

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

October 21, 2013  
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Lee, Deputy Mayor Robertson, and Councilmembers Balducci, Chelminiak, Davidson, and Stokes

ABSENT: Councilmember Wallace

1. Executive Session

Deputy Mayor Robertson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m., and declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 45 minutes to discuss one item of potential litigation.

The meeting resumed at 6:43 p.m., with Mayor Lee presiding.

2. Study Session

- (a) Regional Solid Waste Management Update on King County Transfer Station Review Recommendation

Acting City Manager Brad Miyake opened staff's presentation regarding the draft King County Transfer Plan Review report and recommendations.

Alison Bennett, Utilities Policy Advisor, recalled that the King County Solid Waste Division's 2006 Base Plan contained stations in Shoreline (opened in 2009), Bow Lake (opened October 2013), and Factoria (to be rebuilt) as well as future stations in the Northeast county and South county areas. Under the Base Plan scenario, stations at Algona, Houghton (Kirkland) and Renton would be closed.

At the time that the 2006 plan was developed, the City and King County agreed to not expand the Factoria Transfer Station onto the adjacent parcel abutting Eastgate Way. The area was expected to continue to develop as a commercial center and it serves as a gateway into Bellevue from I-90. Additional concerns were traffic impacts and regional equity.

Ms. Bennett said King County has invested \$21 million in the Factoria site to date. Since 2006, the City adopted the Eastgate/I-90 Corridor Plan, which solidifies the City's vision for the area. The plan specifically designates the upper Eastgate Way property for office development with 10-12 story buildings. Despite the 2006 agreement with the County, Ms. Bennett said that some

of the current alternatives under review include using that property adjacent to the existing transfer station along Eastgate Way.

Ms. Bennett said the King County Solid Waste Division's current recommendation is a variation on the Base Plan. It delays the opening date for a new Northeast station and recommends moving forward with rebuilding the Factoria station on its existing (lower) site, while studying whether additional space and services could be added to the new Factoria station that could affect a Northeast station.

The draft Transfer Plan Review report states several times that siting a transfer station on the upper Eastgate Way property would be incompatible with Bellevue's Land Use Code and adopted I-90 Corridor Plan, and that the City would unlikely permit development of the site as a transfer station. However, the current recommendation language is ambiguous about the future use of the upper Eastgate Way property.

Ms. Bennett said staff is seeking Council direction regarding the draft comment letter to the King County Solid Waste Division, which is provided in the desk packet. The letter is intended to remind the County of its 2006 agreement with the City and to request that the ambiguous language be replaced with a definitive statement that the County will not seek to expand the Factoria transfer station on the upper Eastgate Way property now or in the future.

Ms. Bennett said the comment period ends on October 23, and the County's deadline for finalizing the entire plan is November 27.

Deputy Mayor Robertson questioned whether the County's plans would affect traffic movements on SE 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. She noted there are frequently pedestrians and runners along that street and she would want some safety measures along the road.

With regard to the draft letter, Ms. Robertson expressed support for sending the comments to the County. She suggested attaching a copy of the Eastgate/I-90 Corridor Plan, which includes plans for housing to support Bellevue College, office buildings, and potentially transit-oriented mixed use development.

Joyce Nichols, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, agreed that would be useful in communicating the City's plans to King County. She said a County staff person served on the Eastgate/I-90 study committee. Ms. Bennett said the plan includes a specific section on the upper Eastgate Way property.

Councilmember Chelminiak expressed support for the letter and questioned whether the City plans to offer comments on the other alternatives. Ms. Bennett said the intent of the letter was to comment specifically on the County's recommended plan.

Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Ms. Nichols said King County staff held three workshops to discuss all of the scenarios that had been recommended for study. City staff attended all three workshops and continued to support the Base Plan as well as the hybrid plan that seemed to accomplish the majority of the City's objectives. The other alternatives were deficient in terms of meeting the Council's previous direction to staff to not use the upper Eastgate Way property.

Mayor Lee said Bellevue needs to be at the table to give the County a better understanding of the City's position. He suggested that the City could help the County identify a better solution.

Councilmember Chelminiak observed that the draft letter sounds like what the City does not want instead of what the City does want. He believes the letter needs to clearly articulate the City's current position. He observed that the upper Eastgate Way parcel is an opportunity for the King County Solid Waste Division to raise money by selling the property.

As a related issue, Mr. Chelminiak recalled that the City did not sign on to the County's extended Interlocal Agreement. He suggested a discussion about where Bellevue's future transfer station might be after 2028.

Mayor Lee suggested that the letter address the County's current specific recommendation. However, more work will be needed to communicate more of the City's plans and priorities.

Responding to Councilmember Stokes, Ms. Bennett said the County's current recommendation is a variation of Alternative A, reflected in the added language regarding studying whether additional space and services could be added to the new Factoria station that could affect a Northeast station.

Mr. Stokes said this plan was presented to the Regional Policy Committee and the Sound Cities Association (SCA) caucus. The latter supports Alternative D (i.e., Bow Lake, Shoreline, and Factoria stations) as well as an understanding that Bellevue's position is against expanding the Factoria site onto the Eastgate Way parcel.

