East Bellevue Community Council
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

March 5, 2013
6:30 p.m.

Lake Hills Boys & Girls Club
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Liz Stead, Development Services Department

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 and all Councilmembers were present. Chair Kasner led the flag salute.

Chair Kasner introduced James Eder, a former East Bellevue Community Councilmember, who recently celebrated his 86th birthday. He noted that Councilmember Seal will celebrate his 85th birthday later in the month.

Mr. Kasner suggested moving Agenda Items 3 and 7 to occur following Agenda Item 8.

[Agenda Interruption]

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Capron moved to approve the agenda, amended as suggested by Chair Kasner. Councilmember Gooding seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

5. PUBLIC HEARING: None.

6. RESOLUTIONS: None.

8. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(a) Lake Hills Shopping Center Redevelopment

Chair Kasner opened the presentation on the Lake Hills Shopping Center redevelopment.

Liz Stead, Urban Design Planning Manager, said the project's Master Redevelopment Plan was reviewed and approved in 2006. The first phase of the project, the King County Library branch and office building, has been completed.

The project has been approved for the below-grade work underway for the parking garage and the first level of retail spaces. The City continues to work with Cosmos Development to design the upper stories of the buildings, which will include residential units, as well as townhomes at the back of the site.

Oscar Del Moro, Cosmos Development, provided a history of the project, noting that the shopping center was built after World War II to serve suburban growth. An early concomitant agreement was put in place to prevent any future expansion of the center. Cosmos Development bought the property in 1998. The company was approached by the City in March 2000 to discuss redevelopment of the Lake Hills Shopping Center site to better serve residents. Mr. Del Moro said Cosmos believed it could create an enhanced environment for the neighborhood, and they envisioned a public, landscaped plaza as part of the project.

Mr. Del Moro said the second phase of the project will include underground parking, upper level retail and residential development, landscaping, and a European-style square in the middle of the development. He described additional uses planned for the site.

Jan Benson questioned how the development will protect individuals with property on 155th Avenue adjacent to the pedestrian crosswalk. Mr. Del Moro said the residential units are scaled to surrounding development, and there will be 30-foot setbacks on the property. There will be patios on the back of the units and the area is meant to be a greenbelt. There will be a five-foot masonry wall throughout the entire project.

Responding to Mr. Kasner, Mr. Del Moro said the project involves approximately 90 residential units and 600 parking spaces with 170 of those in a surface lot and the remainder underground.

Responding to Sandra Hughes, Mr. Del Moro said there will be parking immediately in front of the grocery store.

James Eder said he has lived in his home, which is 100 yards west of the shopping center, for 52 years. He described certain covenants in the neighborhood and suggested that the redevelopment plan might violate some of the covenants.

Mr. Kasner clarified that the shopping center is in a commercial district, which is subject to different rules than residential development.

Continuing, Mr. Eder advised citizens that a title company is able to tell them which covenants apply to a specific address. He expressed concern that building heights at the shopping center violate the covenants.

Mr. Del Moro said the 20-foot height limit was changed to 45 feet under the current concomitant agreement.

Ms. Stead confirmed that the allowable building height is 45 feet. The new zoning articulated in the concomitant agreement involved an extensive public process before it was approved by the City Council.

Cheryl Kuhn, who recently retired from her position as Neighborhood Outreach Manager with the City, described the Citizen Advisory Committee's involvement over a seven-month period in developing the concomitant agreement. The project was vetted through public meetings and public hearings before decisions were made by the City Council.

Chair Kasner confirmed that many community stakeholders, including representatives of the East Bellevue Community Council, were involved in the public process.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Mr. Del Moro said the housing units are intended as rental units, at least until the economy improves.

Responding to Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Del Moro said the redeveloped center will provide needed businesses and services as well as gathering spaces outside on the plaza, in the library, and in restaurants and/or coffee shops.

Sonja Rossman wants to be sure the center provides adequate parking. She is concerned that tenants have left the site, and she questioned the future of the bank.

Mr. Del Moro said the bank does not own any property on the site. After approximately four years of negotiating with the bank, the bank has determined that the center is not consistent with its future vision.

Mr. Del Moro said there are 400 cars on the site now and it will ultimately accommodate up to a total of 600 cars, mostly underground.

Mr. Eder expressed concern that neighbors were not present at the meeting.

Ms. Stead reiterated that there was an extensive public involvement process some years ago, and information is publicly available, including on the City's web site.

Amanda Baruch, a Renton resident who attends Sammamish High School, spoke in favor of the shopping center's redevelopment and encouraged youth-oriented stores and/or activities (e.g., yogurt shop).

Lesley Batog, a youth, expressed support for the shopping center redevelopment plan.

Chris Baruch, Renton, said she is Amanda's mother (see above) and has another child at the Jewish Day School. She questioned what will happen with the four-way stop.

Mr. Del Moro said a traffic study will be conducted to determine how to handle the intersection.

Councilmember Seal spoke in favor of a study of 156th Avenue, which he said was not built to handle heavy traffic.

Responding to Don Boettinger, a resident, Mr. Del Moro said that a number of grocery stores have expressed an interest in locating at the center.

Deanna Howell expressed concern about traffic impacts.

Sandy Hughes questioned how long the library entrance to Lake Hills Boulevard will be closed. For the long term, she questioned whether there will be easy drop off places on the site.

Mr. Del Moro said they are working to reestablish the plaza deck as quickly as possible. He described the long-term parking plan which will be structured according to uses and to avoid congestion.

