

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

November 18, 2009
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Sheffels, Commissioners Hamlin, Lai, Mathews, Robertson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Ferris, Orrico

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Inghram, Department of Planning and Community Development; Michael Paine, Development Services Department; Camron Parker, Glenn Kost, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Roger Tabor, National Marine Fish and Wildlife Service; Jeff Parsons, Jose Carresquero, Herrera Environmental

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. by Chair Sheffels who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Hamlin, who arrived at 6:41 p.m., and Commissioners Ferris and Orrico, both of whom were excused.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Dallas Evans, 2254 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, asked the Commission to consider allowing staff to work with groups from the public who might want to make presentations of more than five minutes duration and arrange for a time to do that.

Chair Sheffels said the Commission and staff are in the process of developing a system that will allow for more in-depth and longer public comments. She said more information would be available for the December Commission meeting.

Mr. Jack, 2510 165th Avenue NE, with Troop 641, thanked the Commission for allowing him to listen in on the meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda as submitted was approved by consensus.

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

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS None

7. STAFF REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Manager Paul Inghram informed the Commission that staff has received requests from the public to be allowed to use the city's assisted listening device. He asked the Commissioners, as well as anyone from the public addressing the Commission, to speak directly into the microphones.

Mr. Inghram stressed for the benefit of the audience that the city has existing shoreline regulations adopted and said they will serve as the starting point for the discussion on regulations. However, no new regulations have been proposed to date.

8. STUDY SESSION

A. Shoreline Master Program Update

1. Technical Presentation

Environmental Planning Manager Michael Paine underscored the statement made by Chair Sheffels with regard to developing a process for hearing from the public in a cohesive and coherent way. He said a series of alternatives are under discussion on how to do that, and some suggestions will be brought to the Commission on December 9.

With regard to his memo in the Commission desk packet regarding the fundraising letter that is making the rounds, Mr. Paine pointed out that the letter contains a significant misunderstanding of city code. Consequently, it does not serve as a good starting point for a conversation with the community. Staff is working to develop another mailing to be sent out to the community that will seek to iron out some of the misunderstandings.

Mr. Paine introduced Roger Tabor with the National Marine Fish and Wildlife Service who has worked for 14 years focused on the Lake Washington basin, and who is an authority on the movements and habits of Chinook salmon, smallmouth bass and other fish in the Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish systems.

Mr. Tabor said in 1999 when the Chinook salmon were listed under the Endangered Species Act there was a lot of concern relative to a variety of issues regarding their survival. One of the big concerns was how the species was faring in Lake Washington and some of the other lakes. Funding from King County and Seattle was allocated to look at issues related to habitat use by juvenile Chinook in Lake Washington. In time the study was expanded to include some work in Lake Sammamish and Lake Quinault.

Much of the work was done in the Cedar River at the south end of Lake Washington where a smolt trap has been set up and is operated by the state. The number of Chinook coming into the lake are counted at that facility. Typically there is a large pulse of Chinook fry as they emerge from their redds, followed by a lull and then another pulse of pre smolt-sized fish moving into the lake. Not all the Chinook that enter the lake will eventually leave the lake since they will face mortality and predation rates while in the lake. What is not known is what the lake contributes versus what the river contributes

There are a number of different ways Chinook enter and exit Lake Washington. Bear Creek fish come in as fry but they tend to stay in the creek and not come in as fry; they primarily enter the lake as pre smolts. In the middle of May Issaquah Creek releases the hatchery fish, so there is a large pulse at that time. Lake Sammamish have some Chinook that spawn in Issaquah Creek and

come into the lake as fry along with the large pulse of pre-smolts coming in from the hatchery.

During the long growing cycle between February and June the fish are changing and their habitat requirements change. The work of studying the fish has included a lot of snorkeling between February and May to count fish in and around various structures and habitat types. After May that approach does not work well because the fish are bigger and move off-shore and into deeper water. At that point more high-tech acoustic tracking is required. The study work has included looking at both diurnal and nocturnal habitat use.

From February to May the closer one is to the Cedar River, the more Chinook fry there are. During that same time period there are a fair number of fry in the north end of the lake near Bear Creek. Those facts are important when considering habitat restoration and other activities. After May the fish tend to be fairly evenly distributed throughout the lake.

Mr. Tabor shared with the Commissioners a chart indicating a series of transects showing the number of fish located at various depths from zero to ten feet. He noted that the March, April and May nighttime transects showed a clean progression from shallow water to deeper water but a continued close association with the shoreline. The daytime transects were more difficult with regard to ascertaining the exact distributions. At dawn early in the season the fish can be counted as they can be seen feeding at the surface; most of the fish at that time are in water of less than half a meter depth. By April the fish have moved into deeper water; by mid-June they are in waters that are three to four meters deep. The fish remain, however, very well connected to the shoreline.

The work done in Lake Quinault focused on features that are not common in Lake Washington or Lake Sammamish. The study there centered on emerging vegetation and large woody debris, as well as other shoreline factors. The fish categories in the lake are very similar to those in Lake Washington. Transects were prepared for each type of habitat ranging from steep rocky shorelines to emergent vegetation and large woody debris. The study found very few fish in areas with bedrock and steep shorelines, and lots of fish near tributary mouths, open beaches, emergent vegetation and large woody debris.

Mr. Tabor said the studies on Lake Sammamish showed that early in the season there are large schools of fish during the day in areas with natural woody debris and overhanging vegetation. However, during the night the fish avoid areas of complex habitat. The cover appears to function as a predator refuge during the daytime, while open areas function more as foraging areas.

The south part of Lake Washington was studied and the transects developed were focused on the substrates used by the Chinook, the impact of armored shorelines, and the impact of overwater structures. The general pattern for both day and night between February and May was observed to be a predilection for the smaller-sized substrates of sand and gravel. There was a clear indication that shorelines without armoring support far more fish than do armored shorelines. That finding did not come as a big surprise given the fact that the fish prefer water depths of less than half a meter during those months and the bulkheads eliminate shallow water.

The studies relative to overwater structures focused on both the day and night times for the categories of directly under the structures, within five meters of overwater structures, and open areas. During the daytime a fair number of fish were observed in the areas along the edges of overwater structures; very few were observed under the structures. The nighttime findings were similar. However, in April through May there is a gradual movement away from overwater structures. Small fish are cover and shade oriented and seek out those refuges, but as they get larger they will use the structures less and less as they incline to seek out more open environments.

