

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

June 5, 2014
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-120

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Aznoff, Jullie Gray, Jeanne Grote, Beverly Heyden, Howard Katz, Hannah Kimball, Bill Merriman, Susan Posten, Berta Seltzer, Diana Thompson, Janet Zielasko, Ethan Crawford, Peg Jones

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bob Megargel, Eileen Rasnack, Chris Strand, Mary Watkins, Terri Wilson

STAFF PRESENT: Bo Du & Alex O'Reilly, Department of Parks & Community Services

OTHERS PRESENT: Pat Chiarelli, Congressman Adam Smith's office

RECORDING SECRETARY: Teri Ekstrom

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by Vice-Chair Heyden. Roll was taken and all members were present with the exception of Bob Megargel, Eileen Rasnack, Chris Strand, Mary Watkins, and Terri Wilson.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Visitor Pat Chiarelli, Congressman Adam Smith's office, stated that he was present to listen and relay any relevant information to the office.

Light Rail Station & Hospital Station Access [PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION]

Vice-Chair Heyden introduced Luke Lamon, Sound Transit Community Outreach, and Kate March, City of Bellevue - Community Outreach regarding the Eastlake Project. Vice-Chair Heyden stated that they will present and then questions can be asked after the presentation, with questions limited to one per person and communications limited to 3 minutes each. Once everyone has had a chance to ask a question, members may ask another one if time permits.

Kate March, City of Bellevue – Eastlake Community Outreach, said that she and Luke work closely together on the Eastlake Project. They had the opportunity to meet with the City of Bellevue Transportation Subcommittee last week and talked through some issues and concerns

regarding the Eastlake Project. Because of limited time, they will streamline their presentation to focus on the hospital station.

The nine-member Light Rail Permitting Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was appointed by the City Council to provide community input regarding the project. Mr. Katz has been in attendance at these meetings. Last night, the committee transmitted two recommendations for Sound Transit: 1) examine using various seat heights at the hospital station and 2) look into installing upward-lighting at stations as notification system. Sound Transit will move forward with these two recommendations.

Mr. Lamon recapped for the group that the Transportation and Housing Sub-Committee meeting two weeks ago, at which, he and Paul Cornish, City of Bellevue project manager, went through the animation of the Eastlink Project and explained the various stations and features and found the conversation productive.

The Eastlink Project is an extension of the existing link light rail project that starts in the International District in Seattle and will go to the Overlake Transit Center in Redmond (14 miles), which includes 10 stations. Sound Transit is beginning construction in 2016 with revenue service (passengers riding) in 2023. Sound Transit started in 2006 and is now in “final design” stage (30%-100% into the project). Early utility work will start in 2015 and some permits have already been submitted. The system will be complete in 2022, with testing done the last 6-12 months before passengers are permitted.

This presentation will focus on the hospital station: weather protection, access to the medical centers, security and safety, passenger notification (up-lights on the platform). Mr. Lamon shared that the Department of Transportation issues ADA standards, with elements that include bench heights and truncated dome pavers. These ADA standards serve as guidelines for all state and regional facilities. Mr. Lamon will email a link to the ADA standards document that they use for State/Local/Regional transportation guidelines. It includes guidelines for bench height, which should be no lower than 17” and no higher than 19”.

Sound Transit has enhanced elements that go above the ADA guideline: each station has truncated dome pavers that serve as tactile warning devices to indicate platform approach; the “braid,” which is a raised tactile piece that runs from the entrance point of the station to the platform to the entrance of the train is used at every station, which serves as indicators for the blind who cane and is part of the rider-training program for station continuity.

Weather protection is an important element. The hospital station is an elevated station, with stairs, elevators and escalators at two entrances. The station accommodates a 4 car train (currently Sound Transit only runs 2 car trains due to usage volume) and the overhead canopy protection covers 72% ridership at the stations. If people are in motion, versus standing still, there is no expectation of weather protection. The hospital station is projected to be the 2nd highest ridership on the Eastside at 1500 riders per day, with the Downtown station at 1900 riders per day.

There are bike lockers and racks that are covered and available. Bikes can be accommodated on the train, with two bike spots per train. In addition to the pre-planned wind screens, architects are putting up screens to protect from the SW wind.

The hospital station will have a pedestrian path that will run alongside Whole Foods to 116th Ave NE. This uncovered path will be lit, ADA accessible, equipped with yellow emergency phones along the path. It will be uncovered due to the moving expectations, as stated previously.

