

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

March 23, 2009  
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room 1E-113  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Degginger, Deputy Mayor Balducci, and Councilmembers Bonincontri, Chelminiak, Davidson, Lee, and Noble

ABSENT: None.

1. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., with Mayor Degginger presiding. There was no Executive Session.

2. Oral Communications

- (a) Marco de Sa e Silva, speaking on behalf of SPLASH, said that SPLASH endorses the Aquatic Center Feasibility Study completed by the City. He encouraged the Council to support Option D, an indoor regional aquatics center with a 50-meter competition pool, as its preferred alternative.
- (b) Bill Hirt spoke about the East Link light rail project and submitted his comments in writing. He expressed concern that the system will have little impact on reducing traffic congestion by the time it is completed. He spoke in favor of expanding bus service as an alternate approach that could be implemented faster and at a significantly lower cost.
- (c) Ali Biria thanked Councilmembers for their time and effort in the light rail planning process. He expressed support for Sound Transit's proposed alignment through downtown Bellevue along 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and noted opposition to the 106<sup>th</sup> Avenue route by local businesses.
- (d) Lise Northey asked the City to enhance its enforcement of the leash law. She said it is important to feel safe in City parks and described her feelings of being threatened by dogs running loose in parks while she was jogging and walking with her family.

Deputy Mayor Balducci requested follow-up from staff on the leash issue.

- (e) Jack Akamine spoke in support of the aquatics center proposed by SPLASH.

- (f) Keri Stout, Executive Director for Bellevue Family YMCA, expressed support for the proposed aquatics center. She commended the efforts of City staff, and encouraged the Council to take the next steps for the project.
- (g) Mindy Garner, President of the Lake Hills Neighborhood Association, encouraged adoption of the Transportation Facilities Plan and asked the Council to include the Lake Hills Boulevard sidewalk project (West of 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue) in the plan. She said the current sidewalk is too narrow for two people to walk side by side, and it provides a route to Lake Hills Elementary School. In addition, residents would like an enhanced appearance along the boulevard, which is a gateway to the neighborhood.
- (h) Leslie Lloyd, representing the Bellevue Downtown Association and the Bellevue Jazz Festival, thanked the City for its response to the roof collapse at the Magic Season ice rink this winter. She thanked Paul Craig, Parks Department employee, for getting up on Christmas morning to restart power to the site in order to generate new ice. Ms. Lloyd thanked the Council for supporting the Bellevue Jazz Festival coming up on Memorial Day weekend. She highlighted the events, including national and local performers, as well as educational activities associated with the festival. She referred the public to [www.bellevuejazz.com](http://www.bellevuejazz.com) for more information.
- (i) Joe Rosmann, President of the Surrey Downs Community Club, thanked the Council and staff for its work with the community on the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan.
- (j) Ian Elliott advocated for an outdoor skate park in Ashwood Park in downtown Bellevue.

### 3. Study Session

#### (a) Council Business and New Initiatives

Councilmember Noble noted the hiring of the new Bellevue School District Superintendent, Dr. Amalia Cudeiro, and suggest sending her a letter of welcome on behalf of the City Council and the City Manager.

#### (b) Management Brief regarding 2009 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) Proposals

City Manager Steve Sarkozy opened staff's presentation of the 2009 annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) proposals.

Planning Director Dan Stroh described the two privately initiated CPA applications. The first affects the Newport Professional Buildings at 4307 and 4317 128<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, and requests a change in the map designation from Professional Office (PO) to Commercial Business (CB). The parcels border Newport High School on three sides. The applicant proposes attaching development conditions to the site that would limit the location of retail uses and require an affordable housing component.

The Kinoshita CPA proposal requests a map designation change from single family-high (SF-H) to multifamily-medium (MF-M) for a site at 1429 Bellevue Way SE. Mr. Stroh noted that the Planning Commission will hold its public hearing on the CPA proposals this spring. Following that, staff will bring the Commission's recommendations back to the Council.

(c) 2009-2020 Transportation Facilities Plan

Resolution No. 7896 approving the 2009-2020 Transportation Facilities Plan.

Lise Northey, Transportation Commission Chair, referenced the Commission's recommendation for the 2009-2020 Transportation Facilities Plan, which is provided in the meeting packet. She recalled that the Commission presented roadway and intersection capacity projects to the Council in September, and in November the Commission spoke to the Council regarding pedestrian and bicycle projects. The environmental review process has been completed, and the Commission took formal action in February on its recommendation.