Mr. Tabor said data on Chinook abundance was collected both before and after a restoration project was done on Rainier Beach during the summer of 2005. The project included replacement of marina and riprap with a nice gravel beach, and the data showed that the restored site now has more fish than the adjacent control site.

There are a lot of small non-natal tributaries around Lake Washington. Many of them are inaccessible to Chinook because they have been culverted, because they come in too deep, or for some other reason. The studies show that the fish do use some of the smaller streams. The general conclusion reached was that large delta areas with fine sand are preferred by the fish. While most of the tributaries themselves were not observed to be used much by the Chinook, there was one exception, namely Johns Creek in the southeast corner of Lake Washington. The creek is close to the Cedar River, has a low gradient and is fairly small. Large numbers of fish move up into the system, particularly early in the season when the fish are still small; there was not spawning activity observed in the creek. The city of Seattle has expressed an interest in restoring some of its small tributaries because of the study findings.

At the south end of Lake Sammamish are Laughing Jacobs and Tibbits creeks, and some small stream tributaries that have no names. Both Laughing Jacobs and Tibbits creeks have large deltas and are home to lots of fish, though very few fish move up into the systems of the larger streams, probably because they are home to other fish such as large cutthroat trout and coho. Of the unnamed streams, most of the Chinook were found in the one near the Schneider property. The small streams serve as important rearing areas for small Chinook.

Mr. Tabor said in more recent years the studies have focused more on the larger smolts as they migrate through the ship canal and into Lake Washington. Snorkeling does not work well as a study technique for that group of fish, but acoustic tagging does. Caught fish have devices surgically implanted, and then they are returned to the lake and tracked by a series of hydrophones. Acoustic tagging has been ongoing for several years so there is quite a bit of data to rely on.

The Seattle Tennis Club site is secure and has a very nice shoreline reach. Eight hydrophones have been installed there and any tagged fish coming to the area can be tagged and fixed exactly for position. There site has a number of overwater structures in the form of piers and a large platform. There is also a riprap and a swimming beach. The data shows some fish remaining offshore, some staying close to shore, and some staying in the intermediate area. All fish encountering the large overwater structure move around it. The fish encountering the piers tend to travel under them but not remain under them. The amount of shade cast by piers and docks, even the height of the structures above the water, all factor in to how the fish respond to them. As the fish encounter structures they typically move off into deeper water, and as they move along the shoreline they prefer waters that are from a meter and a half to two and a half meters deep.

Smallmouth bass are one species of fish that are typically found in and around structures and close to the shore. In Lake Sammamish and Lake Washington there are large populations of smallmouth bass utilizing the structures, and that is an important element for Chinook as they migrate through and along the shorelines. Northern pike are also often found under overwater structures and they also are an important ramification for the Chinook and their movements.

The condominium structure that is constructed out over the water of Lake Washington near the SR-520 bridge is large, is over deep water, and casts an impenetrable shadow. Every type of fish avoids the area under the structure, with the exception of bass which have been observed in the darkness underneath it.

Mr. Tabor said the degree to which there is vegetation in the areas near docks is a very important factor for the Chinook. If there is vegetation, the fish in their travels will elect to remain in water that is between a meter and two and a half meters deep. When there is vegetation, the fish will see it not as vegetation but as the bottom of the lake and will choose to remain offshore in deeper water, thus avoiding the structure.

Mr. Tabor said artificial lighting has become an issue for the fish. An experiment was done that involved setting up artificial lighting in an area known to be frequented by Chinook salmon. Very clearly the fish were attracted to the lighted areas. It was observed that herons and grebes forage very effectively at night in areas that have artificial lights, thus it can be deduced that artificial lighting impacts the food chain by increasing fish predation. The SR-520 bridge has lights and each one has been shown to attract fish. As a new SR-520 bridge is designed, that factor will be addressed. The lights on the University and I-5 bridges also attract fish.

Commissioner Robertson asked what riprap is. Mr. Tabor explained that it is a term typically used in regard to a series of large boulders used to armor a bank. Bulkheads are typically squared and plumb, where as riprap typically is laid out without regard to shape to control wave action.

Commissioner Robertson asked if large woody debris is to be desired along shorelines; she cited previously presentation data which indicated woody debris can cause an oxygen squeeze zone in the summer months, which is negative to fish. Mr. Tabor said woody debris is clearly used in Lake Sammamish by Chinook salmon. In Lake Washington the issue is introduced species, primarily smallmouth bass, habitat. When the Chinook are present in the lake there is not much of an issue with oxygen levels because they are there during the months when the water temperatures are fairly cool. Large woody debris is used by Chinook typically in their fry stage. However, as the weather warms in the summer smallmouth bass typically move in toward the shore and utilize large woody debris for their habitat. Largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, yellow perch and other fish are known to spawn on the large woody debris. The benefits and the risks of having large woody debris in the lakes must be weighed in relation to determining which species needs help.

Commissioner Robertson noted from the presentation that later in the summer months and at nighttime Chinook salmon in Lake Sammamish need open areas and less large woody debris and overhanging vegetation. She asked how vital overhanging vegetation is to Chinook habitat apart from tributary and delta areas. Mr. Tabor said his findings indicate that overhanging vegetation is very important but is used only for short terms; they forage offshore, but when there is a predator nearby they retreat to the cover of the overhanging vegetation.

Commissioner Robertson asked if docks, especially the smaller ones that have prisms built in, are used by the fish similar to overhanging vegetation and large woody debris to hide from predators. Mr. Tabor said they do use structures as refuges from predators, particularly early in the season when the Chinook fry are very shade oriented. As they grow larger, however, they become less attached to shady areas at the very time when the introduced predators such as largemouth bass move into the shade of the structures which sets up a different dynamic in which the docks and piers become a hindrance to the Chinook.

Commissioner Robertson said it seemed from the information provided to the Commission thus far that the most vital components in making sure there is a healthy fish stock are the creeks, tributaries and delta areas. She asked if that is a fair read of the best available science. Mr. Tabor said he would not characterize it in that way. All of the components are important, though it would be difficult to determine relative importance for each component. More studies will need to be conducted before getting a firm grip on relative importance. The current science is

that the fish are using each of the habitat types and that each type is important.

Commissioner Robertson noted that the Seattle Tennis Club shoreline includes a lot of hard surfaces near the shoreline. She asked how structures of that type constructed so close to the shoreline impact the fish. Mr. Tabor said the study done there did not notice any strong negative impact from either the riprap or the tennis courts adjacent to the shoreline on the fish populations migrating through.

