he disagreed with the previous public comment and that he did not believe that the transportation system had the capacity for Alternative Two and that certain intersections would fail. Mr. Woosley stated it would require extensive wait times at certain intersections. He stated that the Committee should study the transportation projects and plan the land uses to be more in line with these studies so that they do not create the next South Lake Union. Mr. Woosley stated that the Committee did an excellent job to offer redevelopment opportunity for the study area, but they need to maximize the transportation system capacity.

Andrew Coates stated that he was with KG Investment Properties. He stated he has served on Committees before and understands the amount of effort and energy that goes into the Committee and he just wanted to thank the members. Mr. Coates stated that they were very excited about the multi-modal vision that the Committee has created for an area that is truly unique. He stated that it could be a really special area, but would not be a car centric area. Mr. Coates stated that there is no reason that the Wilburton Commercial Area should be treated differently than Downtown or BelRed in regard to Level of Service. He stated that it is located between the two neighborhoods and will connect them. Mr. Coates stated that the Committee has created a fantastic urban vision, and that the Level of Service standard should reflect that. He stated that he understood that there were concerns over trip generation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), but believed that they are grossly overstated. Mr. Coates stated that the DEIS uses an office trip generation rate that is 50 percent higher than the actual trip rate generated in Downtown Bellevue. He stated that the DEIS does not offer a reduction for light rail trips, those commuting on the Eastside Rail Corridor, or any future transportation technologies. Mr. Coates stated that it grossly overestimates the impacts to the transportation system. He stated as an aside he would be one of those users that used to drive to work, but would rely on the Eastside Rail Corridor and light rail in the future to commute to work. Mr. Coates stated that they wanted to continue to advocate for the at-grade crossing at NE 8th Street and the Eastside Rail Corridor. He stated that it has minimal impact on the transportation system.

Steve Kramer stated that he represented KG Investment Properties. He stated that he believed they were in a catalyst position for the study area. Mr. Kramer stated that they supported Alternative Two, and that it represented a unique opportunity that should not fall short. He stated that in regard to open space, there was a unique opportunity to turn the city owned Lincoln Center property into a park and could be the centerpiece to the vision. Mr. Kramer stated that there is only 1300 feet between NE 8th Street and NE 4th Street. He stated that it could become a world-class pedestrian and cyclists gathering area between the two streets. Mr. Kramer stated that in the center the Grand Connection and Eastside Rail Corridor will interface. He stated that pushing a four-lane road with the NE 6th Street extension to 120th Avenue NE will ruin that opportunity. Mr. Kramer stated that he just visited the High Line in New York City. He stated that 5 million visitors per year visit the High Line and that the same amazing opportunity existed to create a destination experience as well.

5. Adoption of Affordable Housing Principles and Strategies

Mr. Calvert stated that he wanted to address a couple edits and questions regarding the affordable housing principles and strategies. He stated that per the prior meeting requests the term “workforce housing” was added under the third point in the general section. Mr. Calvert stated that was consistent with other principles and strategies. He stated that as recommended, under the sixth point for leverage public resources, a reference was added to recommendation C-1 from the Affordable Housing Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for continuity and consistency to support the TAG’s work.

Mr. Calvert stated that the question was raised as to why the MFTE and incentive systems for affordable housing had different rates of affordability. He stated that the intent is to create more diversity in affordability so that multiple income ranges are addressed. Mr. Calvert stated that it also presents the opportunity for a single development to “stack” affordability rates in a single project. Mr. Jack stated that he noticed the MFTE program uses units for affordability and the incentive system uses square feet, and he asked if there was a way to make that more consistent. Janet Lewine, from the City of Bellevue, stated that they could be layered. Ms. Lewine stated that because the affordability systems were developed at different times, they couldn’t really be brought together while covering all areas of the city.

Mr. Calvert stated that there is a new principle that addressed properties just beyond the study area. He stated he wanted to introduce Nicholas Matz and Janet Lewine from Planning and Community Development and that they were going to further explain the intent of the principle and the opportunity with the additional properties.

Mr. Matz stated that they were present to look at new opportunities to bring more affordable housing to the city. He stated that when Ms. Buchanan and DASH approached the city with the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the Evergreen and Glendale sites they saw an opportunity with the Wilburton Commercial Area. Mr. Matz stated that they wanted to ask the Committee to make a recommendation to extend the study area to include the two properties so that they would not have to pursue a Comprehensive Plan Amendment individually.

Mr. Matz stated that the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process allows them to consider changing the allowable density on a site and align that with other community visions and goals. He stated that regardless of the Committee decision the DASH application will move forward, but there existed an opportunity to bring the two projects together. Mr. Matz stated that a policy of Comprehensive Plan Amendments was to find existing work programs that may be more suitable to address an amendment. He stated that creates a rare opportunity to align an affordable housing provider and the Wilburton Commercial Area project. Mr. Matz stated that a memo was provided to the Committee that outlined the opportunity that existed, and that he wanted to also explain what would happen moving forward.

