

# Neighborhood News

City of Bellevue

News for and about Bellevue Neighborhoods

September 2007

## Help find the best fit for light rail in Bellevue

Sound Transit is proposing to bring light rail across the I-90 bridge, through Bellevue and on to Redmond. The City wants to find the right fit for Bellevue by exploring the “best practices” of other light rail systems to learn what works and doesn’t work elsewhere and apply those lessons to Bellevue. This project will not decide specific routing or station locations.

The Light Rail Best Practices Committee wants to hear from the Bellevue community at its first open house: **Thursday, Sept. 13, 4-7 p.m., Bellevue City Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> floor.**

Who should attend? Anyone who lives, works, walks, bikes, drives a car or rides a bus anywhere in Bellevue. Come to the open house to:

- Learn out about light rail, best practices and East Link projects;
- Find out about issues and opportunities identified so far;
- Share your comments, ideas, and concerns;
- Tell the City which best practices should be explored.



The Committee will use community feedback to provide direction to staff and project consultants on ideas to explore as the project progresses. Public comments so far have addressed such topics as:

- Neighborhood character and protection;
- Station accessibility;
- Street design and operations;
- Land use and property values;
- Environmental protection;
- Public safety and construction.

You can comment on best practices by attending the open house or by e-mailing Michael Katterman or Bernard Van de Kamp at: [mkattermann@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:mkattermann@bellevuewa.gov) or [bvandekamp@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:bvandekamp@bellevuewa.gov). For more information visit the project website at: [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light\\_rail\\_best\\_practices\\_intro.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light_rail_best_practices_intro.htm).

## Proposed regulations target neighborhood character

Starting this month, the Planning Commission will consider code changes to reduce the impacts of redevelopment in single family neighborhoods. For the next several months, commissioners will work with staff to develop regulations targeting three areas of community concern:

- Loss of trees and greenscape associated with the teardown/rebuild of single family homes;
- Loss of sunlight and privacy due to out-of-scale development; and
- Impacts of construction activity on the livability of neighborhoods.

The City Council agreed this summer to pursue the Planning Commission’s preliminary recommendations for addressing public concerns. The Council further agreed with a phased approach to considering code changes.

In the first phase, the Planning Commission and City Council will consider changes to:

- Modify the way single family building height is measured (aimed at restricting unnecessary lot build-up);
- Restrict rooftop mechanical equipment, lot assembly, and “pop-up carports” in areas visible from the street;.
- Require informational signs and regular debris removal at construction sites;

- Establish a tree retention requirement for single family lots undergoing redevelopment; and
- Establish a front yard greenscape requirement for redeveloped single family lots.

First phase changes will be discussed by the Planning Commission on Sept. 12 and Sept. 26. Additional meetings, including a public hearing, would be scheduled later in the fall and a final decision by the City Council could be made by December or January.

A second phase of code amendments will be considered by the Planning Commission and the public beginning in 2008. Potential changes could include:

- Another look at tree retention, with the possibility of expanding tree retention requirements to include lots not undergoing redevelopment;
- New requirements for placement of heating and air conditioning units;
- Special standards for homes exceeding a size threshold (could include requirements for daylight plane analysis, articulated second story, other techniques for reducing impacts on neighboring homes);
- New setback requirement for guest cottages;
- Changes in codes or procedures that define remodels and allow for private streets to count as part of setbacks;
- Requirements for clean-up of abandoned building sites;
- A new publication, *Guidelines for Reasonable Development*.

Public comment is invited at all stages of code discussion and adoption. News of upcoming hearings and other involvement opportunities is available on the city website, [www.bellevuewa.gov](http://www.bellevuewa.gov). Questions and comments on the proposed changes may be directed by e-mail to [NeighborhoodOutreach@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:NeighborhoodOutreach@bellevuewa.gov), or by telephone to Cheryl Kuhn, 452-4089, or Steph Hewitt, 452-2564.

## [Learn a better way to run neighborhood meetings](#)

When neighborhood discussions become heated and emotional, decision-making can be painful. Too often, rigid rules and formal votes get in the way of more creative ways to achieve consensus. If you'd like to toss the rulebook and work toward agreement in a way that preserves feelings and relationships, consider attending the Oct. 11 presentation of Bellevue's Neighborhood Mediation Manager Andrew Kidde on *Alternatives to Roberts Rules: Making Decisions for the Whole Community*.