Chair Sheffels read questions submitted by the audience, beginning with a question asking Mr. Tabor if written copies of his reports are available for the public. Mr. Tabor said there are a number of reports available on the website. Mr. Paine added that links to those reports can be found on the city's website.

The next question cited the recently published study by Dr. Don Flora in which it was stated that no relation exists between shoreline development and fish habitat and asked if the findings, while specific to a marine setting, could be applicable to the city's freshwater lakes. Mr. Tabor said he has not seen the study and would have to review it before commenting. He said there has been some work done by the University of Washington on juvenile Chinook in the Elliot Bay and Shilshole areas. The results shown were similar to the studies done on Lake Washington, that there is an impact resulting from shoreline development.

Chair Sheffels read a question in which it was stated that the city's 2009 analysis report showed no coho, Chinook, steelhead or sockeye habitat on Lake Sammamish beyond three specific tributary streams and asked why armoring removal should be advocated. Mr. Paine suggested that question could not possibly be answered without first having Mr. Tabor review those documents. Mr. Tabor did say that when Chinook are small they use the very shallow waters along the shorelines both day and night. Anything that changes that environment, a bulkhead or a riprap wall, will reduce the quality and amount of habitat.

The next question asked if there would be a larger production of fish fry in river rearing areas and if more fish would end up avoiding death by predator before passing through the locks if neither Lake Washington or Lake Sammamish had any docks or bulkheads but did have significant amounts of large woody debris and fewer predatory birds and fish. Mr. Tabor said there is a natural suite of predators extant in Lake Washington; they include northern pike, cutthroat trout and rainbow trout in addition to many varieties of birds. Large woody debris, open shorelines and open beaches are important factors for the predator species as well.

The next question asked where the highest mortality rates for Chinook salmon are being observed, in the streams or in the lakes. Mr. Tabor said a study to make that determination was proposed but has never been done. As a result, the answer remains an unknown. However, most jurisdictions are seeking to improve habitat conditions in the areas the fish are known to use.

Chair Sheffels thanked Mr. Tabor on behalf of the Commission for taking the time to present his information and answer questions.

Mr. Paine introduced Jose Carresquero, principal scientist with Herrera Environmental, who has 21 years of experience in the Puget Sound and who has done a lot of work on nearshore restoration. He also introduced Jeff Parsons, a geomorphologist with 15 years experience working on complex environmental problems in coastal environments.

Mr. Parsons said his specialty is with regard to physical processes. He explained that geomorphologists focus on the differences between intact and altered natural systems. With regard to Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, the dominant physical forcing is associated with wind-generated waves. The term "fetch" refers to the distance over which the wind blows to create a wave; the longer the distance, the bigger the wave becomes. Thus, with Lake Washington being much bigger than Lake Sammamish, it has bigger waves. Both lakes, however, allow motor boats which in turn create waves of their own.

Mr. Parsons said there are basically two sources of sediment in natural systems: the creeks, which still produce a significant amount of sediment, and eroding bluffs and banks. Vegetation plays a role as well, particularly emergent vegetation, primarily in the form of bulrushes; woody vegetation ranging from trees to shrubs; and woody debris in the form of trees and shrubs that have fallen into the water or along the shoreline. The various forms of vegetation serve to scatter and dissipate wave energy as it meets the shoreline and directly impact the ability of the shorelines to retain finer grain sediments.

The most obvious thing that happens when a shoreline is armored is a disconnect between the uplands and the nearshore. The Taylor Creek delta is a good example; the creek is small yet has quite a lot of water flowing into the lake in a very confined spot. Normally the delta would spread over a very large area and would be very diffuse. However, the entire delta is bulkheaded with the exception of the outlet of the creek. The alteration and disconnection between the upland hydrology and the lake is very important. Bulkheads can also serve to eliminate the supply of sediment to the system from bank or bluff erosion, which is often why a bulkhead is put in in the first place. Bulkheads often result in the loss of woody vegetation associated with a shoreline environment and simplifies the shoreline, though there are older bulkheads that have vegetation growing around them that retains some of the qualities of having shoreline vegetation.

Waves are reflected any time they contact an immobile vertical surface. The wave energy is transmitted back into the water body rather than being dissipated. On a natural shoreline, the waves are dissipated by either the aquatic vegetation, woody debris in the water, or by the vegetation on the shoreline. With a bulkhead in place, the wave energy remains in the water body. Shoreline areas that are steeply sloped act in much the same way as bulkheads in reflecting wave energy back into the lake. Any rigid infrastructure has a tendency to increase wave reflection.

Mr. Parsons showed the Commissioners slides that demonstrated how wave action is impacted by floating bridges. He noted that a study done on the Hood Canal bridge that included modeling demonstrated how strong winds coming from the south generate waves which are deflected by the bridge, the energy of which eventually is transmitted to a single small beach area. Wave energy deflected by the I-90 bridge is also transmitted to the adjacent shorelines.

In Lake Washington, the dominant source of energy to the shoreline are storm-generated waves. The waves during a storm are continuous, whereas waves from passing motor boats are not even if their wave heights are comparable to storm wave heights. The floating bridges in the lake act to increase wave energy locally. The shoreline in Myrtle Edwards Park in Seattle is primarily natural and the wave energy is naturally dissipated, resulting in a relatively fine-grain beach.

Lake Sammamish is different. Its water level is less regulated and it is more dependent on fresh water input. It has a shallower sloped shoreline and more intact areas that have not been developed. The lake also has more aquatic vegetation, primarily in the form of bulrush. The overall result is less wave energy reaching the ordinary high water mark. Most windstorms come from the south, so in the case of Lake Sammamish the winds are disrupted to a large degree by Cougar Mountain. Lake Sammamish being smaller than Lake Washington, it has less fetch, thus the natural wave heights are much smaller.

With regard to the issue of climate change, Mr. Parsons allowed that many are concerned about rising sea levels. However, the risks for Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish are minimal as it would require a 20-foot rise in sea level before they could be impacted. There are hydrologic changes which have been documented in the Northwest that could affect lake levels, primarily in Lake Sammamish where there is some response associated with fresh water input; with larger storms comes greater rainfall, and with more development the direct runoff into the lakes is increased substantially.

