

**East Bellevue Community Council**  
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

September 4, 2012  
6:30 p.m.

Lake Hills Library Meeting Room  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Chair Kasner, Vice Chair Seal, and Councilmembers Capron, Gooding\* and Hughes

STAFF: Antoinette Pratt, Senior Land Use Planner  
Sally Nichols, Associate Planner  
Carl Wilson, Senior Development Review Engineer

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Chair Kasner presiding.

2. **ROLL CALL**

The Clerk called the roll, all members present with exception of Mr. Gooding who arrived at 6:53 PM.

Chair Kasner led the flag salute.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS - WRITTEN AND ORAL:** None.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Hughes requested an amendment to the agenda to include review of a draft letter to City Council related to expansion of the off-leash facility at Robinswood Park under Unfinished Business. Mr. Capron moved to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Hughes seconded the motion which carried by a vote of 4-0.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING**

- (a) Sammamish High School Conditional Use Application to demolish existing building with exception of the Performing Arts Center and replace with new 3 story facility

Ms. Antoinette Pratt provided the staff overview. The Bellevue School District is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to demolish Sammamish High School with the exception of the 18,000 square foot Performing Arts Center. The new facility will be 3 stories to serve students 9th through 12th grades. No changes are proposed to the existing athletic fields. Site improvements include parking, landscaping, and new concession/ticket booth. This project will be constructed in four phases to accommodate active use during the school year. Portables will be added to the

- Mr. Gooding arrived at 6:53 PM.

site to aid this phased occupancy approach. Site size is 38 acres. She noted that the new facility has been designed to soften the height of the existing Performing Arts Center by wrapping the new structure around this feature. This is a Process III application and will return to the Community Council for final approval.

Rebecca Baibak, Integrus Architecture, described the project and proposed traffic flow and phasing. She stated the facility has been designed with large building setbacks to accommodate the proposed height; a large student open space south of the main building entry for student gatherings; and, the relocation of parking to the south and west portions of the site.

In response to Chair Kasner, Ms. Baibak stated the Main Street ingress has moved further to the east.

Responding to audience participant, Ms. Baibak stated Sammamish High School does not have school buses that service the high school but, instead, rely on public transportation. However, all drives and turnarounds both in the south parking lot or east drop-off area allows for school bus turnaround.

Ms. Baibak introduced the Sammamish High School Principle, Tom Duenwald.

In response to Mr. Seal, Ms. Baibak stated the ingress/egress from Main Street serves the drop-off area, while the ingress/egress to the parking areas is off 140<sup>th</sup>.

In response to Mr. Kasner, Ms. Baibak described the ingresses and egresses off 140<sup>th</sup>, similar to the number of ingresses/egresses currently available. Parking can accommodate approximately 506/507 vehicles.

Matt Palmer, Transportation Engineer, stated parking studies were done to determine parking demand of students and staff. To date, parking is only utilized at 45% to 50% with 260 possible spaces. He stated current use is underutilized.

Ms. Baibak stated proposed parking is intended, not only for student/staff parking but also event parking.

Mr. Seal asked if there would be a possibility of a traffic signal at the south end of the parking area?

Responding, Mr. Palmer stated the traffic counts do not drive the need for a signal, however, the provision for the northbound right turn pocket is proposed.

In response to Mr. Kasner, Mr. McCloud stated the growth projection for the District overall indicates the need for the currently proposed capacity. He stated there has been discussion over the years about going from 4 high schools to 3, but, the last 4 years have seen an increase in student enrollment district-wide from about 15,300 up to about 18,300. Current numbers are just shy of 18,000. He stated that there is definitely a need to make sure that we have enough

capacity at Sammamish High School. He noted, due to the economic downturn, the migration from private to public schools.

Responding to Mr. Seal, Mr. McCloud stated long term planning indicates the need for an additional elementary school within the next 5 years.

Ms. Pratt reported that feedback to date has been about traffic.

Ms. Baibak explained the timeline/phasing of construction. Completion is anticipated in 3 years.

In response to Mr. Kasner's suggestion to access the parking areas from Main Street as well, Ms. Baibak stated the goal of a single entry to ensure the safety of students and event goers.

Mr. Duenwald stated the goal of separating pedestrian for vehicle traffic. He noted the greenspace on the northwest corner of the campus and its use as separation for the apartments.