Mr. Matz said the question of appropriate land use on the site is a key question. He stated that DASH has been on the site since 1969. Mr. Matz stated that the property is similarly situated as other properties in the study area such as proximity to light rail and other infrastructure. He stated that is very beneficial for those that may not be able to afford a car, and that proximity to the infrastructure is important for affordable housing. Mr. Matz stated that the properties specifically address the Committee’s support to pursue unique opportunities, partnerships, and publicly owned assets.

Mr. Matz stated that they reviewed the DEIS, and it represents a mitigation opportunity for affordable housing. He stated that they are asking the Committee to consider adding the properties as part of their final recommendations. Mr. Matz stated that City Council would make the final decision, and that they are only making a recommendation.

Ms. Lewine stated that she wanted to correct that the buildings have been there since 1969, but DASH has owned the property since the 1990's. She stated that including these properties aligns with the City's affordable housing strategy to increase affordable units over the next 10 years. Ms. Lewine stated that the proposal from DASH is an opportunity to increase density and flexibility, but is executed in a context of a larger planning process and not on their own. She stated that one of the affordable housing strategies is to increase density on properties already owned by non-profits and are multi-family, which the DASH proposal supports. Ms. Lewine stated that this mitigates the challenge of non-profits not being able to afford land for affordable housing.

Mr. Renn asked if the proposal was to increase density on both the Evergreen and Glendale properties. Ms. Lewine stated that it was only for the Glendale property. Mr. Renn stated that he wanted to verify the addition of the Evergreen property was to connect the study area to the Glendale property but not to increase density on both. He stated that he wanted to be careful and make sure that if the properties are added that they wouldn't be at the same density to what they have considered to the west. Mr. Renn stated that there should be continuity with the surrounding townhomes. Mr. Matz stated that was also considered, and that as part of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process it would take the surrounding context into consideration. He stated that they would also ask the Committee to make their recommendation regarding density if they wanted to include the properties.

Mr. McEachran asked if the Evergreen property was senior affordable housing and if the Glendale property was workforce housing. Ms. Buchanan confirmed that was correct. Mr. McEachran stated that the TAG wanted to see bold and collaborative action, and he stated this fit the goal. Co-chair Wu stated that she is supportive of including affordable housing, but wanted clarification of process. Mr. Matz stated the Committee would determine appropriate density and that the Final Environmental Impact Statement would address other impacts associated with adding the sites. He stated that Council would make the final determination on whether to implement amendments and code changes that would include those properties. Mr. Matz stated that if DASH proceeded on their own, it would still include some environmental analysis but wouldn't be linked to supporting opportunities such as the Committee vision.

Mr. Johnson asked if this was considered as part of the BelRed lookback project. Mr. Matz stated that the properties are not within the existing BelRed boundary. Mr. Johnson asked if the properties were in the Wilburton subarea but not in the study area. Mr. Matz responded that was correct. Mr. Johnson asked what the implications would be of a zoning change. Mr. Matz stated that current zoning is R-20 which is measured in units per acre. He stated that the zoning could be changed to NMU which would measure density, rather than actual units. Mr. Matz stated that NMU is a good choice to measure affordable housing and would be consistent with the Committee's discussion on density and height.

Mr. Hamlin stated that he liked the idea of extending the study area, but asked if included a third property that intersects with the two subject properties. Mr. Matz stated that DASH did not own that property so it would not be included. He stated that property was also zoned for office which did not make it as appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan

Amendments. Mr. Hamlin stated he supported the addition of the properties but it could also create challenges if surrounding properties also began to request to be added to the process. Mr. Matz stated that context is considered, but he stated that he did not believe that the more mature communities around the properties would be interested in being included in any amendments. He stated that would also consider the context of BelRed and the Wilburton vision.

Co-chair Wu stated that she was very supportive of additional affordable housing, but stated she was unclear in relationship to density. Mr. Matz stated that they hadn't asked the Committee for that opinion yet, but rather the inclusion of the properties as part of the study area. Mr. Renn stated that the context for these properties is different from the rest of the study area. Mr. Calvert stated that if they referenced their transect that they developed their original distribution of density, this area would be more consistent with the B-2 type of density which represented town homes or smaller apartment buildings. He stated that would be a maximum height of 55', but that the Committee could also apply additional design principles.

Co-chair Barksdale asked if there was a motion to recommend that the DASH properties be included as part of the study area, in addition to the changes discussed earlier in the meeting.

Co-chair Wu stated that she would like to include an amendment that would limit the height between 35 and 55 feet for future development on the parcels.