Mr. Parsons said there has been a lot of anecdotal comment relative to the change in wave energy. The one study done suggests that in Puget Sound there is no increase in wave energy resulting from strong southerly storm events.

Mr. Carresquero shared with the Commissioners photographs of shorelines in a natural condition with tree and shrub vegetation. He pointed out that from even a casual look, natural shoreline conditions are very different from armored shoreline characteristics.

Mr. Carresquero said he has been involved in studies comparing shorelines that are armored and shorelines that are not armored. He said most of the studies have been focused on Puget Sound but the studies that have involved lake shorelines have observed similar effects. Armored shorelines typically lack fish access for the public and have very little shoreline complexity. The beach sizes of armored shorelines are significantly reduced, and there is a reduction of sediment recruitment. The habitat in front of bulkheads is much deeper as a result of sediment removal, and that has implications for fish.

Armored shorelines disconnect the foreshore, or the lower portion of the beach, from the backshore, where the bulk of the vegetation exists. Typically, large woody debris is lost, either through intentional removal, or most commonly as a result of the loss of the shallow water habitat; the buoyant wood loses its capacity to naturally anchor itself and just floats away. Armoring also creates places for predator fish to hide and prey upon juvenile fish along the shoreline.

Mr. Carresquero shared with the Commissioners photographs of a shoreline area, half of which was armored and half of which remained natural. He pointed out the presence of large woody debris in the water and shoreline vegetation and sand and gravel on the shoreline of the natural segment. He noted that when wave energy hits the armored wall the energy is dissipated either in the form of splash on the wall or in scouring at the base of the wall, causing the loss of sediment into deeper water. On the natural shoreline, the waves break on the gradual slope approaching

the shoreline and the energy is dissipated prior to the backshore area. The energy is dissipated through the substrate through percolation; the roots and wood provide roughness that further helps to dissipate the energy. Armored and non-armored shorelines thus function very differently in terms of local habitat.

Natural shorelines are generally gently sloped. When a bulkhead is constructed, the shore-side slope remains much the same, while the scouring action of the wave energy removes sediment from in front of the bulkhead, thus creating a drop in elevation. The lost sediment cannot be replenished naturally.

Mr. Carresquero said the natural impacts of armored shorelines are well documented. The empirical data from a number of studies clearly show the impacts. With those facts established, the logical thing to do is focus on what can be done about it. The shoreline guidelines call for no net loss of ecological functions and talk about the restoration of impaired shorelines. The question is whether or not the techniques used to armor the shorelines in new projects can allow for achieving the objectives. Another question is whether or not required restoration techniques can produce habitat improvements.

The Commissioners were shown photos of a project in which a property owner, seeking to do the right thing, included some habitat restoration with a bulkhead restoration. When the project was completed, habitat conditions had not changed all that much; the shoreline contained boulders not commonly found on the lakeshore, very little shoreline vegetation, and conditions that would not allow for large woody debris recruitment. The conditions associated with armoring were not improved.

In Puget Sound, shorelines are typically managed by drift cells, which are shoreline reaches along which sediment gets transported by physical processes. Drift cells recognize the fact that in nature there are no natural boundaries corresponding to the artificial boundaries of property lines. The accumulated impact of armored shorelines is, therefore, something to keep in mind. Restoration solutions must keep that in mind as well.

Mr. Carresquero shared with the Commission a case study done on Lake Sammamish that involved the loss of bulrush along the shoreline of one property owner caused by the activities of another property owner that changed the way sediment was accreted. The bulrush root systems were being exposed and eroded away by boat waves. The property owners sought to do the right thing and looked for solutions to protect their properties in line with the current regulations, but they were told nothing could be done because of their ability to affect only a small portion of the shoreline.

Property owners seeking construction permits may be required to do some mitigation work. One such requirement is to add woody debris and include some vegetative planting. That can result in situations where the shoreline remains armored, woody debris is introduced, and planting is done beyond the bulkhead, none of which interacts with the wave action. Ultimately, such mitigation work involves little more than beautification at significant cost to the property owner without achieving the objective of the shoreline guidelines of no net loss and restoring ecological functions.

Another form of mitigation involves the addition of sand or gravel. Mr. Carresquero showed pictures of a project where a property owner wanting to add armoring was required to add gravel. Kokanee are documented to spawn in Lake Sammamish in shallow waters where there is shoreline vegetation, but the effects of bringing in sand or gravel on the vegetation has not been determined. The property owner recognized the benefits of adding emergent vegetation, but the substrate did not stay in place and was transported to deeper water, thus destroying the vegetation. The no net loss standard was not achieved, and there was no measurable habitat improvement.

The Shoreline Management Act calls for a process that supports uncoordinated and piecemeal development at the individual property level. The process will not achieve the desired results. One strategy that should be considered involves restoration banking, a process that is used for freshwater wetlands. The strategy can result in restoration of areas that are ecologically connected in exchange for the selling of credits. Instead of forcing property owners to put unfunctional woody debris on a site, something which might actually cause ecological damage, the property owner could buy credits and be allowed to move forward with a project. That would be particularly helpful on shorelines where it can be demonstrated that a structured solution is best. Studies show that basins are positively benefited by improvement projects located within the watershed. Restoration banking is an option that should be explored. Nature must be observed as an analog and mimicked in order to bring about positive ecological benefits.

Mr. Carresquero said there are ways to armor a shoreline using engineering techniques that will assure perpetuity for the structure and mimic natural processes at the same time. While such structures may not always be appropriate, they should at least be explored.

Commissioner Mathews sought clarification regarding the statement that mitigation projects done at the property level cannot be as effective as they can on a larger scale. Mr. Carresquero said true success will only be achieved if restoration is spread out over a large enough area. Commissioner Mathews asked if, in addition to bringing about mitigation for areas away from the shoreline, restoration banking could be used to mitigate large areas along a shoreline. Mr. Carresquero allowed that it could.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Lai, Mr. Parsons said for most wind waves, the wavelength, or the distance from the wave to the crest, is between 50 and 100 feet. Any shoreline restoration project that is smaller than the wavelength of the wave will not be very effective. Restoration projects on properties spanning more than the wavelength will have positive impacts. The problem is that most properties along the lake shorelines do not typically exceed 100 feet. It would therefore take two or more property owners working together to mimic natural physical conditions.

