

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

May 7, 2001  
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Mosher, Deputy Mayor Marshall, Councilmembers Davidson, Degginger, Lee, and Noble

ABSENT: Councilmember Creighton

1. Executive Session

Deputy Mayor Marshall opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m. and announced recess to executive session for approximately one hour to discuss two items of potential litigation. The study session reconvened at 7:35 p.m. with Mayor Mosher presiding.

2. Study Session

(a) Proposed Amendments to Sign Code

Assistant City Attorney Lori Riordan noted proposed amendments to the City's sign code addressing the use of sandwich boards and other portable signs. The City has received complaints from citizens concerned about safety hazards created by the use of signs carried or worn by persons who: 1) wave and shout to attract the attention of drivers, 2) block ingress to and egress from parking lots, 3) enter the roadway to approach drivers, 4) impair drivers' views by standing too close to intersections and/or the roadway, and 5) block sidewalks. Ms. Riordan said the proposed amendments address these public safety concerns. In addition, the use of portable signs is limited to the premises of the business that is being advertised and the right-of-way directly adjacent to the business.

Ms. Riordan said this ordinance is subject to SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) review. She requested Council direction regarding the proposed code amendments.

Deputy Mayor Marshall is pleased with staff's proposal. She observed a car accident recently which she believes was caused by the distraction of persons waving portable signs. Mr. Degginger agreed with Mrs. Marshall's concerns.

In response to Mr. Noble, Ms. Riordan said she conducted a national search of cases involving sandwich boards and did not find any regulations specifically aimed at this type of sign. She did, however, find examples of municipal sign codes. She noted that the use of sandwich boards and portable signs by labor organizations performing informational picketing is governed by the National Labor Relations Act. A provision has been added to the sign ordinance that recognizes the preemption of City regulations if they are in conflict with the National Labor Relations Act.

Mr. Lee commended staff for addressing this issue and noted that persons with portable signs often block sidewalks.

In response to Mayor Mosher, Ms. Riordan said the City of Redmond has requested a copy of the proposed ordinance amending Bellevue's sign code.

In response to Dr. Davidson, Ms. Riordan said portable political signs will be subject to the same rules regulating commercial signs. However, the limitation on the use of portable signs to the adjacent right-of-way applies only to commercial businesses.

There was Council concurrence to direct staff to prepare a draft ordinance for Council consideration following completion of the required SEPA review. Legal Planner Carol Helland said the SEPA analysis will take approximately five weeks.

Noting only 15 minutes remaining for the study session, Mayor Mosher suggested discussing Council Business at this time and postponing discussion of transportation funding until after the regular session.

### 3. Council Business [Regular Session Agenda Item 6]

Mrs. Marshall and Mr. Noble attended the Trans-Lake Washington Study Executive Committee meeting.

Mr. Lee attended the Earth Day celebration at Lakemont Park, an Asian Pacific Cities Summit reception, and the Best of Bellevue awards dinner.

Dr. Davidson noted Council's meeting with the Bellevue Community College Board of Trustees last week.

Mr. Degginger attended a meeting with Mayor Schell and Deputy Mayor Collins of Seattle to discuss water negotiations with the Cascade Water Alliance.

Mrs. Marshall is again participating in annual DUI drills with the Bellevue Fire Department, which are held to coincide with prom time at area high schools. She attended a Woodridge Community Club meeting to discuss upcoming projects on I-405 and SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mayor Mosher commended Police Officer Angela Rockcastle who helped a citizen following a recent car accident. The citizen wrote a letter to the City praising her actions. Mr. Mosher

attended the opening ceremony for a new housing project, Somerset Gardens. He thanked Doreen Cato for her role in developing this project.

Mr. Lee noted that Darcy Johnson, founder of St. Andrews Housing Group, and Sam Pace, King County Association of Realtors, have been recognized for their work to provide affordable housing.

At 7:59 p.m., Mayor Mosher declared recess to the regular session.

2. Study Session [Continued]

(b) Update on State Transportation Funding and Governance Proposals

The study session resumed at 9:05 p.m.

Assistant City Manager Karen Reed commented on the Texas Transportation Institute's annual report on traffic congestion in urban areas. Ms. Reed briefly reviewed Governor Gary Locke's Proposed Ten-Year Transportation Plan, which would provide \$12.5 billion to the four-county region. This includes \$3.6 billion for projects on I-405, \$1.3 billion for SR 520, as well as funding to complete desired improvements to I-90.

Ms. Reed reviewed key concerns with the governor's package:

- Shortfalls in funding for I-405 and SR 520, which receive lower levels of state matching funds compared to the Highway 99 viaduct and SR 509 projects.
- Regional portion of the package would rely on new sales tax authority and add a region-wide B&O (Business and Occupation) tax.
- Governance proposal does not guarantee Bellevue and/or Eastside representation.
- Proposal calls for voter approval of the transportation package. Recent polling indicates that a regional package is likely to pass while a statewide measure probably would not be approved by voters.

Mrs. Marshall reviewed the three governance models currently being considered: 1) Executive model – three County executives and governor's nominee, 2) King County Councilmembers submit names and governor selects representatives from these names, and 3) Legislative district model – nomination of individuals from each district. Mike Doubleday, lobbyist, commented on the apparent lack of consensus around any of the governance models at this time. In response to Mrs. Marshall, he said it is likely the governor's transportation package will be presented to the voters as two items, one regional and one statewide.

Ms. Reed requested Council feedback on the document regarding possible City messages to the "Four Corners" on transportation.

Mrs. Marshall suggested a stronger emphasis on completing improvements to I-405 as soon as possible. She noted that the three worst traffic bottlenecks in the state are located in this area and the Eastside's economy relies on I-405. Further, she suggested adding a statement to reflect

citizens' demands for improvements to the regional highway system in order to relieve congestion on local streets.

Dr. Davidson is frustrated that the State is not required to comply with the Growth Management Act. Mayor Mosher agreed that it is unfair for local governments to be required to provide adequate infrastructure while this requirement does not apply to state roadways.

Mr. Lee said Bellevue should continue to insist on a total system approach and the appropriate funding to solve regional transportation inadequacies.

Mr. Degginger feels transportation is both a quality of life and economic issue and that the region has not planned adequately for the future.

Mr. Noble is disappointed in the governor's proposal. He suggested the City's message should articulate that the package is insufficient to meet current transportation needs.

Mayor Mosher suggested adding an item to advocate the streamlining of state approval over transportation projects.

Mr. Degginger suggested adding a reference to the Blue Ribbon Commission Report on Transportation in terms of identifying and funding key needs such as improvements to SR 520 and I-405.

In response to Dr. Davidson, Mr. Doubleday said the current Special Session ends on May 24 and a budget must be adopted by June 30. He said Republican legislators are working to develop a bill on permit processing which will then facilitate moving toward a consensus on transportation funding and budget approval.

City Manager Steve Sarkozy commented on the need to streamline the permit process and noted that other states have accepted alternative processes for expediting the design and construction of major projects. Transportation Director Goran Sparrman spoke to the frustration and potential cost increases associated with having to wait six months or more for projects to be reviewed by the State.

At 9:45 p.m., Mayor Mosher declared the meeting adjourned.

Myrna L. Basich  
City Clerk

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