Mr. Boettinger observed that traffic is not handled well at Kelsey Creek Center, and he is skeptical about how it will be handled at Lake Hills Shopping Center.

Councilmember Capron thanked Mr. Del Moro for the update. Mr. Capron opined that traffic issues tend to work themselves out. He noted that more residents will walk to the shopping center instead of driving by. He likes the vision of the redevelopment plan and would like to see some office tenants.

Wendy Pender said she lives south of I-90 but works at Lake Hills Library in the shopping center. She looks forward to continued development and new tenants.

Debra Westwood, also with King County Library System, expressed support for the project and said that a child care business would be an asset to the center. She believes the center will become the heart of the neighborhood.

Councilmember Seal shared his recollections on the original development of the center, including the first QFC store. He believes the redeveloped center will be a great addition to the community. He thanked Mr. Del Moro for the report.

Amanda encouraged a community art project and suggested that Sammamish High School students would have many ideas to consider.

Terry Voss suggested submitting a proposal to the City for arts funding.

Chair Kasner encouraged citizens to drive by the library at night if they have not done so. He said the lighting is beautiful and he looks forward to continued development. Mr. Kasner said an open house will be held at the center in the near future to discuss particular project elements.

(b) Update on Key Bank Site at Kelsey Creek Center

Ms. Stead provided an update regarding the Key Bank site (former gas station) at Kelsey Creek Center. Key Bank submitted permit applications to build a branch but later cancelled the applications. She said a Wells Fargo Bank is moving into the current Starbucks space, and Starbucks is moving to a separate building on the site.

Responding to the Council, Ms. Stead encouraged residents to contact the City with concerns about code compliance issues at the site.

Responding to Chair Kasner, Ms. Stead said the owner is required to maintain safety on the site. The City is not aware of any safety hazards, and has very limited ability to control the appearance of the site.

Councilmember Hughes observed that the appearance, a cyclone fence around a concrete lot on a visible corner, is not reasonable. He said the fence is not sturdy enough to prevent access to the site or to ensure safe conditions.

Ms. Stead said she is frustrated as well that the City cannot do more.

Responding to Chair Kasner, Ms. Stead said the City's code enforcement staff have had a number of contacts with the property owner (Key Bank). However, the bank is not motivated to sell or develop the property at this point.

Chair Kasner encouraged residents to be active in voicing concerns to the City and other community partners.

Wes Clark suggested that the East Bellevue Community Council write a letter to Key Bank expressing residents' concerns.

Mr. Kasner opined that contacts from residents to the City can potentially be more effective than the Community Council's efforts.

Councilmember Hughes moved that the East Bellevue Community Council send a letter to Key Bank regarding the Kelsey Creek Center site. Councilmember Seal seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-1, with Chair Kasner opposed.

Chair Kasner thanked Ms. Stead for attending. He again encouraged residents to become active advocates for their community interests.

3. COMMUNICATIONS - WRITTEN AND ORAL

Chris Arundell said he would like to increase his participation in community discussions. He said the information presented this evening was very helpful. He thanked the Community Council and City staff for their work.

Chair Kasner encouraged residents to visit the Winters House on Bellevue Way to see an exhibit on the history of the Lake Hills community. He noted that sidewalks were only meant to last for 50 years, and he observed that many in East Bellevue are deteriorating. He believes the options are to replace them where possible or to remove them. He encouraged residents to become involved in communicating what they would like to see in anticipation of the upcoming effort to update the City's overall Comprehensive Plan.

Tim Hauck expressed support for the Lake Hills Shopping Center redevelopment project.

James Eder suggested that the Community Council enhance its communication with residents. He objected that his neighbors did not know of tonight's meeting.

Councilmember Hughes said he would like to increase residents' involvement in the Community Council's activities. He noted that the meetings are listed in the *Bellevue Reporter*, and Chair Kasner recently had an article published in *It's Your City.*

Chair Kasner said information about Community Council meetings, agendas, and meeting minutes is provided on the City's web site.

Mr. Hughes left the table at 8:22 p.m. to speak as a citizen.

Mr. Hughes said he has run into difficulties in dealing with the City's building and development staff, and he questioned whether other residents have concerns as well. He believes that citizens who apply for permits are harassed. He suggested that it would be more effective to have a group of citizens talk to City staff about concerns.

Mr. Hughes returned to the Council table at 8:26 p.m.

7. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS

(a) Community Council Business and New Initiatives

Councilmember Seal said he and Chair Kasner attended a meeting of the Eastside Transportation Association (ETA).

Councilmember Hughes noted that he and Mr. Kasner attended the Neighborhood Leaders meeting.

Chair Kasner said he attended the Parks and Community Services Board meeting on February 12 and the Neighborhood Leaders meeting on February 26.

Councilmember Hughes said he visited the Big Picture School, which is focused on project-oriented, collaborative learning.

9. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**: None.

10. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

(a) Junior Taxing Districts, Municipal Corporations and Local Government Finance Committee Report

Chair Kasner reported that the state legislature has not yet reintroduced the issue of eliminating Municipal Corporations (Community Councils) this session.

11. **NEW BUSINESS**: None.

12. **CONTINUED COMMUNICATIONS**: None.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**: None.

14. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilmember Capron moved to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2013 Special Meeting. Mr. Gooding seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Councilmember Hughes moved to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2013 Special Meeting. Mr. Capron seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

Councilmember Seal moved to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2013 Regular Meeting. Mr. Capron seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5-0.

15. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

At 8:45 p.m., Chair Kasner declared the meeting adjourned.

Michelle Murphy, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

/kaw