Mr. Carresquero said from an ecological perspective, a non-armored shoreline might have a drift of 1000 feet from the site of a proposed restoration or mitigation project. In between there might be a number of structures that would cut out the sediment transport. Self-maintaining restoration projects will need to account for those elements. In general, however, restoration or mitigation at the property lot scale will not work so long as there are adjacent lots that maintain conditions that

are causing the impacts. Asking a property owner whose bulkhead has collapsed to set it back a little further when replacing it might not be a good idea if the adjacent properties are armored further out. The reflective wave energy could present a very real threat.

Commissioner Lai suggested that the city will not be able to direct all shoreline property owners to make similar improvements simultaneously. He asked what kind of incentives would encourage the kind of changes which cumulatively over time will bring about positive effects. Mr. Carresquero said cumulative benefits will only result from coordination. Techniques suitable to achieving the no net loss objective should be implemented; such techniques do not always include armoring shorelines.

Commissioner Robertson suggested that an engineered log jam intended to dissipate wave energy and provide woody debris along the lake shore may prove to be hazardous for swimmers and boaters. Mr. Carresquero said natural systems have logjams and wood in the water. Most of the wood, however, is below the level of the lake surface. It can be anchored to the bottom with cables. He recommended undertaking some pilot projects that could be studied afterwards to determine their effectiveness in achieving the no net loss objective.

Commissioner Robertson asked how the developed properties along Lake Sammamish can be protected from boat and storm wave energy if the existing bulkheads are removed. Mr. Carresquero said wave energy affecting shorelines can be mapped. In areas of low energy, the simple planting of natural vegetation can ameliorate the wave forces; areas of high energy, however, may need to be addressed through structural measures, including bulkheads. In every instance, the first preference should be given to soft techniques that mimic natural processes and effectively protect the shoreline. Where deltas are concerned, armoring that prevents the flow of water and sediments into the lake should be avoided.

Commissioner Robertson asked if the streams and delta areas should be given top priority and would yield the most benefit from restoration projects. Mr. Carresquero said his studies of streams and deltas have been focused on physical perspectives rather than ecological perspectives. Deltas provide a natural source of sediments that nourish the beach areas. Mr. Parsons added that most of the sand in Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish that has been shown to be the most liked by the fish comes from the small tributaries. The sand from tributary outflows that are limited by structures to small areas is far more likely to be washed away from the shorelines; the opposite is true of tributaries that are spread out. If the goal were to retain sand, addressing the deltas would be the place to work.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Robertson, Mr. Carresquero said a single piece of wood in the water will create a more complex habitat than will water without any wood in it. That, however, can be compared to a single family home as opposed to a condominium. To support large numbers of fish it is necessary to have habitat that is more partitioned and complex. Much depends on the targeted species since each has its own habitat requirements. It is never as simple as putting in wood or not putting in wood. Restoration banking could result in far more complex environments that might not otherwise be feasible along the shoreline on individual properties.

Chair Sheffels read a question from the audience in which it was noted that many bulkheads constructed on the Lake Sammamish shoreline are above the ordinary high water mark; the question asked how far back from the water must bulkheads be in order to not have a detrimental effect. Mr. Carresquero answered that any bulkhead that interacts with the water will have some effect, even bulkheads set back so far that they only interact with the water during the winter months.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Richard Peterson, 103 96th Avenue, spoke representing the Bayshore East Condominium Owners Association. He explained that in July David Pyle with the city attended a meeting of the Association and presented the city's approach for identifying and updating the waterfront boundaries in preparation for the Shoreline Master Program update. At the meeting, Mr. Pyle said the city's preferred plan was to have the Bayshore East property rezoned to urban conservancy rather than remain as shoreline residential owing to the fact that Meydenbauer Creek runs through the property. It was stated that the area offshore of the creek would not be noted as a wetland due to the infill of sediment. On July 18, a large number of Bayshore owners attended the Commission meeting and reported their desire to have the designation remain shoreline residential, keep the area offshore from being labeled a wetland, and to keep the cabana building from being labeled an ancillary structure. In his presentation to the Commission, however, Mr. Pyle said the recommendation of staff was for the Bayshore property to remain shoreline residential, but nothing was said about designating the area offshore as a wetland. At subsequent meetings the staff have held that the cabana should be called an ancillary structure. The minutes for the July 22 Commission study session reflect agreement with regard to the shoreline residential designation, and to not require existing multifamily developments to provide public access to the lakeshore. The wetlands issue has not been discussed. From the beginning the Bayshore East Condominiums has acted as guardians of the bay. The Association is concerned about the garbage that ends up in the bay and the effluent that flows in the creek. No structures will be added along the shore that will impede views from the condominiums. When the regulations are written, leniency should be shown for those property owners who have shown good intentions with regard to maintaining the shoreline. No regulations should require actions that would destroy the views from the condominiums. It was noted that the fish expert who addressed the main tributaries where the salmon are did not say any of the smolts come near Bellevue properties; it is not until the fish get bigger and migrate through the entire lake that they come to Bellevue. That should be kept in mind when developing regulations.

Ms. Anita Neil, 9302 SE Shoreland Drive, said she was impressed with the suggestion to undertake pilot projects. The frustration is that the techniques to protect the fish seem to keep changing. Some who in the past undertook projects that were designed to protect the environment apparently did all their work for no real gain. Pilot projects could be used to prove if one method is better than another, or if a particular method is effective at all. With regard to the issue of buffers, one of the staff memos said that with only minor exceptions buffers on the shoreline are non-disturbance areas; that is concerning in that property owners may ultimately be told they are forbidden from walking in those non-disturbance areas. Another staff memo stated that there is no agreement in the scientific literature as to the optimal buffer width for each critical area. Even when an intact buffer of substantial size exists, the buffer may not reduce

