

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

October 22, 2008
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Orrico, Vice-Chair Sheffels, Commissioners Ferris, Mathews, Robertson, Hamlin

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Lai

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Inghram, Department of Planning and Community Development; Kevin O'Neill, Franz Loewenherz, Department of Transportation

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Chair Orrico who presided. Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Lai who was excused.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. James Binder, a resident of 142nd Place NE, said he serves as a member of the Bridle Trails Community Club. He thanked the Commission for considering the 140th Avenue NE bike lanes issue seriously. In May the Bridle Trails Community Club voted unanimously to inform the city that the proposal is against the goals for the Bridle Trails area. Any widening that would occur by adding bicycle and pedestrian lanes would increase traffic speeds on the roadway, which is already heavily used. There are 58 driveways between NE 24th Street and NE 40th Street, which will be an even bigger problem if 140th Avenue NE becomes a commuter route. The project would require the removal of trees, which is in opposition to the direct desires of the community. In the project score ranking, the area scored 123 out of 150, which is not good, yet the Transportation Commission still indicated a desire to add NS-4. Making 140th Avenue NE a commuter route will be a road to nowhere; there are no schools north of NE 24th Street, and there are no retail centers, and there are no employment centers. The best alternative would be to connect at NE 24th Street over to 148th Avenue NE through the recently completed NE 29th Street connector.

Mr. Norm Hanson, 3851 136th Avenue NE, said the Bridle Trails community likes the current recreational multiuse pathway in place along 140th Avenue NE which offers recreational opportunities. Any north/south bike lanes should be directed to the Redmond Overlake area by turning right at NE 24th Street, continuing onto NE 29th Street that already has bike lanes, then on to 148th Avenue NE. That approach would be a low-cost way to serve a much more dense urban area. The Bridle Trails Community Club certainly appreciates the time taken by the Transportation Commission in deliberating the ped/bike plan, but does not agree with the position taken by the Transportation Commission regarding 140th Avenue NE. They have established goals and objectives for the ped/bike plan, and the existing recreational bicycle facilities on 140th Avenue NE meet those goals and objectives. The goals and objectives seem to be in conflict with the Bridle Trails community as they relate to the 140th Avenue NE north/south route. The proposed

140th Avenue NE project would be very expensive in both dollars and impacts on the community.

Ms. Loretta Lopez, 13419 NE 33rd Lane, said she serves as co-president of the Bridle Trails Community Club but was speaking representing only herself as a resident and taxpayer. She said the proposed bike lanes for 140th Avenue NE were suggested by the Transportation Commission and not the Transportation staff or members of the community. The suggestion was made that notices concerning the ped/bike plan be sent to every affected property owner. While the plan is considered to be only a vision statement, it must be understood that vision statements often become plans that are implemented. In light of that there should be more sufficient notice given to the community about what exactly is going on. There are a large number of people citywide that do not understand their properties will be affected. Having all of the projects shown on a web site is clever but does not actually make it easy to know neighborhood by neighborhood what the impacts will be. The Planning Commission should consider inserting in the language of the vision statement the need for more adequate notice once projects are funded and are set for implementation. None of the projects include a price tag, which makes it very difficult to determine how to allocate resources, which are limited. The Bridle Trails community does not want the proposed 140th Avenue NE bike project; the community is satisfied with the current multiuse path.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consensus.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCILS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS None

6. STAFF REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Manager Paul Inghram invited the Commissioners to attend a transportation management program workshop on October 28. He also noted that in the Commission desk packets were communications from the Bridle Trails community regarding the ped/bike plan and a letter regarding the Bel-Red area.

Mr. Inghram confirmed that the planning short course has been scheduled for November 5. He said it will be held at City Hall beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Inghram said he attended the recent regional APA conference which was focused on issues of sustainability. He said there were both good speakers and good discussions. The topics covered included farming practices that occur on the doorsteps of urban areas, and the increased demand for housing in walkable neighborhoods and the decline in demand for single family homes in fringe suburban areas. There was also a session focused on Bel-Red that was well attended and well received.