Responding to Mr. Erwin, Nick Haugen, the project's landscape architect, stated there are approximately 300 plus spaces in the south parking area.

Mr. Wilson, Senior Development Review Engineer stated some of the concerns raised tonight are being considered by the City's Transportation Review, in particular, getting more access to Main Street.

Mr. Kasner stated he appreciates the attention to safety within the design. He noted his sensitivity to green buffers.

Harry West stated his concern regarding construction hours. Ms. Pratt responded that the normal hours of construction are Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM and Saturdays, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Hours may differ slightly given the project's designation as an essential facility.

Ms. Rossman questioned the status of the fir trees along 140<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Haugen stated an arborist has reviewed all the trees on site and has determined that some of the trees along 140<sup>th</sup> are in poor health. The trees in poor health will be removed while the healthy trees will be retained.

Chris Areandel stated, once the project is done, his hope that pride in the new facility might spillover into student academic achievements. Principal Duenwald agreed, providing an example of student pride in the form of a mural paid for by the student body dedicated to the Class of 2012.

Michael Richardson asked if all buildings would be multi-storied. Ms. Baibak responded affirmatively, stating, however, not all will have the same number of stories.

Mr. Richardson observed that although Sammamish High School does not receive school bus service, there will be a number of field trips to the Performing Arts Center and athletic events within and outside the District that will utilize bus transport; and, that parking lot design should take that into consideration.

Bob Leingang stated his concern about foot traffic, stating the loss of student access to the south.

Mr. Palmer responded there is a bus stop at the corner of SE 8<sup>th</sup> and 140<sup>th</sup> where students can walk up the west side of 140<sup>th</sup> and cross at the crosswalk further north and which ties to the front entrance of the building.

Chair Kasner seeing no one further wishing to testify closed the courtesy hearing.

Chair Kasner called a short recess at 7:16 PM.

(b) Puget Sound Energy Transmission Line Conditional Use Application connecting Phantom Lake and Lake Hills substations

Chair Kasner reconvened the meeting at 7:26 PM and opened the courtesy hearing.

Phyllis Egts stated her concern that this project will impact property values. She stated she is not agreeable to selling any portion of her property to accommodate the proposed transmission line. She stated her support for undergrounding the new line on 156<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Kasner explained the public process.

Sally Nichols provided a brief staff overview of the proposed Puget Sound Energy Transmission Line that will link the Phantom Lake and Lake Hills Substations at the corner of SE 16<sup>th</sup> and 156<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kasner stated his frustration with the process due to this proposal's quasi-judicial nature prohibiting him from attending any of the public information meetings.

Andy Swayne, Municipal Liaison Manager for PSE, provided his background with PSE and explained the progression of this project over the last five years. He stated earlier iteration of this proposal actually goes back twenty years. PSE recognized the need to build a new transmission line connecting these two substations to increase electrical reliability. There are three substations currently fed only by single transmission lines. If something should happen to that single line, power to the substation would be lost, making all customers served by those substations vulnerable to power loss. He explained the often timely options that can be employed to remedy such power outages and stated that very few substations in the total county's urbanized service area are served only by a single transmission line. In terms of giving this local area the same level of systems support, PSE determined it was time to move this project forward.

Chair Kasner read the questions and answers printed in the packet into the record. Council asked additional clarifying questions to which Mr. Swayne responded.

Mr. Marvin Kananen asked if there is only one main power line going into Redmond. Mr. Swayne responded there are several transmission lines that bring power to the Lakeside switching station. There are a total of fourteen lines to Redmond.

Ms. Rossman asked if a greater load is anticipated. Mr. Swayne responded that this proposal has very little to do with how load has grown over time. The question is, given the PSE operating guidelines today, should this group of customers served by these facilities be exposed to a lower level of reliability. From a policy perspective, such a lower level of reliability is not appropriate. He stated each of these three substations have the capacity to serve the surrounding areas.

Unidentified audience participant asked if over the last twenty or so years if there have been other situations where PSE has gone from one line to two lines and the reactions of those impacted. Mr. Swayne stated PSE had attempted a similar project on Bainbridge Island. Continuing the response, Mr. McMeekin relayed a somewhat similar project in Watcom County and the mitigation employed to address impacts.

In response to Ms. Rossman, Mr. McMeekin noted that this current project is designed around the retention of as many trees as possible.