Ms. March added that Stationary Planning will be done by the City for all of the stations, starting in about a year. The most pertinent question for the hospital station is how people would get back and forth between the station and the hospital. There is talk of a hospital connector and the 3 hospitals could run a circulator from the station. This is a decision that would be made by the hospitals, if they so choose. Sound Transit is not responsible for the areas surrounding the stations, as that is City property.

Safety and security of riders are of the utmost importance to Sound Transit. There is a two pronged approach: active and passive. The active approach includes CCTV's monitored 24-hours a day, fare enforcement officers, Sound Transit police force (contracted with KC sheriff), and coordination with local jurisdictions. Prior to a facility opening, Sound Transit has planning efforts between agencies to coordinate and work in concert together. There is no permanent security stationed at each station because it is found to be more effective to not be predictable. The passive approach, which is crime prevention through environmental design, includes clear sight lines, clear (see-through) elevators, and shrubs & landscaping kept to a certain height and does not create dark corners or hiding.

Sound Transit recently was recognized by the Transportation and Security Administration as 1 of only 6 agencies to receive a gold standard certification.

Passenger notification is as important as any other element in station design. Sound Transit already has systems in place that are in compliance with and go above the ADA standards: numerous methods of train notification such as variable message boards for those who can't hear the audible signal; bells on the train themselves (the sound of the bells around neighborhoods are lower, so the sound on these is variable); a voice announcing the train approach and departure; and flashing LED lights on train doors. Truncated strips add to the safety of passengers on the platforms. Sound Transit is exploring the up-lights for notification (lights that flash as the train is entering the station), as well.

Sound Transit must accommodate the entire spectrum of disabilities (blind, blind/deaf, deaf, etc.), not just concentrating on one, so it needs to maintain standardized features for continuity across stations so those that who are disabled can access them and count on them being uniform. Lighthouse for the Blind is a regional service provider that trains passengers on standardizations at all stations, so all stations from Westlake to East link should maintain continuity for safety and protection. The Citizens Advisory Committee holds public meetings throughout the community, which give gives Sound Transit direction on these disability issues.

Question: What is the access for bikes?

Answer: There are standard, uncovered bike racks at each station, bike cages (covered and securely accessed), or bikes can be taken on the train (brought up via elevator). Each train can hold two bikes. Stationary Planning will examine bike routes and station access.

Mr. Katz added that the issue of platform up lights was brought up at the CAC meeting. Sound Transit architects said that people who have photophobia will be blinded and/or bothered by these lights. Mr. Katz said that he knows someone in the D.C. area who has photophobia and has testified that the upward platform lights do not bother her. Mr. Katz shared that the blind consists of 0.3% of the population, while 17% are deaf or hard of hearing. Mr. Lamon replied that this is true and why they want to accommodate the spectrum of disabilities. He added that it has been great and very useful to have the input of the BNOA members.

Ms. Thompson asked if the captioning of variable message boards can be seen from anywhere in the station. Mr. Lamon replied that the signs will hang every 40 feet, so passengers can see them from anywhere in the station and stay dry under covers.

Question: What about parking and people accessing the station?

Answer: There will be a small amount of street parking available at the hospital station. Sound Transit does not provide parking at all stations. There will be 300 additional parking stalls at the BelRed Station. Overlake Village Station would have more.

Mr. Katz commented that the homeless live on the tracks and no one walks that area at night and that having cameras will not prevent robberies. Mr. Lamon said that is a very valid concern; security will walk through and around the station. Mr. Lamon added that Sound Transit is flexible and responsive, so if the initial plan is not working, then Sound Transit will address the problem and shift or provide solutions accordingly.

Mr. Katz added that the most robberies occur with cell phones, that a lot of older adults have them. Sound Transit is responsible for the safety and security on their property only (the stations, trains, and platforms) and the city will be responsible for the additional areas (i.e. areas surrounding the stations).

Ms. Kimball asked about the ridership demographics of the hospital station, the percentages of medical personnel, older adults, and/or people with disabilities. Mr. Lamon replied that Michael Miller with Sound Transit's accessibility group may possibly know this information. Sound Transit projects ridership based on the Puget Sound Regional Council's data. Mr. Lamon will check with Mr. Miller and send the information to BNOA.

Ms. March added that the City's long term vision encourages housing development, with higher density housing around the BelRed corridor. The goal is for Bellevue citizens to use transit instead of driving themselves. The City will be looking at the transportation impacts once the stations are operating, and shift elements as needed.

Mr. Lamon said he will send the link for ADA guidelines and the demographic ridership information to Ms. Du to forward to the BNOA members.

BREAK

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 1, 2014

Ms. Thompson said she had a change: on page 5 in the last sentence, it is meant to say "Senior Center **or** Cultural Center **at downtown**," not Senior Cultural Center.