Mr. Inghram said he also recently attended planning policy briefing sessions in Washington, D.C. He said it was interesting to hear planning issues at the federal level and to see the interest in infrastructure and the reauthorization of the federal transportation funding package. There were also discussions regarding climate change and a cap and trade bill, the current mortgage crisis, and the possibility of holding a lame duck session on a stimulus bill that may include infrastructure funding.

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Ped/Bike Plan Update CPA

Senior transportation planner Franz Loewenherz said the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan has a requirement for a ped/bike component. The requirement stems from the state Growth Management Act. The current ped/bike plan was adopted in 1999; it represented an update of the 1993 document. The proposed update include amendments to existing policies, the addition of a new goal statement in the Transportation Element, replacement of the network maps, amendments to policies in other Comprehensive Plan elements, and amendments to the ped/bike Transportation Facilities Plan.

Mr. Loewenherz said a public hearing is scheduled for November 19 but has not yet been noticed. The Commission could elect to make its recommendation to the City Council that same evening after the hearing, or at a meeting in December.

The Commissioners were shown the documents that reflected the public engagement effort. Mr. Loewenherz noted that in addition to the public engagement process, there have been 16 Transportation Commission meetings on the topic which generated 50 single spaced pages of minutes.

Assistant Director Kevin O'Neill distributed to the Commissioners a document containing all of the proposed policy revisions. He said a thorough review of the existing Comprehensive Plan policies and ped/bike plan found that there are policies in a number of different elements that relate to the pedestrian and bicycle environment in many different ways. There were several policies added during the 2003-2004 major Comprehensive Plan update. There are policies in the ped/bike Transportation Facilities Plan, which is in Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan, all of which have a "PB" suffix.

Some redundancies were found in the various policies, particularly between the older 1999 PB policies and the newer Transportation Element policies. Mr. O'Neill allowed that staff often is more adept at adding new policies than they are at taking old ones away, which is to some degree what happened in the 2003-2004 Comprehensive Plan update. The current effort is aimed in part at eliminating those redundancies while reflecting the changes made during the last Comprehensive Plan update along with changed circumstances that have occurred since then.

The City Council made the suggestion that what the plan is lacking is a more robust goal statement that clarifies what the plan is intended to achieve. Staff worked with the Transportation Commission to develop a new vision/goal statement. The Transportation Commission also wanted to have more specific objectives incorporated in the plan. The goal statement being recommended by the Transportation Commission would be added to the beginning of the pedestrian and bicycle system section of the Transportation Element. He stressed that the introductory statement that references collaboration with community stakeholders is intended to apply to planning, designing and building.

Mr. O'Neill said new policies PB-4, PB-5 and PB-6 relate to trail improvements and protection. They specifically provide guidance for when trails are to be improved. There are also strong policies that call for incorporating non-motorized facilities in the planning and design of roadways; those policies lean toward the complete streets concept.

The policies include support for incorporating best practices and innovative tools. Policy TR-94 was added to incorporate ideas such as bicycle sharing and innovative implementation tools that are being used nationwide. Some of the tools in use across the country address the issue of how to provide facilities in constrained rights-of-way without adding more asphalt. Seattle is

currently using an in-lane treatment called sharrows where the travel lanes are narrowed and bike lanes are created without expanding the curb-to-curb width.

Mr. O'Neill said the policies support public involvement and being context-sensitive. PB-19 is a new policy that was added to ensure that buildings are not constructed in a way that would block a future planned bike path, especially one in the 12-year Transportation Facilities Plan.

Finally, the Transportation Commission added policy support to developing a program to implement the ped/bike plan.

With regard to policy TR-79, Mr. O'Neill allowed that the Planning Commission, and indeed Mayor Degginger, had previously raised a question with regard to having language that equates low-income status to special accessibility needs. He explained that the intent of the proposed language is to make sure Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is taken into account. He suggested the language could be shortened to read "Serve concentrations of residents with special accessibility needs" and still achieve the objective.

Commissioner Robertson asked if there is a definition elsewhere, either in federal, state or city code, for special accessibility needs. Mr. Loewenherz said the parlance is commonly used in transportation documents across the nation. He said he did not know if it is a term with a specific definition. Commissioner Robertson suggested including a definition would be a good idea.