Mr. Hughes noted the tagged trees along 140<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Nichols explained that those trees are part of the 140<sup>th</sup> overlay project.

Michael Richardson stated the system in his neighborhood are underground and have experienced about ten power outages in the same timeframe, most of which were due to the power station. He questioned why there has been no consideration of undergrounding the new transmission line.

Mr. Boettinger stated there have been basically four outages in ten years all remedied within a few hours. He stated to have less outages he is being asked to put up with lines going down 148<sup>th</sup> and double lines down 156<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. He does not see the value in this tradeoff.

Chair Kasner continued with the printed questions and answers for the record.

Mr. Swayne clarified that building this proposed transmission line will not change what happens in the distribution system itself. Similarly, having this transmission line is not going to affect other problems in the distribution system. He explained the transmission system moves power around the region and City. Each local substation, which is a smaller network of distribution operating at a low voltage, brings power to area homes. One does not replace the other but instead work in tandem.

There was discussion related to the cost of undergrounding versus the cost of the current proposal. Mr. Swayne estimated the typical cost of undergrounding at four to ten times the cost of building equivalent lines overhead.

Mr. Swayne described the loop accomplished by the new transmission line and the system redundancy created. He stated that distribution of build costs would be shared by all rate payers.

Mr. Palmer questioned the proposed distance between poles and placement at edge of roadway. Mr. Swayne responded that today's placement depends on road configuration. But, generally,

poles are placed towards edge of right of way if possible. PSE's design guidelines call for placement two feet from face of curb.

In response to Mr. Kasner, Mr. Swayne stated the PSE policy related to the purchase of right of way/easements. Offers are based on property/fair market values and impacts anticipated, and are typically negotiated one on one with individual property owners. He noted PSE is granted condemnation authority under state law.

Mr. Rick Conte requested better explanation of homeowners' rights under these circumstances and how the value of the appraisal is reached.

Mr. Swayne explained the easement acquisition process.

Mr. Ken Koken stated he is not faulting the need for a redundant power system, but, was concerned about the surveyor stakes placed about 27 feet in from the asphalt into the parking line 10 to 12 feet from his building. He continued, stating if the stakes represent the easement needed, he will lose control of all his plantings and north end of his property. Mr. Koken stated such a loss would be a quality of life issue.

Mr. Conte expressed his concern related to possible easement acquisitions and impact on structures such as patios and decks.

Mr. Swayne stated typically there is a standard easement form that starts at a generic level and individualized depending on the circumstance. He explained that when PSE acquires an easement from a private property owner, it is for PSE use and PSE use alone. Under federal law, PSE must make their poles available to other communication providers but does not allow trespass onto private property through the use of PSE's negotiated easements.

Unidentified speaker stated his understanding of Mr. Swayne's comment that PSE will allow the use of its poles by other communication providers. Mr. Swayne continued his response, providing a hypothetical example.

Unidentified speaker stated his point was that PSE will string three cables on the pole and, over time, could allow other carriers use of the pole as well. He opined that such additional lines will increase the blight in neighborhoods. He noted that he is not convinced the proposed line is even necessary at this time and is concerned with impact to property values.

Chair Kasner stated the December report identified four potential routes. Currently under consideration is only one of those routes. He asked how the route selection was narrowed down.

Mr. Swayne stated, over the past five years, PSE has spent a lot of time and effort with members of the community to identify the preferred route. After much discussion, the route decision was based on the least overall impact to the smallest number of residential properties.

Mr. Kasner stated he believed the level of knowledge of the general community related to this issue is incredibly low.

Mr. Swayne stated PSE mailed invitations to at least three separate public meetings over the last three years to every residential and commercial address throughout the entire area.

Mr. Kasner asked, as this application moves forward, if the Community Council has the opportunity to look at the outreach to date. Mr. Swayne noted that the outreach accomplished to date is summarized in the application package.

Mr. Livingston stated he felt misled when he was approached regarding an easement prior to permit application.

Unidentified speaker stated that PSE already has huge poles in the right of way on the north side of the street. He asked why PSE needs to trash the opposite side of the street with additional poles and transmission lines.

Ms. Nichols spoke to the conditional use process, explaining the noticing accomplished to date.