Ms. Northey noted three issues raised during the TFP environmental review. One is that traffic congestion in four mobility management areas (MMAs) is projected to exceed level of service (LOS) standards by 2020 under both No Action and Proposed Action alternatives. The second is that noise levels along several residential arterials are projected to exceed the threshold at which a noise analysis would be required for any arterial improvement project. Finally, the Transportation Commission suggests that development procedures could be enhanced as they relate to Title VI, environmental justice, and limited English proficiency.

Eric Miller, Capital Programming Manager, briefly reviewed the process initiated in September 2007 to prepare the 2009-2020 TFP update. The plan has a total of 71 projects, including 31 new projects, with an estimated cost of \$430.3 million.

Mr. Miller noted Deputy Mayor Balducci's inquiry regarding the Lake Hill Boulevard sidewalk improvements project (143<sup>rd</sup> to 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE). He described the existing conditions which include bicycle lanes, substandard/narrow asphalt sidewalks, and aging fences and trees. The project adds a six-foot sidewalk and four-foot planter strip on both sides of the street, while preserving the existing on-street bicycle lanes. The estimated project cost is \$1.98 million.

Mr. Miller reviewed Council's options regarding adoption of the TFP. Council may adopt the plan as recommended, with or without direction to staff to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) addendum related to the Lake Hills sidewalk project and to return to the Council for approval of a minor TFP amendment. Additionally, Council may adopt a modified TFP that includes the Lake Hills project, after which staff will prepare a post-action EIS addendum, or Council may choose to not adopt the TFP and to direct staff to prepare an EIS addendum before returning for Council action on a modified TFP.

Mr. Miller noted that a minor environmental impact is anticipated for the Lake Hills sidewalk project. The TFP is a programmatic document, and a specific environmental analysis would be conducted during the project design phase.

Deputy Mayor Balducci commended the Transportation Commission's work and expressed her support for inclusion of the Lake Hills Boulevard sidewalk project. The project has been a priority for the community for a long time but has proven to not compete well for funding and implementation. She recalled the history of the Neighborhood Investment Strategy (NIS) which focused on the Lake Hills area and identified and funded a number of projects.

Ms. Balducci observed that the 143<sup>rd</sup> to 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue segment of Lake Hills Boulevard was inadvertently overlooked when other improvements were completed. The sidewalks are narrow and buckling, the fences are falling over, and the trees are dying. Ms. Balducci asked that the project be added to the project list to allow it to compete with the other projects for funding.

→ Deputy Mayor Balducci moved to approve Resolution No. 7896 adopting the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) as recommended, and to direct staff to prepare an EIS addendum and to return to Council for approval of a minor TFP amendment to add the Lake Hills Boulevard sidewalk project. Councilmember Chelminiak seconded the motion.

Responding to Councilmember Noble, Ms. Northey and Mr. Miller explained that the project was not included on the project list because it is not part of any of the east-west priority corridors identified in the pedestrian and bicycle plan. It was also considered a lower priority because there are existing sidewalks. Ms. Northey noted that it did meet the criteria of being located near a school and completing improvements to a pedestrian link.

Responding to Dr. Davidson, Deputy Mayor Balducci said the project was proposed during the Neighborhood Investment Strategy process. She said a similar project was completed on the east side of 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue in conjunction with the installation of a gateway feature, and she believes that the exclusion of this project was an oversight.

Responding to Councilmember Chelminiak, Mr. Miller recalled that 29 neighborhood sidewalk projects have been presented to the Council in past. The top three projects were funded through the Supplemental CIP in 2007, and an additional 10 are on the proposed TFP list.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Mr. Miller said there are improved sidewalks between 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 145<sup>th</sup> Place, which is where Lake Hills Boulevard ends at a T-intersection at 145<sup>th</sup> Place.

Councilmember Lee expressed support for the project. Councilmember Davidson concurred.

Mayor Degginger concurred as well, noting however his preference to not reprioritize the sidewalk project list.

Councilmember Chelminiak observed that the project makes sense, but he shares Mayor Degginger's concern about reprioritizing the project list.

Deputy Mayor Balducci clarified that she is requesting reconsideration of this project, including the opportunity to review it in greater detail with staff. However, she is not attempting to override previously established priorities.