Commissioner Robertson asked if the bullet points in TR-79 are listed in any given order. Mr. O'Neill said when the Transportation Commission worked on prioritizing projects, they weighted each differently. Mr. Loewenherz added that the Transportation Commission used the policy framework to directly inform the prioritization of the indicators used to score the project list.

Commissioner Robertson questioned how the Transportation Commission could give a heavier weight to some than to others if the policy does not specify any weighting. Mr. Loewenherz suggested that numerically referencing a specific weighting used by a single Commission may not be the right approach. He said he could foresee that in the future a Commission evaluating a project may determine that there should be a different numerical weighting. That language of the policy as drafted allows for that flexibility.

Chair Orrico said the weighting given by the Transportation Commission makes sense except that it misses issues such as the one in Somerset where school children must walk a dangerous route to school but because there have not been any accidents the need falls through the cracks. She agreed with Mr. Loewenherz that the policy should allow for the greatest degree of flexibility. The Transportation Commission has elected to apply certain weighting, but the Planning Commission may want a different scheme. If a specific weighting is given to each in the Comprehensive Plan language, all flexibility will be lost.

Mr. Loewenherz explained that the weighting used by the Transportation Commission informed the GIS point ranking. Numerous layers of maps were placed one on top of the other, and the projects in the vicinity of the layering process received the scoring. Some projects did not score very well in that process, including the 140th Avenue NE corridor, largely because it is not in a highly dense area and is not associated with a transit corridor. The Transportation Commission, however, brought other sections of policy to bear in evaluating projects, including the notion of completing north/south and east/west bike corridors, which applies to 140th Avenue NE. Using that additional step raised some low-scoring projects to a higher emphasis.

Mr. O'Neill said moving from broad plan direction to getting something built on the ground is a

multi-phased process. The ped/bike plan is a long-range facilities plan that has hundreds of projects and which will take decades to bring to fruition. Every two years the Transportation Commission works to update the Transportation Facilities Plan, which is the 12-year package of projects; that process often utilizes a different scoring exercise because ped/bike projects are mixed in with roadway projects and intersection improvements. Additionally, every two years the Council updates the six-year CIP, a process that can also involve scoring and ranking. Ultimately the Council decides what to fund, then a whole new process that involves the public begins to determine designs. Policy TR-79 was used to score the projects in the ped/bike plan, but it will not be the final word as projects move toward construction.

Chair Orrico commented that under school district rules, school busses do not pick up children who live within a one-mile radius of an elementary school. Accordingly, there should be a high priority given to sidewalks within a one-mile radius of elementary schools. Additionally, high priority should be given to sidewalk projects where there are school bus pickups. Mr. O'Neill explained that facilities near schools, community facilities and retail centers received a higher point value. Projects in areas within a quarter mile of a school received a higher point value than those within a half mile and so forth. Chair Orrico said in her opinion the entire first mile within a school should be weighted equally.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Robertson, Mr. Loewenherz explained that the category called social justice indicators included areas with high concentrations of elderly persons, the very young, lower auto ownership levels, and income status. He said the social justice indicators were not afforded the highest point value; the greater weight by far was given to filling in gaps. The social justice indicators were certainly important, but they were not deemed as important in the overall scheme of things.

Mr. O'Neill noted that TR-79 is an existing policy that is proposed to be revised. He said the question for the Commission to determine is whether or not the amendments are the right ones to make.

Commissioner Ferris expressed concern over the fact that the results of the project ranking are to be published in the Comprehensive Plan without indicating what the basis of the ranking was. In the future there will be reevaluations, but only of those things that get changed. Something ranked high in 2009 may not be ranked high in 2010 or beyond, but it will not be possible to know what the basis of the high ranking was. Either the criteria should be identified, or the rankings should not be included. Mr. O'Neill reiterated the way the rankings were done. He said all of the draft projects were run through the GIS analysis, which was based on the policy framework. The Transportation Commission made a decision about where to make the high, medium and low cutoffs. They also pulled other policy factors into play, such as the priority north/south and east/west bicycle corridors, and made a series of adjustments. He allowed that the section in question could include a preamble explaining in detail how the rankings were done.