flows or fine filter sediment, thus protection of aquatic buffers is not sufficient to ensure that critical areas will not be degraded by upland development. Another memo stated that the guidelines are designed to allow governments substantial discretion that reflect local circumstance. The guidelines do not say that one must use buffers, setbacks or special vegetation to ensure no net loss. Yet another memo stated that as part of the 2006 critical areas ordinance existing shoreline structure setback was converted to a critical area buffer, and the staff recommended that the Commission not tread new ground where prior policies and standards are believed to be adequate. Staff have commented that buffers are legally justifiable constructs aimed at regulating private property for public benefit, and that buffers allow for a degree of private use. That statement is concerning in that it could be interpreted to mean the public will be allowed onto private properties. One of the experts testified that their studies did not directly monitor human behavior, thus the potential for the alteration of a shoreline by urban residents contributing to the sediment patterns observed cannot be excluded. Another human influence on sediment composition is erosion from lakeshore development which likely mobilizes soils into lakes, which actually sounds like a good argument for bulkheads. In addition, sediment distribution as associated with wave action from boats can induce wave-like movements, which would seem to place the blame on the boaters. There are several things that seem to say that residential uses need to compensate for potential commercial uses. It has been stated that development priority is given to single family residents, and that public access is lower in priority. The staff have stated that one reason for the Shoreline Master Program update is that missing from the 1974 Shoreline Master Program is a range of land uses other than single family to support existing and future commercial uses. The idea is each local jurisdiction should guarantee no net loss of ecological function, but based on future uses and development a site-by-site determination of no net loss is insufficient to determine no net loss over the long term. Consequently, policies and regulations are needed to create modest improvements in some areas to offset the cumulative decline of intensified shoreline development over time. Thus it seems that individual property owners must offset the impacts of development, such as the commercialization of Meydenbauer Bay park.

Mr. Robert Thorpe with RW Thorpe and Associates said his firm had been retained to look at the plan and provide input. He said for case studies the firm took case studies and showed how the regulations were working. He said he intends to bring all of the information together and then to work cooperatively with the staff on case studies to show how specific regulations would work on a marine area, on undeveloped properties, or on properties that are being subdivided. In the early 1970s staff from the cities of Mercer Island, Kirkland and Bellevue worked on the original master program; he said he was one of those staff members. He noted that his firm has subsequently participated in the development of several shorelines programs and has worked with those seeking permits. Several issues consistently have risen to the top in other jurisdictions as they have worked to write their shoreline regulations; they include buffer widths, public access, the creation of nonconforming uses, dock and bulkhead removal, and vegetation enhancement. It is not true that every city must have the same program. The fact is every city is different and each city's program should be drafted to match specific conditions and the specific interests of its citizens. One size does not fit all. It is also a fallacy to believe that if things are not done right the Department of Ecology will step in and force the city to do things they way they want them done. Regulations should be predicated on the best available science but also on logic and fairness. The Commissioners were asked to keep an open mind, to listen to the

citizens, and to consider the examples brought forward.

Ms. Diane Tebelius, 2650 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, explained that the organization called BASS has disbanded. A new organization has been formed and called the Washington Sensible Shorelines Association, and it is the new organization that has hired RW Thorpe and Associates to serve as a consultant. She reiterated her request that the association and homeowners have an opportunity to make a presentation to the Commission outlining what may be opposing viewpoints. The homeowners have spent an inordinate amount of time gathering facts and evidence representing a more balanced approach, and they would like to be afforded the opportunity to present their position to the Commission. About an hour and a half will be needed to make the presentation. The phrase “no net loss of ecological function” does not equate to turning the clock back to 1952; at that time in history the waters of Lake Sammamish were not nearly as clean as they are currently. The phrase refers to the present time forward. Water skiers do not want to see woody debris in the lake waters because it is very dangerous; the solutions for improving the shorelines and fish habitat will need to be logical and realistic.

Mr. Marty Nizlek, 312 West Lake Sammamish Parkway, called attention to his request to clarify in the Commission minutes the statements he made at the July and September Commission meetings. He said he was the person who asked about the figures in the 2009 study with respect to habitat. He referred to Figure 13 and the information regarding the fisheries, priority habitats, and species. Of all the different variations of salmon referred to, none of them are shown as being present or having habitat on the shorelines of either Lake Sammamish or Lake Washington. During the expert testimony, Mr. Carresquero mentioned various approaches relative to shoreline armoring. The fact is the city needs to be very precise about how it uses the terms “armoring” and “bulkheads.” Bulkheads are at or below the waterline and they are constructed because of the water. Armoring is a broader term and typically can refer to rockeries or the like that are not necessarily constructed to protect from the water. The figure that is bounced around liberally is that between 70 and 80 percent of the Lake Sammamish shoreline is armored. The fact is that only about 40 percent of the total is bulkheads; factoring in the error rate cited in the studies, the actual figure could be as low as 35 percent. Any program that is implemented through permitting actions and addresses only piecemeal improvements cannot be effective. The concept of banking is an interesting one. The frustration for the property owner is the fact that perhaps there is no habitat along the shoreline, yet they will face burdensome costs. Bulrush has a survival rate of about four percent, so that is perhaps why the current regulations require the posting of a five-year bond. With regard to kokanee along the shoreline, he noted that they have not been sighted on any Bellevue shoreline. There are only three areas where they have been observed, and each of those areas is outside the city of Bellevue. When the experts are speaking, it must be made clear whether or not what they are saying is applicable to Bellevue.

3. Commission Discussion

Commissioner Robertson commented that one of the initial assumptions was that if no changes are made things will continue to degrade, even absent additional development. She said, however, that the scientific presentations have not tracked with that understanding. With increases in stormwater quality and the work of the hatcheries, it appears things are getting better, and with the exception of the kokanee, the fish are coming back. The testimony of Mr. Parsons

and Mr. Carresquero relative to the significance of motor activity would seem to argue in favor of keeping bulkheads in place since they are serving to protect individual properties. She allowed that she was still confused with regard to the need to have woody debris in the lakes but stated that there are certainly safety hazards associated with it.

Commissioner Robertson voiced a high interest in the notion of restoration banking as an option that could make a lot of sense. She said she hoped to ultimately see a tweaking of the existing regulations rather than taking on the critical areas regulations wholesale and applying them to the shorelines. The science that has been shared is far different from what was outlined five years ago when the critical areas work was done and the approach should be programmatic.

Commissioner Robertson added that she had been very happy to see the public process and the willingness of the public to attend the meetings and get involved. The request of the public to be allowed to bring their own scientists and experts to the table should be granted so the Commission can hear different viewpoints.

Chair Sheffels reiterated that she and the staff are working diligently on creating a process that will allow for the public to bring their experts to the table. She said the Commission wants to get all the information it can get before reaching any final conclusions and passing a recommendation on to the Council. She stressed that the process remains in the fact-gathering stage and that nothing by way of regulations has yet been proposed.

9. STUDY SESSION

A. Parks and Open Space System Plan Update

Parks and Community Services Planning and Development Manager Glenn Kost said the department staff under the leadership of Long Range Planner Camron Parker have been working for the past several months on updating the 2003 Parks and Open Space System Plan.