❖ **Action Item:** *Mr. McEachran motioned to include the amendment regarding height limit. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamlin. Mr. Johnson abstained from the vote. The amendment was approved by all other Committee members.*

Co-chair Barksdale asked if there was a motion to include the Evergreen and Glendale properties as a recommendation to expand the study area, in addition to the changes of item 3 and item 6 of the affordable housing principles.

Mr. Johnson asked for discussion of the overall motion and amendment. He stated that he believes it is supportive of strategy C-1 of the TAG, but did not favor amending the study area on the last meeting. Mr. Johnson stated that he preferred if the Committee would state a position on the project to allow threshold review to continue. Mr. Matz stated that was already being executed, and that this motion will provide Council with an alternative path to move the DASH properties forward, if they chose to implement. Mr. Johnson stated that he was concerned about amending the study area boundary. Mr. Calvert stated that this motion was not to change the study area boundary, but to make a recommendation for Council to consider adding the properties to the study area when the project moves forward to Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Land Use Code updates. He stated that the recommendation would be taken to Council and that Council will take action. Ms. Lau Hui expressed concern about recommending a height too soon. Mr. Matz stated that the height would be tested as part of the FEIS and could be adjusted.

Ms. Kumar asked that if they made the recommendation would it leave an opportunity open following the Committee to add even more properties that the Committee would not be able to address. Mr. Calvert stated the Committee was not modifying the study area boundary, but that it was recommending to Council that they should adjust the study area boundary. He stated that the focus should be on vision and not on policy. Ms. Lewine stated that DASH has already applied individually, so the question is whether they should be considered as part of the larger initiative and not on their own.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Mr. McEachran motioned to recommend that the DASH properties be included as part of the study area, in addition to the changes discussed earlier in the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamlin. Co-chair Wu abstained. The motion was approved by all other Committee members.*

6. Selection, refinement, and final considerations of the Wilburton Commercial Area Vision and Report Transmittal Letter

Mr. Calvert stated that in their packet they received the public comments on the DEIS. He stated there were a total of 34 comments from 32 individuals or organizations. Mr. Calvert stated the comments included; support for investment in the study area, support and criticism for the change in level of service standard, strong support for the improved cyclists and pedestrian connectivity including the NE 8th Eastside Rail Corridor at-grade crossing, the smaller block configuration, inquiries regarding the transportation modeling process, inclusion of Lake Bellevue as part of the study, and concerns over height and density.

Mr. Hamlin asked if there was also support for a combination of at-grade and over crossing for NE 8th and the Eastside Rail Corridor. Mr. Calvert confirmed that there was support for both to exist. Mr. Calvert stated that staff and the consultants will respond to each of the comments and they will be incorporated as part of the FEIS. He stated that the FEIS will also include corrections to any errors and the potential for additional analysis.

Mr. Calvert stated that the survey between the March and April meeting was to assist in identifying preferred recommendations and to facilitate a more organized discussion for the meeting. He stated that they wanted to walk through the results, justifications, and recognizing different opinions in some of the key decisions. He stated that Kevin McDonald from the Transportation Department was present to assist in the discussion.

Mr. McDonald stated that the Committee has consistently expressed a desire for mobility for all modes in the study area. He stated that the transportation modeling that helps inform the recommendations provides only one piece of information for mobility in the study area. Mr. McDonald stated that some of the assumptions in the model may not be true in years to come. He stated that in public comment the notion of trip generation came up, and how people will move between buildings and other parts of Bellevue. Mr. McDonald stated that the observation in public comment was correct, and overestimated the number of trips. He stated that the expectation is that as the Wilburton Commercial Area matures as a mixed-use center and mobility options increase that less users will rely on private vehicles.

Mr. McDonald stated that the survey results point to a recommendation that the NE 6th Street extension should be terminated at 116th Avenue NE. He stated that if it were extended to 120th Avenue NE would not create an intersection at 116th Avenue NE because it would create a flyover. Mr. McDonald stated that it would create delays at other intersections as well as a poor urban design result. He stated that if it did go to 120th Avenue NE it would allow for better transit access. Mr. McDonald stated that terminating at 116th Avenue NE would create significant delays at other intersections. He stated that the decision from the survey would be to terminate NE 6th Street at 116th Avenue NE

Mr. McDonald stated that regarding 116th Avenue NE the survey recommended a boulevard treatment that provided on street parking and bike lanes. He stated the major

variable was the location of the bike lanes. Mr. McDonald referenced a graphic that showed the bike lanes being buffered with a 2' stripped buffer and the parking adjacent to the curb. He stated another composition would be to switch the position of the bike lane and the parking so that the bike lanes were internal to the parking to provide another measure of safety for cyclists. Mr. McDonald stated another method would be to put the bike lane behind the curb so that it was adjacent to pedestrians and could potentially use the sidewalk.