Mr. Loewenherz suggestion any discussion of that sort should reside in the ped-bike plan report documentation. That way anyone in future years would be able to easily follow the breadcrumb trail.

Chair Orrico questioned how the Planning Commission would review the work of the Transportation Commission without knowing exactly how they did their ranking work. If asked to redo the work of the Transportation Commission, the Planning Commission might come up with different rankings. Mr. O'Neill said staff would be happy to outline in writing the steps taken by the Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Sheffels asked if the ranked list and the priorities assigned to the projects should

even be in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. O'Neill explained that Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan includes all the general elements. Volume 2 is home to all 14 subarea plans and includes five or six transportation facility plans, including the ped-bike transportation facility plan. Each one of those transportation facilities plans includes long lists of projects, and some of the subarea plans, including the downtown plan and the Bel-Red plan, also have capital projects. What the plans typically do not have is a priority list like the one proposed for the ped-bike plan. He said the Transportation Commission and staff felt, and the Council likely would agree, that because of the large number of projects in the plan, not having any priorities would make the plan nothing more than a long wish list of projects. One possible compromise would be to include priorities in the functional plan only, not in the transportation facilities plan.

Mr. Inghram said on one hand it is within the purview of the Planning Commission to reopen the priorities issue and review every single project with an eye on adjusting priorities. At the other end of the spectrum, the Commission could simply elect to accept the work of the Transportation Commission. Staff believes the work done by the Transportation Commission was exhaustive, but would be willing to go through a much more detailed examination of the work they did.

Commissioner Robertson said she did not want to redo the work of the Transportation Commission but did want to see in the Comprehensive Plan a clear trail of crumbs for people in the future to follow. She said she would welcome a briefing from staff and the Transportation Commission on the process undertaken.

Commissioner Sheffels agreed and said she also did not want to redo the work of the Transportation Commission, with the possible exception of reviewing specific projects about which there are differing opinions. She also agreed that there should be some indication in the document showing what constituted the high, medium and low priority rankings. The city has limited funding for capital projects, and when it comes time to allocate those dollars careful consideration will be given to the high priority projects. Mr. O'Neill explained that the Transportation Commission is currently going through the full list of projects with an eye on having about \$15 million to spend on ped-bike projects in the next CIP. The money will pay for only a small fraction of even the high priority projects, so what the Transportation Commission is doing is looking very carefully at the policies and the priorities in developing a recommendation to the Council.

Commissioner Ferris agreed the Comprehensive Plan should include an outline of the process undertaken by the Transportation Commission to rank the projects.

Chair Orrico said in 2007 the Council allocated a chunk of money for sidewalks in neighborhoods. She said in her neighborhood there is a dangerous street without sidewalks that school children must use to get to and from school. The Transportation Commission reviewed a number of projects and developed a recommendation that included projects that would add sidewalks to streets that already had sidewalks on one side, while the dangerous Somerset roadway used by school children had no sidewalks at all. She said had she not protested the Transportation Commission would have proceeded as they are decided. She expressed some discomfort in simply blessing the work of the Transportation Commission. She proposed pulling the prioritized list out of the Comprehensive Plan entirely. The Planning Commission should not herald the list as a roadmap of priorities when in fact it might not agree with the priorities shown.

Commissioner Robertson said she would support giving priority to pedestrian projects in areas where no pedestrian facilities currently exist. Mr. Loewenherz said to some extent that has been done in the project lists. In the past the project lists did not differentiate one side of a street from the other; the proposed list gives a different project number to each side of the street. Given the city's funding circumstances, only one side of the street will be targeted in areas where there are

no pedestrian facilities at all.

Mr. O'Neill pointed out that in 2007 the Transportation Commission was given the task of prioritizing some 27 neighborhood sidewalk projects, but only fund three or four of them. All of those projects were included in the prioritization screening done using the criteria; some projects ranked very high while others ranked very low. Because the Transportation Commission understood the neighborhood priorities, they made all 27 projects a high priority in the current proposed recommendation, regardless of how they ranked in the technical scoring process.

Commissioner Mathews suggested that to not include a ranked project list would evoke the notion that the Commission does not think safety or connectivity or any of the other ranking criteria are important at all. There should be a statement included that outlines why certain projects were identified as being high priority.