Mr. Kost explained that to a large degree the 2008 park and natural areas levy was an outgrowth of the 2003 Parks and Open Space System Plan. Proposition 1, which was approved on November 4, 2008, with a 67 percent approval rate, replaced a bond that was passed in 1988. The city has typically used bond issues to raise funds for park projects; bond issues require a 60 percent approval. A bond issue was put on the ballot in the spring of 2002 received only 58.9 percent; the issue was put on the ballot again in the fall of that same year and it also failed by about the same percentage. The decision to go with a levy in 2008 was predicated on ensuring success since a levy requires only a 50 percent approval; the 67 percent approval rating was a very positive sign.

The levy will make possible a \$73 million capital program. That includes \$40.5 million from the levy over 20 years, and a CIP match of \$28.5 million approved by the Council to jumpstart things. An additional \$5 million was already in the CIP for two specific projects. In the final tally, \$53 million will be used for park development and \$20 million will be used for property acquisition.

Mr. Kost said on the acquisition side the funding is not earmarked for any specific pieces of property yet. Programmatically, the funds will be used to complement the existing park system. That will include acquisition of waterfront access, which has been a high priority for many years; preservation of open space; trail connectivity; and neighborhood park opportunities. Having the money on hand will allow the city to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. The city is opposed to taking condemnation actions and so must seek willing sellers.

The majority of the development projects are site-specific. One of them is the \$3 million synthetic sports fields program, which is aimed at converting the fields at the Newport Hills park and the Wilburton Hill park. The Wilburton Hill park project is under way and is planned to be completed by late spring 2010 about the same time the Newport Hills project is set to begin.

Chair Sheffels commented that a lot of games are scheduled to be played at the Wilburton Hill park site after dark under the lights. She said the lights sometimes remain on until midnight long after the games have wrapped up. It seems a waste of electricity to have them on when there is no one there. Mr. Kost said all fields, with the exception of Newport Hills, have games scheduled until 11:00 p.m. The lights are typically left on for 15 minutes after that time to allow the players to gather their things and get to their cars. It is not unusual for the lights to be on until 11:15 p.m. Games are only scheduled until 10:00 p.m. at Newport Hills, after which the lights remain on until 10:15 p.m. There should be no lights burning after the last scheduled game is played.

Commissioner Hamlin asked if the department keeps a master plan for converting fields to synthetic surfaces over the long run. He also asked how much the synthetic fields save the city in terms of reduced maintenance costs. Mr. Kost said the department is always seeking to make more efficient use of its sports fields because of the high demand. There is no conversion master plan per se; plans to convert playing surfaces are generally developed as a part of the process of working on master plans for individual park sites. Synthetic fields do require less maintenance, but they do not necessarily save the city money. There is no need to cut, fertilize or water the grass, but some level of brushing is required, and because the fields can be used in all seasons the facilities are programmed and the lights are on 12 months out of the year. With the increase in use the restrooms must be cleaned more often and trash must be picked up more often.

Commissioner Robertson said she discovered during her campaigning that many people in Newport Hills are upset about the conversion to synthetic fields at their park. She asked if there are any plans to add additional park space in that part of the city, like a pocket park, that would be more for local use. Mr. Kost allowed that one of the programmatic goals of the park levy is acquiring land for additional neighborhood sites. The Newport area has for many years been recognized as being deficient in park facilities, and the local residents have diligently kept that fact before the city park staff. There is a small but vocal group of Newport residents who are passionately opposed to converting the playing fields to synthetic surfaces for a variety of reasons; one of their primary arguments against the change is that the field there will go from being used four months out the year to every month of the year.

Ms. Kost explained that the goal of the trail development element of the levy program is to expand the trail system and improve some of the open space areas. There are about 2600 acres of

park land in Bellevue, nearly 2000 acres of which are in open space. The Coal Creek Natural Area was acquired from King County not too many years ago and needs a lot of work; it represents one of the major target areas for the trail system and open space element aspect of the levy.

The majority of the work on the Lewis Creek Park on the south end of the city on Lakemont Boulevard was completed in 2005. The final phase of the project involves a picnic area and a small parking lot off of Lakemont Boulevard. That work will be done under the levy.

Mr. Kost outlined the plans regarding Bellevue Theatre in Crossroads Park. The project involves the construction of a small black box youth theater that will seat anywhere from 110 to 150 persons. The theater is intended to augment the existing facilities at the former Ivanhoe school site. The projected cost is \$8 million, and \$6.5 million is available from the levy and the CIP. The Youth Theatre Foundation will be embarking on a fundraising campaign in 2010 to help close the funding gap.

The master plan update for the Bellevue Botanical Garden was completed about a year ago. Two million dollars from the levy has been identified for the garden, which will be added to \$4.5 million from the CIP. Both the youth theater and the botanical gardens will be launching fundraising campaigns to help augment the costs of the projects. The ravine garden will include a 150-foot suspension bridge over an existing ravine; the wetland sun terrace garden will be located to the west of the perennial garden. The visitor center will also be expanded, including additional parking. The total price tag is close to \$11 million.

Mr. Kost said two specific areas have been identified for neighborhood park development. One is a park along Lake Sammamish for which there will likely be some shoreline improvements required. The department will work with the community over the next couple of years to develop a master plan; the specifics will come to light during that process. The Bridle Trails area has also been targeted. No specific site has been selected but staff has been working with a neighborhood group to identify potential uses for the available funds.

Funding has also been earmarked for the Surrey Downs park development. A master plan was completed in 2008, and part of it has been adopted by the Council. The work has been the subject of fairly intense debate on the part of the neighborhood, and the Bellevue Boys and Girls Club has made a proposal to put one of their clubs at the site. It is hoped that the vision for the site will be established by mid-2010. There are, however, factors outside the realm of the parks department that may affect the site, including the proposed light rail line on 112th Avenue SE, and where the court will ultimately be sited.

Commissioner Lai asked what the neighborhood's concern has been relative to having a Boys and Girls Club located on the site. Mr. Kost said they have cited traffic and safety concerns, but their two biggest concerns are the magnitude of a 45,000 square foot building, and the feeling that they would not be serving a broad enough spectrum of the population from the Surrey Downs location. They are also concerned that the use of the building would spill out and overwhelm the use of the park.

Mr. Kost said the Park Board just recently recommended a preferred alternative for the Eastgate area park development. The alternative will be brought to the Council either in December 2009 or January 2010. The project was the subject of intense debate during an 18-month master planning process for the former airfield site, which is also a former landfill. The preferred alternative does not include a dog park component.

