

## East Bellevue voters continue Community Council thru 2009

By James E. Bell, East Bellevue Community Council Chair

East Bellevue voters, by a 2 to 1 majority, elected to continue the East Bellevue Community Municipal Corporation for four additional years. Voters also elected five members to the East Bellevue Community Council (EBCC) to run the corporation through 2009. Four of the incumbent members of the EBCC, Jim Eder, Ken Seal, Jim Bell and Jim Keeffe, ran unopposed. In the only contested race, Neil Penrose will succeed Brigitte Weichmann.

A majority of the voters must elect to continue the East Bellevue Community Municipal Corporation every four years. This requirement was levied in the Washington State statute that created the original community municipal corporation in 1969. Details are described in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) section 35.14. Basically that state law gave voters in areas that were being annexed to a city the option of electing a community municipal corporation and five members to govern it. The municipal corporation is granted two powers by the State of Washington. First is the power to veto land use ordinances adopted by the City of Bellevue. The second power is the right to advise the Bellevue City Council on levels of service within the annexed area.

In comparing the 2005 election to the 2001 election, the voter turnout was larger this time even though there were fewer registered voters.

In the 2001 election there were 7062 registered voters in the East Bellevue area. Of those, 2335 voted. There were 1242 votes to continue the Community Council versus 1093 who opposed the continuation.

In the 2005 election, voter turnout was 2875 out of 5530 registered voters. There were 1521 votes to continue the corporation for an additional four years; 800 voters opposed the continuation.

It has been the practice that each member of the Council be sworn-in at the beginning of their first meeting of the new year. This year that meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 3, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. in the Lake Hills Community Clubhouse located at 15230 Lake Hills Boulevard. Presiding Judge Michael Trickey of the King County Superior Court will administer the oath of office. Refreshments will be served following the ceremony. The regular meeting agenda should start about 7:15 p.m.

### Neil R. Penrose is the newest member of the East Bellevue Community Council

Neil Penrose and his wife grew up on the Eastside. He believes that the East Bellevue Community Council (EBCC) is an effective tool in preserving our neighborhoods and property rights. Neil has two children and believes this area is a good safe place to raise them. Neil wants to work to preserve our neighborhoods and provide a good place for local businesses to thrive as well.

He also believes that the East Bellevue Community Municipal Corporation's power to reject city proposals is a valuable check on the city's power. This power is even more important now that the U.S. Supreme Court has diminished private property rights with the Kelo v. New London decision. The Kelo decision gives government the power to take land from individuals and allows them to sell it to developers in the hope that they will generate more taxes. The State Supreme Court has demonstrated a willingness to defer to cities and developers with decisions on eminent domain during the construction of Quest and Safeco Fields. These public/private projects displaced businesses that had been there for years and forced them to relocate. The EBCC provides local residents with a tool that can block actions that they believe will harm the neighborhood and can advocate for changes that will improve the neighborhood.

Finally he believes that the best government is the one closest to the people. The EBCC gives residents of East Bellevue access to city government through five council members who have been their neighbors for years and will be their neighbors for years to come.