Commissioner Hamlin asked if the desires of those neighborhoods that do not want sidewalks were taken into account. Mr. Loewenherz allowed that in any given neighborhood there are both opponents and proponents. There were very clear calls by some neighborhoods against proposed trail connections that had been carried forward from previous plans, and as a result many projects were pulled from the project list; those projects are, however, depicted on the network map because many of them already exist as informal connections. Mr. O'Neill said the 140th Avenue NE project was an exception to the rule.

Commissioner Ferris said he had no desire to redo the work done by the Transportation Commission, and was opposed to not including the prioritized list. He said what he wanted to see was documentation of the process that created the prioritized project list. Chair Orrico pointed out that the prioritized project list will be in the other document even if it is not included in the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Ferris said he could support that provided the prioritized list does not go away completely.

It was agreed staff should bring back to the Commission options for how to address the prioritized project list in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. O'Neill explained that policy PB-2 builds on the direction given by the Council to have specific completion targets, particularly on the bike side, that will result in a clear, connected system. The idea is to include policy language that will help to direct future spending. The policy states that within 10 years of plan adoption the city should implement at least two completed north/south and at least two east/west bicycle routes that connect the boundaries of the city limits and connects to the broader regional bicycle system; within five years implement at least one completed east/west and north/south bicycle route through downtown Bellevue; within 10 years reduce pedestrian/vehicle and bicycle/vehicle accidents by 25 percent from 2007 levels); within 10 years construct 25 more miles of sidewalks along arterial streets, including collector arterials, above the 2007 levels; and within 10 years increase trips by bicycle and foot by 10 percent over 2007 levels.

Mr. O'Neill shared with the Commissioners maps of the north/south and east/west routes chosen by the Transportation Commission. The map included color coding to indicate which sections have already been completed, projects that have been proposed, and the gaps in the system.

Mr. O'Neill said the Council likes the language of PB-2 but has voiced concerns over legally tying the hands of the city by having the policy in the Comprehensive Plan. The issue was referred to the City Attorney's office for an opinion, and they indicated that there has never been a challenge before the Growth Management Hearings Board about the lack of the ability of a city to implement a facilities plan. One option would be to turn the policy into more of a goal, giving

the city some wiggle room while clearly describing the intent.

Commissioner Sheffels pointed out that the city is desirous of increasing the number of pedestrians and bicycles in the city significantly. She suggested the policy language regarding reducing the number of accidents by 25 percent should be worded more as a goal than a policy directive. Mr. O'Neill said pedestrian and bicycle accidents are tallied every year. The goal, according to the policy language, would be a net reduction in the number of accidents. Safety is a function of both numbers and facilities. If facilities are designed and constructed to be safe, there can be more bicycles and pedestrians operating while experiencing fewer accidents.

Mr. Loewenherz pointed out that the number of accidents between pedestrians and vehicles has remained steady despite increases in both pedestrians and vehicles since 1999. The policy speaks to design but also speaks to education and awareness building activities. The language proposed by the Transportation Commission reflects their desire to make a strong statement and to shoot for bold and significant improvements.

Commissioner Ferris pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan generally deals with the long-term vision for the city and does not include specific timeframes. The Bel-Red subarea plan, which was just recently completed, has no language at all about when the particulars are supposed to happen. Mr. O'Neill noted that the Transportation Element includes specific modesplit goals, and the MMA documents have sidewalk completion goals. The reason the proposed policy is suggested for inclusion in the facilities plan is precisely because it goes to a level of specificity that is not typically found in the Comprehensive Plan, particularly in the general elements.

Mr. Loewenherz explained that the network map is a part of the Transportation Element. It portrays what exists and lays out a broad vision of what is proposed. He said the intent of the network map is to improve connectivity between origins and destinations; highlight system gaps; and assure context sensitive designs. The project maps are contained in the facilities section of the document and include 90 miles of sidewalk facilities; 143 miles of bicycle facilities; and 21 miles of trail facilities, all in a variety of configurations. It will take many years to complete the system projects. He explained that all of the projects are conceptual and that the final details for the design of each project will be developed as the projects proceed along the implementation process.