Andrew is a mediator with extensive experience in dispute resolution training. His talk will be presented at the luncheon meeting of the Washington State Chapter of the Community Associate Institute. The event is scheduled for 11:30-1:30 at the Coast Bellevue Hotel, 625 116<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE. Cost of the luncheon is \$25. Reservations can be made by calling 425-778-6378.

## [Walkers, bikers, trail users – City needs your comments](#)

Do you bike or walk around Bellevue for recreation or as a commuter? Would you if there were more bike- and pedestrian-friendly paths, lanes or trails? The City of Bellevue wants to hear from you. Bellevue planners are currently updating the city's pedestrian and bicycle plan and your ideas could help to expand the network of routes for walkers and bikers.

On Sept. 27 at 5:30 p.m., the Transportation Commission will review a staff-recommended pedestrian and bicycle network, based in part on public feedback received this spring. If you are interested in what biking and walking locations are recommended, please attend this meeting in City Hall conference room 1E-108.



After the Sept. 27 meeting, staff will post online an interactive mapping system that will make it easier for people to comment on the recommended pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements. To stay informed about the mapping system, future Transportation Commission meetings, and other pedestrian/bicycle information, please visit the project website at <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pedbikeplan.htm> and sign-up to receive e-mail updates. For more information, contact the project manager, Franz Loewenherz, at 425-452-4077 or [floewenherz@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:floewenherz@bellevuewa.gov).

## Who Ya Gonna Call?



Forget about Ghostbusters!

- When you see a *maintenance problem* – a pothole, flooding, clogged catch basin, a fallen tree, a broken pipe or sidewalk – call Street Maintenance at 452-7840.
- For *code violations* – inoperable vehicles, dumping or excessive litter on private property, building without a permit, illegal storage or illegally parked boats and RVs – call Code Compliance at 452-4570.
- For *neighborhood concerns* or questions about city programs and services, call Neighborhood Outreach at 452-6836.
- For information about *parks, trails and community centers*, call Parks & Community Services at 452-6881.
- For referral to *health and human services*, call 211.
- And for *medical and public safety emergencies*, call 911.

## Neighborhood rants and raves

Neighborhoods keep coming up with clever ways to highlight the good deeds and volunteer efforts of civic-minded residents. The Whispering Heights/Collingwood newsletter features “Rants and Raves,” patterned after the *Seattle Times* column of the same name. Residents submit a paragraph or two about something that catches their eye – an act of thoughtfulness, like the two girls who cleaned up the SE 47<sup>th</sup> trail, or an act of thoughtlessness, like the park users who failed to pick up their litter. Fortunately, the raves outnumber the rants!

## Vuecrest turns 60

Every year in September, the Vuecrest neighbors get together for a block party. This year, however, there is something special brewing – the neighborhood turns 60, and the community is planning an anniversary celebration like no other.

On Sept. 6, the Vuecrest Community Association will close off the esplanade of Park Road between Vineyard Crest and Belfair Road for the *60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Extravaganza*. Residents will eat pizza and mingle with invited guests, including Mayor Degginger and City Council members. Firefighters from Station 5 will bring a big, red fire engine to the party, and the Police Department will offer photo ops with the motorcycle, bicycle, K-9, and Bomb Squad Units.

Vuecrest boasts a rich history that predates the City of Bellevue. More than 60 years ago, the area near Evergreen Drive and Vineyard Crest was laden with strawberry fields, evergreen trees, and rows of fruit trees. The Downey family owned the land for decades, and sold it after World War II to developer W.E. Rodgers and banker James H. Barber. The visionary duo developed the 80-acre homestead into 204 residential lots with strict covenants that would protect views and create a unique neighborhood identity. On April 25, 1947, Vuecrest officially became a subdivision.

Sixty years later, much of the original Vuecrest character remains. It’s a neighborhood of manicured lawns, meticulously maintained landscapes, and graceful street rhythms – “Leave-it-to-Beaver land” in the words of Judith White, Chair of the Social and Welcoming Committee.

If you would like the city to participate in a special neighborhood event, or if you would like to receive information about a city program, please contact your Neighborhood Liaison in the Neighborhood Resource Center at 425-452-6836.