→ The motion to approve Resolution No. 7896 adopting the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) as recommended, and to direct staff to prepare an EIS addendum and to return to Council for approval of a minor TFP amendment to add the Lake Hills Boulevard sidewalk project, carried by a vote of 7-0.

(d) Regulatory Options for Revising Development Codes to Comply with Requirements of NPDES Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit

Denny Vidmar, Utilities Director, opened staff's presentation regarding regulatory options for revising the City's development Codes to comply with requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit. He noted that staff is not seeking Council action tonight as noted in the meeting packet, but will request action on April 13. An open house and public meeting will be held by the Environmental Services Commission on April 2 to provide an opportunity for feedback from the community and developers. The permit deadline for City Code revisions is August 15.

Mr. Vidmar noted that the Phase II permit requires compliance with the 2005 Ecology Manual stormwater standards for projects disturbing one or more acres.

Phyllis Varner, NPDES Permit Coordinator, reviewed NPDES Phase II regulatory options for projects disturbing less than one acre. Option 1 is to adopt the 2005 Ecology Manual stormwater standards, resulting in one citywide stormwater standard regardless of the size of the project. Option 2 is to retain existing stormwater standards (1992 Ecology Manual) for projects affecting less than one acre, while following the 2005 Ecology Manual for projects disturbing one or more acres.

Under Option 1, the 2005 Ecology Manual standards apply to all development including single-family residences, which are exempt under the 1992 standards except for a requirement to provide a safe runoff discharge location or connection. The thresholds for flow control (detention) are higher under Option 1, and low impact development is encouraged. When triggered, the new standards require larger detention and treatment facilities resulting in higher stormwater capital costs.

Ms. Varner noted that the policy considerations for Options 1 and 2 are summarized in a table beginning on page 3-19 of the meeting packet. The potential cost impacts are reviewed in Attachment B [Page 3-25]. Staff's position is that the benefits of Option 1 outweigh any negative implications, except for related costs. However, the cost increases affect only a limited number of projects disturbing less than one acre.

Ms. Varner explained that the NPDES-related Code package reflects a multiple department effort. The NPDES Phase II permit requires that the revisions address development and

construction stormwater standards, control of non-stormwater discharges, and maintenance standards.

Mr. Vidmar noted a revised project timeline in Council's desk packet, as well as Attachment C outlining the public outreach process. He briefly reviewed the next steps in the NPDES Code revisions process.

Responding to Councilmember Bonincontri, Ms. Varner explained that low impact development practices could reduce the detention volume required for a site to a limited degree. Mr. Vidmar added that low impact techniques are designed for smaller storms, and the detention requirements are generally for larger storms.

(e) Review of Draft Aquatics Center Feasibility Study

City Manager Steve Sarkozy opened discussion regarding the draft Aquatics Center Feasibility Study. He recalled that the group SPLASH has been advocating for a facility for the past couple of years.

Parks and Community Services Director Patrick Foran reported that the first phase of the feasibility study has been completed. It assesses facility demand and supply, as well as the condition of various aquatic facilities within region. The study identifies programmatic needs, swim groups within the community, specific facility alternatives for Council review, and potential sites in Bellevue including projected fiscal impact.

Mr. Foran said staff is seeking Council direction on whether to continue to dedicate resources to pursue the development of an aquatics center. Policy considerations include current economic conditions, Bellevue's desired role in developing a regional solution, the potential for project partnerships, and alternatives for further study.

Glenn Kost, Planning Manager, recalled that Bellevue acquired the Odle Pool from King County in 1995, and added the warm water therapy pool in 1997. In addition the City operates six seasonal swim beaches, a boat launch, and a canoe and kayak program. The feasibility study involved a market analysis, public outreach, a review of facility options, and projected financial performance. Fifteen stakeholder meetings were held with cities, schools and school districts, the business community, and SPLASH. Nine focus groups representing high school and club swim teams, local private pools, YMCA, USA Swimming, and medical/therapy organizations participated in the study. A statistically valid phone survey of 406 Bellevue households was conducted as well.

Mr. Kost reviewed national and local trends related to swimming and aquatics recreation. Competitive swimming remains popular nationally. However, major events are not typically held in this area and are not profitable. Competitive aquatics remain strong locally. Bellevue has one public pool and 14 private pools. The Eastside has 13 public pools and 38 private pools. The phone survey indicated that 46 percent of Bellevue households have a member who swims. The primary reasons cited for using an aquatic facility are recreation, fitness and exercise, while nine percent of survey respondents reported that they participate in competitive swimming or

diving. A new aquatic center was ranked as a medium priority by 40 percent of respondents and a high priority by 23 percent of respondents. Approximately half would support a tax increase for an aquatic facility.