The levy includes funding to complete the circle at Downtown Park. Some elements of the master plan adopted for the park have been completed, though other elements are only partially completed and others have not been started yet. There will need to be additional public discussion about the project to complete the circle, in part because it will require the removal of some parking.

Mr. Kost explained that with a bond measure the city receives all of the proceeds up front; with a levy, the funds come in over a 20-year period. When the Council adopted the current 2009-2010 budget they included a \$28.5 million match for parks, and the idea was it was needed to jump start the whole program. However, when the economic downturn hit, the money evaporated and it has become necessary to prioritize the projects and develop a new timeline. The sports field projects, which were identified as the top priority, are moving ahead, but beyond that a lot of background work is being done. Work is being done relative to trail improvements. The design work for the Lewis Creek project is under way and should be completed by the middle of 2010. The design work has been started for the youth theater project, and the fundraising will kick off early in 2010; the same is true for the Botanical Garden. The city is working with property owners relative to property acquisition. Staff is actively working with Bridle Trails residents on a neighborhood park in that part of the city. The Lake Sammamish project likely will not start for another year.

The longer term projects include Surrey Downs; that project will not be able to move ahead until a determination is made about where the court will ultimately be sited. A plan for the Eastgate park has not been completed, but when it is done there will still be a very long permitting process required. The botanical gardens visitor's center and Downtown Park projects will take a few years to get off the ground, and property acquisition efforts will be ongoing for several years.

Chair Sheffels asked if there are any plans to include landscaping or other beautification efforts around any of the proposed light rail components. Mr. Parker said it is too early to say how that will play out. He said there will be discussions around station-area planning particularly, as well as the connections stations will make with surrounding features, including parks. There will be a call for signage and general landscaping along the line, but that work is still a couple of years away.

Commissioner Robertson noted that one of the things listed on the fact sheet outlining what the park levy will pay for was shoreline or habitat restoration. Mr. Kost said the phrases used were environmental restoration, environmental improvements and open space, but the reference was not specific to shorelines work. One of the programmatic goals of the acquisition element, however, is to secure shoreline properties that become available.

Chair Sheffels asked how natural shorelines for city parks can be created given the ideas floating

around for more natural beaches and shorelines. Mr. Kost said the city has been working on the Meydenbauer Bay park project for the better part of three years. It is generally believed that it will be possible to significantly improve the shoreline habitat there with any of the alternatives. The beach at Chism Beach Park has over the years been ripped, and the department recognizes the benefits associated with removing the riprap. Mr. Parker added that the new shoreline regulations, whatever they may turn out to be, will also impact the city as the city is a major shoreline property owner.

Mr. Parker said the park levy outlines the department's marching orders for the years to come. No attempt is being made to draft an entirely new Parks and Open Space System Plan; the focus is on updating the existing plan that was adopted in 2003. The plan is updated about every six years, in part to retain the city's parks accreditation standing, and to satisfy the grant eligibility requirements of the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, a state granting organization. There is also a GMA requirement to keep the Parks, Recreation and Open Space element in the Comprehensive Plan updated.

Chair Sheffels asked if the parks department ever receives funding from private organizations, and if so, how those funds are used. Mr. Parker said the city has a number of programming partnerships which provide volunteers and funds; the Botanical Garden has a number of such partnerships, and there is a partnership with the Pacific Science Center. Mr. Kost said the Mercer Slough Environmental Center project cost \$11.3 million, only \$3.8 million of which came from the city. The rest of the funding, including \$1.7 million in private funding, came from non-city sources.

Motion to extend the meeting until 10:15 p.m. was made by Commissioner Robertson. Second was by Commissioner Hamlin and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Parker said there are three major components to the update process: 1) collecting public opinion; 2) making sure the 2003 plan is updated to reference all of the work that has happened since its adoption; and 3) updating the long-range capital project list that extends out over a 20-year period.

With regard to collecting public opinion, Mr. Parker informed the Commissioners that recently data was received from a random sample survey conducted of Bellevue residents. The questions were formulated to get answers about how the public is currently using the park system, what they would like to see more of in the park system, and how they would prioritize future development and property acquisition. A web survey has also been set up on the city's website and to date some 700 people have completed it. Word is also getting around, and data is being collected, through the making of presentations to various groups.

Mr. Parker said the random sample survey included a list of ten different parks and recreation uses typically found in parks, and the respondents were asked to indicate how often they visit the different types of uses. The top five answers tracked with the results of similar surveys, with use of trails, playgrounds, unstructured open areas, beach and waterfront parks, and sports fields rounding out the list. The answers given by household members under the age of 18 highlighted the same top five uses, but they were in a slightly different order. When the respondents were

asked to rate their priorities for future development of parks, the same five uses came out on top.

Mr. Parker said the survey was designed to allow staff to track the answers given by the different areas of the city to see how they differ. The department did some GIS work to determine how many Bellevue citizens can walk to a park from their homes without having to walk more than a quarter mile using the street network; it was determined that overall 86 percent of Bellevue residents said they had that ability. In all the different subareas, the respondents indicated that they feel safe walking to a park.

Another question asked in the survey was whether the city should be focusing in acquiring new land for the park system or developed existing properties. The results were nearly an even split between the two, which indicates strong support for both actions.

Commissioner Hamlin observed that the levy does not include any specific projects in the Bel-Red corridor. Mr. Kost said the department does not foresee any park facility development in the near term in the Bel-Red corridor, but added that the acquisition opportunities fund could be used in part to acquire property in that area.

10. OTHER BUSINESS None

11. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 22, 2009

Chair Sheffels noted the need to change all references to "Chair Orrico" to read "Commissioner Orrico," and to change all references to "Commissioner Sheffels" to read "Chair Sheffels."

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

B. September 23, 2009

Chair Sheffels noted the need to revise the minutes to make the same corrections relative to Commissioner Orrico and Chair Sheffels.

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

13. NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

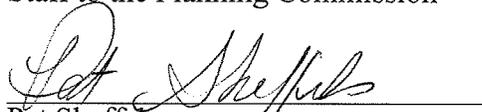
A. December 9, 2009

14. ADJOURN

Chair Sheffels adjourned the meeting at 10:16 p.m.


Paul Inghram
Staff to the Planning Commission

3/22/10
Date


Pat Sheffels
Chair of the Planning Commission

3/22/10
Date