Ms. Seltzer motioned to approve the minutes as changed and was seconded by Ms. Grote. The minutes with the change were approved unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach Committee (reported by Jeanne Grote)

Ms. Thompson worked a YMCA event with Ms. Kimball and Ms. Posten. One of the goals for the committee is to review BNOA's PowerPoint presentation, with one update being a new group photo. The Committee wants to establish a Facebook page and asked Ms. Du to look into the city guidelines for doing this. Ms. Du replied that the City's New Media Group will put this topic on its agenda to see if it will help or hinder the current website. Ms. Du will follow-up with this group and report back to the BNOA on their decisions once this meeting occurs. Mr. Aznoff wrote an article for the Bellevue Reporter on fraud. He will be submitting additional articles in the future and needs feedback on topics, like Medical Observation.

Upcoming outreach events include the Strawberry Festival on June 28th and 29th (a sign-up sheet is going around); Crossroads Farmers Market on August 5th; and Bellevue Farmers Market. Mr. Megargel is checking into the date and a canopy for this latter event. Ms. Kimball asked about the sign-up sheet and whether it was being forwarded to the City's Kevin Henry, to which Ms. Grote said it was.

Ms. Thompson added that Smart 9-1-1 is still currently not available in Bellevue, but there is a good new supply of the Vials of Life.

Ms. Grote thanked Mr. Megargel for sponsoring her to go to the Coordinators for Patient Services (COPS) event, at which she was able to network with a lot of people on behalf of BNOA. Ms. Grote also attended the joint board and commissions meeting (along with Ms. Kimball and Ms. Thompson) and found it well worth it. The Eastside Human Services Forum Annual Event at the Red Lion is on June 12th and Senior Services Aging Your Way Conference is June 26th at the Tukwila Community Center.

Transportation/Housing Committee (reported by Hannah Kimball)

The last committee meeting involved presentation by Sound Transit's Luke Lamon, Paul Ingraham and Michael Miller and the City's Kate March, who showed the extended version of the Sound Transit animation, which really provides a great visual of the train route and what stations will look like. They explained and elaborated on the features of the route and each station. Mr. Lamon and Ms. March tailored today's presentation to focus on the hospital station because that was where the questions focused on at the committee meeting. Sound Transit is responsible for its property and portion of the transit system, but the city and the community are responsible for the rest (e.g. station access).

Mr. Katz said that at the meeting that Sound Transit indicated that it likes to keep things, like seat heights, uniform because it does not want to be sued. Sound Transit has been very responsive. The timeline for the project is very long and it should be interesting to see the end result.

Advocacy Committee (reported by Diana Thompson)

The committee has written several letters on behalf of the BNOA, regarding reauthorization of the Older American's Act, passage of legislation in Congress to restore the solvency of social security, and medical observation at the federal level, respectively. These letters were sent to pertinent Congressional representatives. There was a hearing on May 20th in Representative Brady's subcommittee on health under Ways and Means to cover Medicare problems. The Center for Medicare Advocacy provided testimony. There was little coverage of the medical observation issue. They allowed until June 3rd for anyone to send in comments for the record, so a letter was drafted that was approved by committee members. Ms. Du emailed it to be included for the record and committee members sent it to state representatives and senators. Ms. Gray said she sent a copy of the letter to the National Association of Geriatric Care Managers legislative consultant and received overwhelming positive response, adding that it looks like it was also a submission for the record at the Ways and Means Commission.

Ms. Thompson asked for a vote on an issue. Last year, there was a meeting at the Art Museum regarding and demonstrating looping. The Transportation/Housing Committee developed its recommendations for changes in the Comprehensive Plan regarding capital facilities. Part of that recommendation included a statement advocating accessibility to all members of the community, with a suggestion that looping be considered in the renovation and new construction of all public buildings. The Advocacy Committee wants to present and promote looping to various committees/groups, which lead to a suggestion of broadening presentations to hearing accessibility, in general, so that looping can be included. Ms. Du secured July 7 for Ms. Thompson to speak at the Bellevue City Council meeting and have the Bellevue Art Museum present to share in the time. Because looping is not a part of BNOA's legislative agenda, this action needs a vote.

Ms. Thompson made a motion that "BNOA support accessibility in public buildings for all members of the community" to be added to BNOA legislative agenda. This motion was seconded by Ms. Gray and Mr. Katz, and approved unanimously. Immediately following the passage of the amendment, Ms. Thompson verified with BNOA members that under the motion just passed on July 7th, she could discuss looping and the Bellevue Art Museum could share her time.