Mr. Kost reported that the need for aquatics facilities is a regional issue, and other feasibility studies are underway. However, limited capital funding has been identified and no property has been identified as a possible site. King County is somewhat concerned that an Eastside facility would compete with its facility in Federal Way. Mr. Kost described the types of uses that can be provided by an aquatics facility including recreation, swim lessons, water therapy and rehabilitation, fitness (lap lanes), and competitive swimming/diving. Key features related to the desired purposes are the size and shape of the pools, water depth, and water temperature.

Mr. Kost described five options reviewed in the study. Option A is an outdoor seasonal aquatic center requiring 5.5 acres, with a local target audience. The estimated cost is \$19.1 million, with an operating surplus of \$130,000 based on 77,200 annual visits.

Option B is an indoor/outdoor aquatic center (5 acres) with a local target audience. The estimated cost is \$28.5 million, with a projected operating deficit of \$670,000 based on 155,200 annual visits.

Option C is an indoor aquatic center requiring six acres, with a local target audience as well as a focus on competitive swimming to accommodate high school and club swim meets. This option adds a therapy pool, separate program and lap pools, and seating for 500. The cost is estimated at \$45 million, with an operating deficit of \$1.22 million based on 205,000 annual visits.

Option D is a regional aquatic center serving local and regional users as well as the needs of Collegiate and Olympic competition levels. This center would require four to 7.5 acres and would provide seating for 1,200. The estimated cost is \$53.3 million to \$71.8 million, with an operating deficit of \$1.35 million and annual visits of 226,000.

Option E is a national aquatic center, which adds a separate diving tank and seating for 3,000. The facility would require six to 10.5 acres. The estimated cost is \$83.7 million to \$114.2 million, with an operating deficit of \$1.9 million and 247,000 annual visits.

Mr. Kost said financial performance is strongest for recreation pools and weakest for competition pools. Option A meets the seasonal needs of the recreation swimmer and is the most cost-efficient to operate. Option B best meets the priorities reflected in the public interest survey. Option C reaches all segments of the aquatics market but is limited to local competition. Option D accommodates regional competitive events. Option E reaches all segments of the aquatics market and the broadest competitive swimming market. It could potentially attract the most external funding.

Mr. Kost reviewed the site location criteria used in the study: 1) Proximity to population, 2) Displacement of existing facilities, 3) Convenience to target audience, 4) Site cost, 5) Size and capacity, 6) Zoning/land use, 7) Development costs, and 8) Partnership opportunities. The seven potential locations identified are Marymoor Park, Highland Center, Bel-Red corridor, Hidden

Valley, Eastgate area, Bellevue Community College, and King County property near Bellevue Community College.

Should Bellevue decide to participate in the development of a regional aquatics facility, the future purpose or potential elimination of the current Bellevue Aquatics Center will be an important consideration. Mr. Foran suggested that if the City moves forward, it should be as part of a regional effort toward a solution. Next steps include choosing an option or alternative for further study, identifying principles for the City's involvement and investment, contacting potential partners to determine levels of commitment, further testing the community's willingness to financially support an aquatics center, and narrowing the site selection to a preferred location.

Councilmember Davidson noted that his sons participated in competitive swimming, and he served as an announcer at events. He has also used therapeutic and private pools. He feels this is a good opportunity for regional government and private sector partners.

Responding to Dr. Davidson, Mr. Foran said the Marymoor site represents 21 acres owned by the City, which is currently used for adult softball fields. Mr. Foran explained that several of the potential aquatics center sites would require that existing facilities be repositioned or redeveloped in another location.

Noting the regional demand for aquatics facilities, Deputy Mayor Balducci encouraged continued efforts to identify partners and move forward. She commented on how aquatics facilities serve us throughout our lives, from toddlers to the elderly.

Responding to Ms. Balducci, Mr. Foran said the Bellevue Aquatics Center currently has a funding subsidy of approximately \$500,000 annually, which could be applied to a new regional facility if the current facility were to be eliminated.

Councilmember Bonincontri expressed support for continuing to pursue this project, and noted that she is a daily swimmer.

Responding to Councilmember Chelminiak, Aquatics Manager Mike Koenig said he believes that King County would welcome a facility that could accommodate regional swim meets, such as Option D. King County's concerns relate to the bidding process on the national and international levels (i.e., Option E).