Mr. Stokes said this will ultimately go before the King County Council for a final decision. He suggested sending the letter to the Solid Waste Division while also having conversations with the King County Council. He believes Bellevue can achieve the SCA's support in opposing the use of the Eastgate Way parcel. He said there is no consensus regarding the South County facility.

Mr. Stokes said he informed the Regional Policy Committee that he served on the Eastgate/I-90 committee and that using the upper Eastgate Way parcel is not an option for expanding the transfer station. He concurred with Councilmember Chelminiak's suggestion that the letter be more clear about what the City would like to see. With regard to Bellevue's potential transfer station beyond 2028, Mr. Stokes observed that the future of solid waste technology is unknown and might utilize very different facilities.

Councilmember Balducci agreed that it is more effective to state what the City does want instead of only what it does not want, and she concurred with including the Eastgate/I-90 Corridor plan in the submittal to the County. She noted that part of the reason that the Eastgate Way property was identified for more intense development is its proximity to the transit center. She suggested adding a statement about the increased value and development potential based on being near the transit center.

Ms. Nichols reiterated that the City and County previously agreed to potentially expanding the Factoria transfer station, but without using the upper Eastgate Way parcel. Councilmember

Balducci said she would like the County to retain that parcel as a temporary park and ride lot throughout the redevelopment of that area. However, she could ultimately support suggesting that the County sell the parcel in order to help keep rates down.

Deputy Mayor Robertson concurred with those comments. Responding to Ms. Robertson, Ms. Nichols confirmed that staff has received sufficient direction to revise the letter and to have the Mayor review it before submitting it on Wednesday.

Councilmember Stokes said new technologies in the future could eliminate the need for the two new transfer stations reflected in the Base Plan. He suggested that the letter focus on Bellevue's position against using the Eastgate Way property.

Responding to Mayor Lee, Ms. Bennett clarified that staff has shared with the County that the City supports the 2006 Base Plan.

Mr. Chelminiak observed that if the Northeast station is delayed or eliminated and the Houghton station is eliminated or reduced to self-haul only, all waste on the Eastside will come to Bellevue. He believes that is not a good choice.

Councilmember Balducci expressed concern about impacts to traffic and the City's road infrastructure if that were to occur.

Ms. Balducci said she cannot support Alternative D, which is supported by the SCA. That alternative eliminates the Northeast and South stations, which is not in Bellevue's best interest.

Responding to Ms. Balducci, Ms. Nichols said the next steps in the process are to submit comments to staff by Wednesday. Staff will take those comments to the King County Solid Waste Division, which indicates that every comment letter will receive a response. The Solid Waste Division will prepare a recommendation for the King County Council by November 27.

Councilmember Balducci opined that it is important to solidify the City's position at this time.

Responding to Mayor Lee, Ms. Bennett said staff recommends continuing to support the Base Plan from 2006.

Ms. Nichols said the Base Plan was the most expensive option, and one of the reasons for conducting the current review was to reevaluate needs and facilities. She observed that having fewer stations and hauling solid waste longer distances will have costs as well. Most of the cities that participated in the workshops continued to support the Base Plan.

Councilmember Stokes questioned why the County has gone through this new review if there is majority support for the Base Plan. With regard to his role with SCA, he said he never expressed support for expanding the Factoria site. He believes the Council is not in a position to make a decision tonight. Mr. Stokes said the key issue is to ensure that the Eastgate Way property is not included in the County's plan.

Councilmember Chelminiak said he could be supportive of closing the Houghton station, building the Northeast station, and retaining the Factoria station.

Mayor Lee said this is a complex issue and it might not be possible for the Council to give clear direction on a specific plan at this time. The conversation at this point might have to be limited to articulating the City's objectives and interests.

Ms. Nichols said she hears agreement to not expand onto the upper Eastgate Way parcel. The Council is concerned about increased truck traffic as well. The original plan was to rebuild Factoria and to keep the Houghton station open during that construction. Then the Northeast station would be built and Houghton would eventually be closed.

Ms. Nichols said Bellevue and Kirkland are in same position. Kirkland is expecting the Houghton facility to close. She said the County's building of the Northeast station would comply with its previous commitments to Bellevue and Kirkland.

Deputy Mayor Robertson said she does not see any compelling reason to support any deviation from the Base Plan. She believes the Council should continue to support the Base Plan, including its commitments for Bellevue and Kirkland. She agrees that Bellevue does not want the extra truck traffic. Ms. Robertson said the letter to the King County Solid Waste Division should reiterate that Bellevue supports the Base Plan.

Councilmember Stokes said he would support a strong statement against using the Eastgate Way parcel and against Bellevue being the only transfer station for the Eastside. Going beyond that is a leap at this point, in his opinion.

Mayor Lee concurred with Mr. Stokes and observed that there will be a continuing opportunity to comment.

Councilmember Chelminiak said he strongly supports a second transfer facility in Northeast King County, where there is continued growth.

Mayor Lee suggested including that in the letter as well.

Deputy Mayor Robertson said she believes a compromise would be to indicate that Bellevue does not want to be the only station on the Eastside/East King County. If there is not a consensus to explicitly express support for the Base Plan, she can support the language used by Councilmembers Chelminiak and Stokes.

At 7:52 p.m., Mayor Lee declared recess to the Regular Session.

Myrna L. Basich, MMC  
City Clerk

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