## September meetings

*(All meetings are in City Hall unless otherwise noted. Agendas are subject to change. You may confirm with Neighborhood Outreach the day before or day of the meeting. Or consult the city web pages listed below to download agendas.)*

**9/3 Labor Day Holiday** - all city offices closed

**9/4 City Council** (6:00 study session, Council Conference Room) Neighborhood Enhancement Program update, Puget Sound Regional Council Draft Vision 2040, second quarter budget monitoring (8:00 regular session,

Council Chambers) Consent calendar; public hearing on extension of the Meydenbauer Bay moratorium to complete planning study [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council\\_overview.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm)

**9/4 East Bellevue Community Council** (6:30, Lake Hills Clubhouse) Public hearing, followed by action, on the Hancock/Muren rezone application [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/EBCC\\_Homepage.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/EBCC_Homepage.htm)

**9/6 Human Services Commission** (6:30, 1E-120) Review first draft of the 2007-08 Human Services Needs Update [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/human\\_serv\\_comm.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/human_serv_comm.htm)

**9/6 Environmental Services Commission** (6:30, 1E-112) Proposed mid-biennium budget update, Emergency Preparedness update, Food Waste Recycling Program, Storm Water Utility review [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/envIRON\\_serv\\_comm.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/envIRON_serv_comm.htm)

**9/6 Bellevue Network on Aging** (8:30 a.m., 1E-120) Update on Bellevue Network On Aging logo; discussion on network resource library development; Kirkland Senior Council meeting sign-up; city initiatives; committee reports [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/network\\_on\\_aging.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/network_on_aging.htm)

**9/6 Bel-Red Corridor Project Steering Committee** (4:00, Council Conference Room) Discussion and confirmation of the Steering Committee's Final Preferred Alternative to be forwarded to City Council [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bel-red\\_intro.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bel-red_intro.htm)

**9/10 City Council** (6:00 extended study session, Council Conference Room) Maintenance facilities at Bellevue Service Center; update on Bel-Red planning study and schedule; Bellevue Art Museum funding allocation. [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council\\_overview.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm)

**9/11 Parks & Community Services Board** (6:00, Council Conference Room) Agenda to be announced [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/parks\\_board.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/parks_board.htm)

**9/12 Planning Commission** (7:00, Council Conference Room) Discussion of Great Streets; Neighborhood Character initiative measures to preserve trees and greenscape [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning\\_commission.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning_commission.htm)

**9/13 Transportation Commission** (5:30, Council Conference Room) Great Streets; Transportation Facility Pan; I-90 Corridor Plan [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/trans\\_comm.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/trans_comm.htm)

**9/13 Light Rail Best Practices Open House** (4:00-7:00 Bellevue City Hall first floor) Opportunity to learn more about light rail, best practices and East Link projects [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light\\_rail\\_best\\_practices\\_intro.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light_rail_best_practices_intro.htm)

**9/17 City Council** (6:00 study session, Council Conference Room) METRO update on circulator/partnership and Rapid Ride; Utilities asset management and failures/claims reduction efforts; Police use of red light camera technology (8:00 regular session, Council Chambers) 24-hour Relay update/recognitions; consent calendar [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council\\_overview.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm)

**9/18 Human Services Commission** (6:30, Council Conference Room) Public hearing on 2008 Community Development Block Grant preliminary funding recommendations; mid-biennium review of General Fund contracts [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/human\\_serv\\_comm.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/human_serv_comm.htm)

**9/19 Neighborhood Enhancement Program Workshop for Sammamish/East Lake Hills** (7:00-9:00 p.m., Spiritridge Elementary School, 16401 SE 24th St.) Opportunity to review and comment on projects proposed for NEP funding

**9/20 Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan Steering Committee** (5:00 p.m., 1E-113) Discussion of early plan alternatives [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/meydenbauer\\_project\\_intro.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/meydenbauer_project_intro.htm).

**9/24 City Council** (6:00 extended study session, Council Conference Room) Bel-Red Corridor study recommendations [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council\\_overview.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm)

**9/25 Light Rail Best Practices Committee** (7:00-9:00, Room 1E-113) Review and discussion of open house feedback and topic areas; and East Link presentation by Sound Transit [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light\\_rail\\_best\\_practices\\_intro.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light_rail_best_practices_intro.htm)

**9/26 Planning Commission** (7:00, Council Conference Room) Discussion of proposed code changes to address impacts of neighborhood redevelopment [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning\\_commission.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning_commission.htm)

**9/27 Transportation Commission** (5:30, Council Conference Room) Ped/Bike Plan update; Downtown Comprehensive Plan [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/trans\\_comm.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/trans_comm.htm)

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Bellevue's Neighborhood Outreach Office offers a variety of programs and partnerships for neighborhood leaders and active residents. To learn more about citizen involvement opportunities and programs to enhance neighborhoods, call 452-6836.