Councilmember Chelminiak noted that while he is not a swimmer, he has three swimmers in his family. He commented on the importance of the sport in providing competitive and leadership opportunities for young people. He feels the City should move forward to identify funding partners and a facility site. He supports SPLASH's endorsement of Option D. He wondered about the potential for the formation of a taxing authority that would encompass multiple jurisdictions and school districts.

Councilmember Noble said he supports the project, albeit as something nice to have versus something we need to have. He suggested that Bellevue move forward as a leader and facilitator.

to conduct further analysis and identify regional partners. He expressed concern with the significant capital costs, and he does not support Option E. However, Options C and D seem to respond to local and regional needs.

Responding to Mayor Degginger, Mr. Koenig said Bellevue typically has waiting lists for its swimming classes. The City has one of the largest swim lessons programs in the state which attracts users from other jurisdictions.

Mayor Degginger is willing to pursue the project further. However, he would like to refine the objectives and desired programs for a facility, as this will affect potential partnership and funding opportunities. He wondered whether it would be appropriate to seek voter support. Mr. Degginger noted his concerns regarding both capital and ongoing operational costs. He expressed an interest in learning from other models of this type of regional facility.

Councilmember Lee recalled the City's commitment to the warm water pool because it provides a public benefit. He supports moving forward toward a regional aquatics center, noting a preference for Option D.

Dr. Davidson expressed support for exploring a special district or multi-jurisdictional approach to the project.

Mayor Degginger summarized Council's interest in pursuing the concept further. He noted the need to clearly outline the facility's program and market. Additional issues of interest to the Council are: 1) Regional or subregional facility? 2) Identifying capital and operating partners, and 3) Whether to present the issue to the voters.

Deputy Mayor Balducci observed that Councilmembers appear to be comfortable with a facility serving the regional level (e.g., Options C and D) versus a facility targeted toward national competitions. The Council also appears to be interested in a facility that would provide more than Option A.

Councilmembers Chelminiak and Noble concurred.

Responding to Dr. Davidson, Mr. Foran said one benefit of a 50-meter pool is that it can be split into two 25-meter pools as needed.

At 8:25 p.m., Mayor Degginger declared a break. The meeting resumed at 8:32 p.m.

(f) Regional Issues

Kim Becklund, Transportation Policy Advisor, reviewed opportunities for federal funding related to the Sound Transit East Link light rail project. The Council has communicated its preferred alignment to Sound Transit. The Sound Transit Board is expected to make a decision on April 23 regarding the alternative/s to be studied in the final environmental impact statement (EIS). Sound Transit will be hosting a number of work sessions and exploring funding options.

The Council had directed staff as part of the Federal Legislative Agenda to begin to advocate for New Starts funding. New Starts is a discretionary funding program administered by the Federal Transit Administration. Over the past several years, the program has averaged approximately \$1.2 billion in allocations to transit systems across the country. More than 30 projects are currently in the queue competing for funding.

Ms. Becklund briefly reviewed some of the New Starts funding criteria, including a cost-effectiveness measure called Transportation System User Benefit (TSUB), which measures the benefit of a light rail project as the aggregate number of hours of travel time saved compared to the baseline travel alternative. The Council's 2009 Federal Legislative Agenda identifies the New Starts program as a 2010 reauthorization priority, and provides direction to pursue funding and modifications to the funding criteria that would help achieve funding for the East Link project.

Responding to Councilmember Bonincontri, Ms. Becklund said Sound Transit's finance plan assumes \$900 million in federal funding over the 15-year program. Of that, \$203 million is identified for the East Subarea program.

Responding to Councilmember Chelminiak, Ms. Becklund said Sound Transit received approximately \$500 million in federal funding for its Central Link south segment project. The agency was recently awarded \$700 million for the University Link segment.

Responding to Councilmember Noble, Ms. Becklund said the TSUB criteria became more strict after Sound Transit received funding for its earlier light rail segments.

Diane Carlson, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, provided a brief update on the state legislative session including bills regarding SR 520 tolling, tax increment financing, city/county revenue authority, and King County regional funding.

Ms. Carlson noted the federal legislative update provided in the Council packet [Page 3-61], as well as an update on regional jail planning [Page 3-67].

At 9:03 p.m., Mayor Degginger declared the meeting adjourned.

Myrna L. Basich  
City Clerk

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