With regard to the 140th Avenue NE corridor project, which has garnered the largest amount of public attention, Mr. Loewenherz said the area in question is between NE 60th Street in Redmond to NE 8th Street. There are currently bike lanes in place at both ends of the corridor. The project builds on a project that was adopted in the previous plans that called for bike lanes on both sides of 140th Avenue NE. A number of different options were considered for the corridor, which has been identified as being a key missing link tying together the north and the south. A bicycle facility on 132nd Avenue NE and 134th Avenue NE was considered but has been pulled from the books because of the reaction of the equestrian community. Consideration was given to 148th Avenue NE, but only briefly given the volumes of traffic and the realities of needing to take a traffic lane in order to accommodate a bicycle lane.

A number of options for what kind of facility should be constructed along 140th Avenue NE. Ultimately, the Transportation Commission opted for bicycle lanes. On October 6 the issue was taken before the Council, and Councilmember Noble expressed concern about whether or not the proposal reflected context sensitive design. Transportation Commissioner Larrivee was present to explain the Transportation Commission's findings and allowed that the discussion had not been an easy one. Councilmember Noble ultimately concluded that the Planning Commission should visit the site and deliberate in greater detail.

Project S-304e contemplates a six-foot pathway or sidewalk and bike lanes on both sides of the roadway. The Redmond end has a six-foot sidewalk, three-foot planter, and a five-foot bike lane on both sides of the street. The roadway pavement is 26 feet wide and the right-of-way ranges between 58 feet and 72 feet. As currently configured, the roadway has narrow shoulders in places, a number of driveway cuts, and vegetation that would likely be impacted.

Mr. Loewenherz allowed that the corridor will not be an easy one to work with. Realistically, the limited funding available will keep the project from being first out of the gate, even though it is earmarked as a high priority.

Answering a question asked by Chair Orrico, Mr. O'Neill said the concern raised by Councilmember Noble is similar to those raised by the Bridle Trails community. It is possible that the recommended project could add ten feet of paved surface to the roadway by adding the bike lanes, and an additional paved width if a six-foot sidewalk were added to the east side of the street. His concern was focused on the resulting overall width, which may not be consistent with the character of the area.

Chair Orrico asked if the Transportation Commission considered any alternatives. Mr. Loewenherz said the Transportation Commission reached their conclusion regarding the 140th Avenue NE project after hours of meetings and review of numerous options. The Transportation Commission concluded that none of the alternatives were robust enough to serve the intended purpose, so they voted to recommend the project as proposed. Early in the process staff recommended an off-street path configuration on the east side of the road, somewhere around 10 to 14 feet wide. There was community opposition to that concept, and ultimately the concept was scaled down to eight to ten feet. The Transportation Commission held that that would not be adequate to accommodate the needs of cyclists.

Mr. O'Neill said in some constrained urban environments bike facilities have been put in by narrowing vehicle lane widths. That option may or may not work in the Bridle Trails area. During the design phase for the project, the intent will be to keep additional asphalt to a minimum.

Commissioner Ferris said he is an avid biker and has found Bellevue to be horrible from the perspective of having connected bike paths. He said he rides up West Lake Sammamish Parkway all the time and likes what Redmond has done on their side of the line with bike lanes on each side. Rather than seeking the Cadillac option, the focus should be more on getting bike lanes in with the least amount of cost and impact. In Vancouver roads one off the main arterial have been treated with bollards which allow vehicles in at only one point, providing local access. The local residents like them because the result is essentially a street dedicated to bikes that does not deny them access by cars; the use is far less intense and no additional asphalt is required.

Mr. Loewenherz said staff is aware of the significant efforts that are occurring both regionally and nationally in the design of bike lanes. The Vancouver example is called a bike boulevard. That level of specificity, however, is too detailed for the ped-bike plan. There is policy guidance included that will inform the design team with regard to using best and innovative practices.

Mr. O'Neill stated that the competition for right-of-way is an ongoing issue for the city. He said he is confident that as the rules and practices change in the coming years, Bellevue will be more comfortable in utilizing new approaches.

Mr. Inghram proposed removing from the project description for the 140th Avenue NE project the exact width for the bike lanes. Mr. Loewenherz said that could be done, leaving the width issue to the design phase.