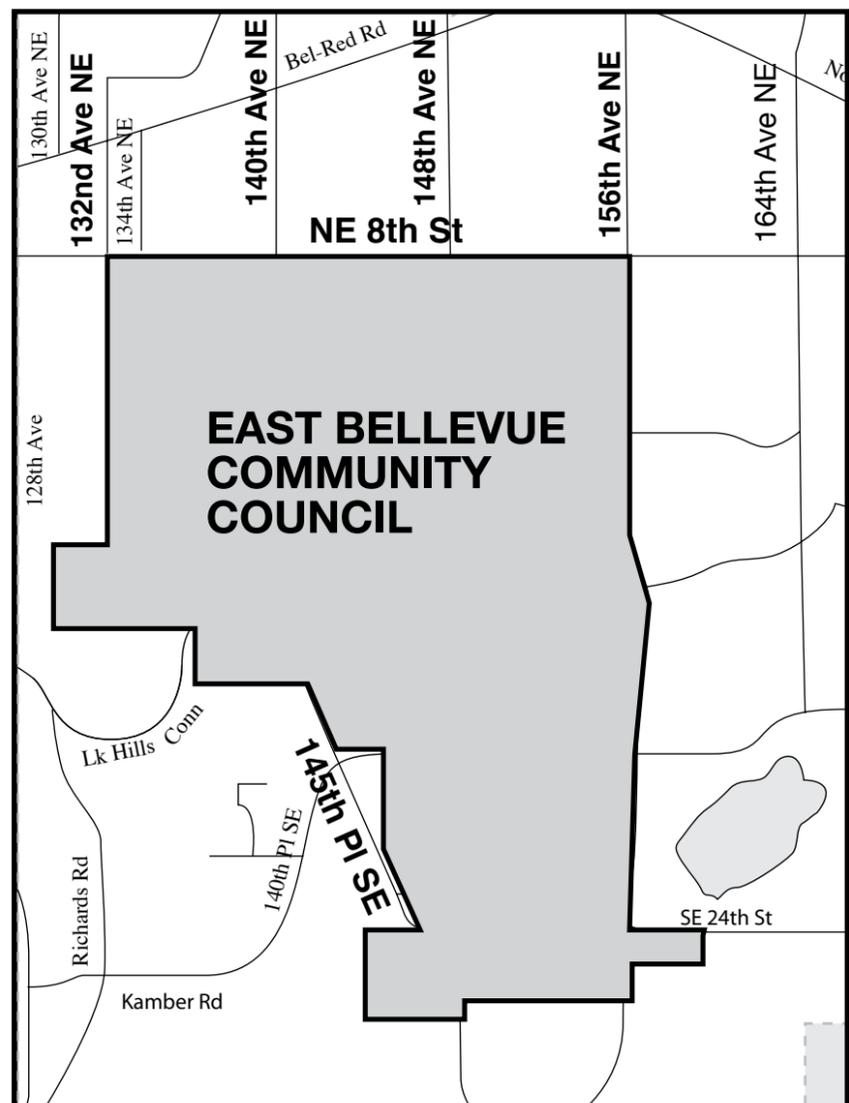
You can share your views with Neil Penrose by phone at 425-260-4549 or by E-mail at [nrpenrose@msn.com](mailto:nrpenrose@msn.com). You can share your views with the whole Community Council by E-mail at [EBCC@ci.bellevue.wa.us](mailto:EBCC@ci.bellevue.wa.us).

### Neighbors and Community Council Members tour Lake Hills Elementary School

Don Lemieux, past EBCC and City Council member, asked the principal, Judy Buckmaster, to give some of the senior local residents a tour of the brand new school. After all he reasoned they had endured all the noise and disruption while the school was completely redone. He invited Jim Bell and Jim Eder to join the tour because EBCC had approved the changes to the Land Use Code that allowed the school project to proceed with administrative rather than full process conditional use permits.

Enrollment at Lake Hills Elementary has been steady at about 425 students. The new building has grown from one story with 41,000 SF to two stories and 67,800 SF. We were amazed and delighted with the new facility. One example was smart boards that have replaced "blackboards" and "whiteboards". These allow the teacher to prepare lessons and plans on their laptop computers. The laptop can be connected to the smart board. The students are able to touch the screen and do learning exercises interactively with the teacher's plan. Of course, story telling or group reading areas are still part of the school library. Buckmaster said there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer and help out with school activities.

East Bellevue Community Council held two Courtesy Public Hearings and one Public Hearing before approving the change from full conditional use to administrative conditional use for the school project. A fourth Courtesy Public Hearing was held on the administrative conditional use application. The chief concerns were granting increased building height without community approval. These concerns were addressed and satisfied during the hearings. You can review the testimony by viewing the meeting minutes for Nov 6, 2002; Dec 3, 2002; Feb 4, 2003; and Jan 13, 2004 on-line at <http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us>. Click on City Government, then Community Council and finally Minutes.



For information about the city's Community Council, call Deputy City Clerk Michelle Murphy, 452-6466, or contact the East Bellevue Community Council Chairperson, James Bell.

East Bellevue Community Council meets the first Tuesday each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Lake Hills Clubhouse, 15230 Lake Hills Blvd.

**Members**  
James E. Bell  
Jim Eder  
James Keeffe  
Ken Seal  
Brigitte Weichmann