Co-chair Wu stated that she would like to see the cyclists raised slightly to make it clear that it is a bike lane. She stated that having the bike lanes should be protected. Ms. Washburn stated that the bar should be set high for pedestrian and cyclist connectivity. Mr. McDonald stated that the configuration details could be worked out by staff. Co-chair Wu stated that she preferred that the bike lanes be internal to the parked cars. Ms. Washburn agreed. Mr. Renn stated he did not believe cyclists should be sharing sidewalk space with pedestrians. Mr. Pardoe stated that he agreed with Co-chair Wu to create separation between pedestrians and cyclists. Mr. Calvert stated that what was important is the placement of the bike lane. Mr. Jack stated that the bike lane should be internal of the on-street parking. Ms. Washburn stated that the cyclists should not be protecting the parked cars, but the parked cars should be protecting the cyclists. Mr. Pardoe stated that he trusted City staff to design something safe. Mr. Hamlin agreed with Mr. Pardoe and stated that the ERC will encourage slower cycling so that 116th Avenue NE could have a separated bike lane intended for commuting purposes.

Ms. Kumar asked if the on-street parking was along the entirety of 116th Avenue NE. Mr. Calvert responded that the design hasn't been completed yet because there is not certainty of what the uses will be along the street. He stated that the real question at hand is there is an original streetscape plan, and whether the Committee would like to move the location of the bike lanes internal of the parked cars per the survey results.

Co-chair Barksdale asked for a motion to provide a vision statement that cyclists should be separated from automobile traffic while minimizing potential conflicts with pedestrian traffic.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Co-chair Wu motioned to approve the vision statement regarding the configuration of 116th Avenue NE. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pardoe. Co-chair Wu abstained. The motion was voted yay:13, nay:1*

Mr. Calvert stated that the decision for 116th Avenue to serve as a grand boulevard was nearly unanimous. He stated that there were a few comments regarding turning movements and landscaping, but those would be addressed during design.

Mr. Calvert stated that the Committee was asked if they approved of the street network developed at prior meetings, or if they would make changes to it. He stated that the changes recommended were to add additional streets. Mr. Calvert stated that they were not determining the exact grid, but they could add additional opportunities to the original diagram.

Co-chair Barksdale asked if there was a motion to amend the original street network diagram with the statement of adding additional opportunities for connectivity.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Mr. Pardoe motioned to approve the additional statement amended to the diagram. Mr. Hamlin seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

Mr. McDonald stated that the crossing for NE 8th and the Eastside Rail Corridor considered at grade and an overcrossing. Mr. Calvert stated that 72 percent of the respondents believed there should be some form of at grade crossing as a stand alone or in addition to an overcrossing. He stated that comments were received that expressed concern of how the over ramp would interact with potential land uses. Mr. Renn stated that the desire was to not just have a ramp and overcrossing for the Eastside Rail Corridor, but to mitigate the need for a ramp. Mr. McDonald stated that the survey demonstrated that at grade options should be provided at NE 4th Street in addition to NE 8th Street as well.

Mr. McDonald stated that the Committee was strongly in favor of changing the Level of Service to be consistent with Downtown and BelRed. He stated that the consequences of retaining the level of service was not conducive to their land use vision. Mr. McDonald stated that either action alternative would exceed the existing level of service. He stated the other option would be to expand the existing roads. Mr. McDonald stated that mobility options and the vision for a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood encourages the change in level of service. The Committee agreed that their opinion on changing the level of service remains the same since the survey.

Mr. Calvert stated that the Committee established a priority of open space as such:

1. Eastside Rail Corridor
2. Central Civic Space
3. Enhanced Natural Systems
4. Pocket Parks and Plazas

He stated that there were comments regarding more emphasis on enhanced natural systems and plazas, but stated that the priority list does not preclude the other considerations from occurring.

Mr. Calvert stated that the Design Principles were supported by a majority of the Committee members. He stated that some amendments included emphasis on a connection to the Lake to Lake Trail and asked if the Committee agreed with the amendment. Mr. Pardoe asked for clarification on the location of the Lake to Lake Trail. Mr. McDonald stated that the trail was part of Main Street.

Co-chair Barksdale asked if there was a motion to include connections to the Lake to Lake Trail as part of the Design Principles.

❖ **Action Item:** *Mr. Hamlin motioned to include connections to the Lake to Lake Trail as part of the Design Principles. Mr. Pardoe seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

Mr. Calvert stated that there was also a request to place a stronger emphasis on the smaller blocks within the study area per the recommended connectivity map.

7. Adjourn

Co-chair Wu adjourned the meeting at 8:14 p.m.