Commissioner Sheffels said the 140th Avenue NE project at least has the right-of-way necessary to accomplish something without having to acquire any additional property. She said she would not want to take the project off the table, but would want to see an innovative design used when it comes time to build it.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 2, 2008

Commissioner Mathews referred to the fourth paragraph on page 17 of the minutes and pointed out that "...an approach that focuses on an FAR of 2.0 inside the nodes and 3.0 outside the nodes..." should be reversed to read "...an approach that focuses on an FAR of 3.0 inside the nodes and 2.0 outside the nodes."

Commissioner Ferris noted that the minutes reflect his presence at the meeting when in fact he was present only by telephone and participated only in the Bel-Red discussion. He suggested the paragraph under Roll Call should be revised to read "Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Ferris who participated in the Bel-Red discussion by telephone."

Chair Orrico suggested Commissioner Ferris should not be shown as present for the meeting because his participation by telephone did not count toward a quorum. She agreed with the proposed revision to the Roll Call paragraph.

Commissioner Robertson called attention to the second sentence of fourth paragraph on page 16 and suggested it should be changed to read "She said she also wanted to see redevelopment outside of the nodes."

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Robertson. Second was by Commissioner Mathews and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioners Hamlin and Ferris abstained from voting.

B. July 9, 2008

Commissioner Ferris suggested revising the Roll Paragraph as was done for the July 2 minutes for the same reason.

Commissioner Mathews noted the minutes should reflect he was absent from the meeting rather than present. He added that reference to Commissioner Bach should be removed as he was no longer on the Commission, and the list of those absent should include Commissioner Ferris.

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Sheffels. Second was by Commissioner Robertson and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioners Mathews and Hamlin abstained from voting.

C. September 10, 2008

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Hamlin. Second was by Commissioner Robertson and the motion carried unanimously.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Norm Hanson, 3851 136th Avenue NE, said the north/south priority route was selected by simply drawing a line on the map. In the ranking process, the section through Bridle Trails came in at 123rd out of 150, which means the route is not feasible and will never be constructed. There is a fallacy in some of the thinking. To a large degree, the bicycle lobby has been pushing for the project; it has not been the community. There are already bicycle facilities in place, and they work very well because of the low density of the area and the fact that 140th Avenue NE has excellent site distances. Getting to Redmond is a good goal, but up beyond the golf course the area is very sparsely populated. It is rare to see anyone walking or biking in that area. He encouraged the Commissioners to visit the site on their own before coming to a conclusion. The community had to jump through the same hoops in 1999. A bike lane was installed on 116th Avenue NE, which will be connected to the park and ride lot in Kirkland at NE 70th Street.

Ms. Loretta Lopez, 13419 NE 33rd Lane, said a north/south bike lane already exists along 116th Avenue NE even though for some reason it does not appear on the map. The claim that the 140th Avenue NE project was in the 1999 plan is not a solid reason for the city moving forward with it. Federal standards will dictate the width of the bike lanes, and will require adherence to lighting standards like those along NE 24th Street, which the community strongly objected to. It is always a battle for the neighborhoods to have to come to City Hall and argue in favor of leaving things as they are. The city should realize it does not have the resources to do everything it thinks would be a good idea. Bicycles can already share the path that runs along 140th Avenue NE.

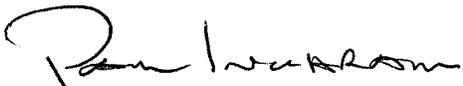
Mr. James Binder, a resident of 142nd Place NE, said there is a lot of concern in the neighborhood about the 140th Avenue NE project as it is proposed. Many fear it will change the neighborhood drastically. A high-speed bicycle corridor will not be a good fit with the community. The six-foot multipurpose path works very well as it is. He urged the Commissioners to visit the site and see for themselves the rural nature of the area.

10. NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

Chairr Orrico noted that the only Commission meeting in November would be on November 12. An additional meeting will be added only if needed.

11. ADJOURN

Chair Orrico adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.



Staff to the Planning Commission

12/10/2008

Date



Chair of the Planning Commission

12/10/08

Date