Mr. Gooding asked if alternative routes could still be suggested. Mr. Swayne stated that PSE has done an alternative siting analysis but, through the formal review process, the potential to suggest alternative routes is possible. However, he stated he did not want to leave the impression that PSE is open to considering a different route. PSE is open to considering refinements to this selected route to mitigate any adverse impacts to the best of its ability.

Continuing his response to Mr. Gooding, Mr. Swayne stated PSE considered four alternative routes in its analysis but had studied in the past five years approximately twenty-two different scenarios that were discarded due to technical issues or community objections.

In response to Mr. Conte, Chair Kasner explained the Community Council's approval/disapproval authority and process of consideration.

Mr. Richardson asked if the Community Council had a subsequent meeting, would they be able to discuss this matter without PSE present. Chair Kasner responded absolutely not, such a meeting would need to be noticed, to allow all parties the opportunity to participate.

Ms. Nichols explained the noticing requirements and the process to which one becomes a party of record.

Unidentified speaker stated this has been an informative meeting tonight. PSE had come to a meeting at the Lake Hills Neighborhood Association going back several years about this very topic. He stated he thought the City of Bellevue, PSE and this Community Council have certainly tried to bring this matter front and center. He questioned the need to go forward with this proposal given the sparse history of past outages.

Mr. Palmer stated he did not live in the affected area, but, as a rate payer asked the return of investment.

Mr. Swayne stated the misperception that all improvements made by PSE are about money. PSE is different from most businesses, as it is a regulated monopoly by the state charged with providing a public service. Therefore, PSE must be able to convince the state regulators that all investments made are prudent in the sense they are necessary, well-grounded and warranted in the interest of the rate payers. If PSE fails that test, it is disallowed to include those capital costs into the rates. PSE has a heightened sensitivity to the investments made and the value to its customers.

Mr. Swayne stated that PSE is firmly convinced that this project is warranted. Route selection is not driven by cost but by what is best for the community as a whole. More information is available at PSE.com in the My Neighborhood Section.

Mr. Seal stated whatever the decision made by this Council it must comply with the decision criteria listed in the Land Use Code.

Ms. Nichols stated the alignment has been selected by PSE but what it looks like is still in flux. She explained that it is the City's job to make this project the best it can possibly be. She invited ideas to make this project better.

Mr. Richardson questioned any consideration of an underground route.

Mr. McMeekin responded that a rough estimate for undergrounding the SE 16<sup>th</sup> section is approximately \$15 million. He noted undergrounding or overhead lines would require the removal of trees.

Ms. Nichols responded to Mr. Boettinger regarding previous public response to this project. She stated the majority of people along SE 16<sup>th</sup> were concerned due to the double impact to their area.

Mr. Kananen suggested the easiest, straightest route.

Mr. Capron clarified that the route was selected by PSE.

Mr. Swayne stated his understanding of the Hearing Examiner's process and recommendation to the City Council. The route selection process and decision is summarized in the PSE application and supports best fit and least impactful based on the public input and the research that has been done. The City, though its review, may find fault with the analysis and could raise issues.

In response to Mr. Kasner, Ms. Nichols stated the City's review will be based on whether or not this project meets the decision criteria set forth in the Land Use Code.

Seeing no one further wishing to testify, Chair Kasner thanked the audience, proponent and City staff for their participation and closed the courtesy hearing at 9:41 PM.

6. **RESOLUTIONS:** - None.

7. **REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS:** None.

8. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:** None.

9. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

10. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

(a) Jr. Taxing Districts, Municipal Corporations & Local Govt. Finance Committee

Chair Kasner reported the Jr. Taxing Districts, Municipal Corporations & Local Govt. Finance Committee will meet again in Olympia at the end of September or early October. He stated that the Joint Community Council Legislative Committee will be following discussions related to the continuance of community councils.

(b) Robinswood Off Leash Plan

Mr. Hughes noted the draft letter to City Council in Council's desk packet related to the Robinswood Off Leash Plan and requested Council feedback. Mr. Capron moved to send letter and Mr. Seal seconded the motion. Motion to send the letter to City Council carried 5-0.

11. **NEW BUSINESS:** None.

12. **CONTINUED COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None.

14. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Councilmember Seal moved to approve the summary minutes of August 7, 2012.  
Councilmember Hughes seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

15. **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Seal moved to adjourn. Councilmember Gooding seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

At 9:52 p.m., Chair Kasner declared the meeting adjourned.

Michelle Murphy, CMC  
Deputy City Clerk