Ms. Thompson shared that a hearing proposal was submitted by Civic Services and is currently being rated by results team. The proposal is for money to study which kind of system to use and where to install in buildings that do not have accessibility. Ms. Thompson says that more rooms should be looped. FM systems can be used in the room occupied by Planning Commission and City Council Chambers.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative (Ms. Grote reporting)

Bench making manual and the ORCA To Go (a mobile terminal) were discussed. The terminal can be taken to different locations, with target sites like King County Housing Authority locations, North Bellevue Community Center, South Bellevue Community Center and possibly Issaquah, Kirkland and Redmond. Staff at these terminals show participants how to use the ORCA card and reload it.

Eastside Human Services Forum (Ms. O'Reilly reporting)

Registration is still open for EHSF's discussion on "livable wage," which is Thursday, June 12th at Red Lion from 7:30-9:30am. The forum does not currently have a position; this event is intended to foster conversation of the impact and ramification of a "livable wage." The panel includes a policy analyst, head of Human Services Alliance in San Francisco, small business owner and senator.

Time Bank (Ms. Grote reporting)

Eastside Time Bank currently has 161 members; and looking for board members from Bellevue. There is a big auction coming up in September. Time Bank is funded by Bellevue, Redmond, Vashon and Mercer Islands and supports with in-kind services, such as printing and meeting locations. Members have been doing different things in their homes, such as planting and "edible" meetings, in order to gain/build more community interest.

Aging & Disability Services Advisory Council (Ms. Seltzer reporting)

ADS held their monthly meeting off-site at the International Health Services in the International District, with a 3-person panel on innovative ways to provide health care to the underserved population. ADS is working on regionalism and coming up with partnership strategies for parts of King County (excluding Seattle) and that will take many years to achieve. The funding and ways contracts are awarded are different in Seattle versus the east and south counties, which will be reviewed for standardization.

Washington State Senior Citizens Lobby (Ms. Thompson reporting)

Ms. Thompson attended the meeting on May 19th at the Columbia Room in the legislative building for Older Americans Month. Topics included 1) importance of good nutrition for seniors, with Kiwanis Club speaker sharing that there is an organic garden plot on the Capitol campus that supplies food to the local food bank; and 2) Fall Prevention emphasis for Older Americans Month and reaching the homebound, with speakers emphasizing Tai Chi exercises for fall prevention. Ms. Thompson suggested getting film on Tai Chi for Bellevue TV and the North Bellevue Community Center (NBCC).

The afternoon consisted of a meeting for the joint legislative executive committee, which was formed in the 2013 legislative session. A final report should come out by the end of December.

The meeting included information on caregiver facts: 850,000 unpaid caregivers in the state; the value of unpaid caregivers services is 10.6 billion per year, vs 1.5 billion spent by Medicaid on Long Term Services and Supports; DSHS is concerned with keeping caregivers or the state will go broke. Trainings on caregiving and respite care help delay nursing home admittances, which saves the state money. The average cost to support an in-home caregiver is \$3,900 per year.

Mr. Katz shared that he spoke with Congressman Reichert about Medicare, specifically that Medicare does not cover the expensive elastic type stockings that prevent blood clots. A bill is being sponsored that includes Representatives DelBene and Smith to get Medicare to cover these stockings. Democrats and Republicans are working together on this issue.

STAFF REPORT/UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Du would like to thank Ms. Thompson for accepting the proclamation for Elder Abuse Awareness on behalf of BNOA. Ms. Thompson expressed that hopefully people will come to the City Council meeting on July 7th (first Monday in July at 8:00) when she speaks on accessibility and looping.

Ms. Du said the next meeting is July 3rd, with guest speaker Mike McCormick-Heuntelman, City of Bellevue Neighborhood Outreach.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Gray said she had the opportunity to meet Paula Houston, head of Senior Services, and George Twiss, VP at Senior Services, who is interested in making the eastside connection. Ms. Gray was able to connect him with Ms. Du. Mr. Twiss would like to attend one of our meetings and possibly get on the agenda to present on how Senior Services can better serve the eastside. Ms. O'Reilly added that the City of Bellevue does have three contracts with Senior Services; currently funding Volunteer Transportation, Minor Home Repair and Meals on Wheels.

Mr. Aznoff is coordinating an event at Swedish Hospital at Issaquah Highlands on gait imbalance on June 11th from 9:30-11:30, which open to the public.

Ms. Kimball gave a plug for NBCC and its EnhanceFitness® class, highly recommending it, saying that Bellevue's participants score about the national average for core strength ability and balance. Group Health Medicare Advantage Plan members can take this class for free at the NBCC.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.