

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BEL-RED CORRIDOR PROJECT
STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

June 29, 2006
4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Creighton, Co-Chair; Kurt Springman, Joel Glass, Doug Matthews, Sue Baugh, Steve Dennis, Norm Hanson, Earl Overstreet, Faith Roland, Bill Ptacek, Ken Schiring, Pat Sheffels, Laurie Tish

MEMBERS ABSENT: Terry Lukens, Co-Chair; Dean Rebhuhn

OTHERS PRESENT: Kevin O'Neill, Matt Terry, Dan Stroh, Michael Paine, Department of Planning and Community Development; Kevin McDonald, Goran Sparrman, Kris Liljeblad, Bernard van de Kamp, Department of Transportation; Glenn Kost, Parks & Community Services; Torsten Lienau, CH2MHill

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. Welcome and Review of the Agenda

Motion to elect Mr. Springman to serve as chair until the arrival of Chair Creighton was made by Ms. Baugh. Second was by Mr. Hanson and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Comment

Ms. Linda James, one of the owners of Evergreen Center on 130th Avenue NE, said she has a variety of tenants in her building. She said the action taken by the committee on June 12 left 130th Avenue NE on the table as a main retail street; she said as envisioned the street would run through the middle of her buildings. The tenants would have to be relocated during the redevelopment, which would be a significant hardship.

Mr. Bob Gregg, 2476 35th Avenue NE, Issaquah, spoke on behalf of Shurguard which has two self-storage facilities on 124th Avenue NE. He said Shurguard believes additional housing units in the Bel-Red area would greatly benefit the company and the city. Under the current city code, the Office designation does not permit self-storage facilities. The final plan for the study area should include self-storage as an allowed use, both on a stand-alone basis and in mixed use buildings.

Mr. Todd Woosley with Hal Woosley Properties, owner of Brierwood Center at the intersection of 120th Avenue NE and NE 12th Street, said he hopes the city will match the proposed land uses with the necessary transportation infrastructure to allow for meeting concurrency. It appears from the draft alternatives that too much micromanaging is occurring. When the Environmental Impact Statement is released, the city should look to trusting the market a little more and avoid micromanaging. If incentives are created through zoning, the market will bring about the desired results; if there are no incentives, and if the uses within the various zones are tightly controlled, redevelopment will occur piecemeal over time. Flexibility overall will be the key.

Ms. Maggie Bentley, 15027 NE 11th Place, noted that the Crossroads Center Plan study is also currently under way. She stressed the need for the two planning efforts are linked in considering the transportation needs and overall impacts of more density.

Mr. Springman handed the gavel to Chair Creighton.

3. Approval of Minutes

A. June 1, 2006

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Glass. Second was by Ms. Tish and the motion carried unanimously.

B. June 12

Mr. Overstreet called attention to the second paragraph on Page 6 and said he was not the one who made the comment about favoring housing in the 122nd Avenue NE area but not close to the Metro base. Mr. Glass said the comment should be attributed to him in the minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes as revised was made by Mr. Glass. Second was by Ms. Tish and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Review of Alternatives 1, 3 and 4

Strategic Planning Manager Kevin O'Neill noted that the committee is poised to wrap up the alternatives identification and deliberation phase, which has included a series of committee and public meetings over the past couple of months. Evaluation of the alternatives will proceed during the summer months and into the early fall. The committee and public meetings will then pick up again focused on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the work to develop a preliminary preferred alternative by taking the best ideas from each of the draft alternatives. Finalizing the vision and thinking about implementation will occur in early 2007.

Continuing, Mr. O'Neill said the alternatives are all based on the ten principles established by the Council, the technical work done by the consultants, the public input, and the committee-adopted objectives around market and economic feasibility, transportation and the environment. The draft alternatives are intended to illustrate alternative visions for the future of the Bel-Red corridor; they are not intended to represent specific zoning maps, only concepts for development. The alternatives offer a range of choices.

As the EIS for the Bel-Red corridor is written, it will include the forecasted growth in Overlake and Crossroads.

a. Overview of Revisions Requested by Committee on June 12

Mr. O'Neill said each of the draft action alternatives has an office focus along 116th Avenue NE; includes low-intensity uses along the south side of Bel-Red Road; continues the retail and commercial uses along NE 20th Street; has the same basic package of transportation improvements; considers neighborhood and community parks improvements synched with land use changes; assumes trail linkage improvements, including an east/west green space along with the extension of NE 16th Street, turning the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe right-of-way into a pedestrian trail, and pedestrian/bicycle connections across I-405; and considers a major

recreation facility of some kind. All of the action alternatives also assume some improvements to wetlands and riparian corridors in the area, but the prioritization of them is yet to be determined.

The action alternatives differ in that they have different development programs for housing and commercial uses; concentrations of development that generalize land use patterns; and different high-capacity transit station locations. A no action alternative will be included for comparative purposes in the EIS, along with a no action transportation network that includes only the projects in the city's existing CIP, the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe pedestrian trail, and high-capacity transit running between downtown Bellevue and Overlake in Redmond.

Mr. O'Neill noted that no substantive changes were made by the committee to draft Alternative 1 at the June 12 meeting. The alternative represents the mid range for employment and housing. He clarified that the term "Main Street" has been used throughout the study to signify the concept of primary focus street with a mixed use orientation having housing over retail. The Bellevue Downtown Association recently made the comment that there is only one Main Street in Bellevue, and because one of the principles for the study is to avoid conflicting with the downtown in any way, staff has agreed to stop using the term in favor of the term "pedestrian-oriented retail."

Alternative 3 has the development nodes in different places and assumes higher housing and less employment. The committee did not make substantive changes to the alternative at its meeting on June 12 but did debate the notion of whether or not to retain the development node at 148th Avenue NE; it was determined that it should be kept in the mix for the time being.

The committee did make some substantive changes to Alternative 4, which is the alternative that assumes both high housing and high employment. The suggestion was made that the south end of Bel-Red Road should have both low-intensity housing and office. The committee also concluded that the civic/arts space shown in Alternative 3 should be changed to parks/open space in Alternative 4. The map has been updated to reflect those revisions.

Senior Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald explained that the range of transportation improvements must be commensurate with the level of housing and employment opportunities. A multimodal transportation system package serving the corridor and connecting to adjacent neighborhoods and the region will be evaluated in the EIS. The package includes all CIP-funded projects; expansions of 120th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE; capacity improvements to accommodate the development programs; high-capacity transit; improvements to the non-motorized transportation system; and neighborhood protection projects. The notion of a major recreational facility is part of each alternative. Such a facility would require as much as 20 acres with both outdoor and indoor uses.

Mr. McDonald said at the request of the committee a glossary of terms has been developed which describes the features illustrated in the land use alternatives. He explained that the glossary is not intended to define the various zones: it does not talk about building height, lot coverage, or permitted uses.

b. Other Committee Questions/Discussion

Mr. Ptacek asked if the package of transportation improvements assumes bicycle facilities along Bel-Red Road. Mr. McDonald said bicycle facilities can refer to separate lanes meeting specific standards for use by bicycles, or a shared outside lane. Each arterial shown in the package of transportation improvements includes some form of accommodation for bicyclists. The off-

street non-motorized system includes trails shared by bicycles and pedestrians.

Ms. Sheffels said she attended the Council meeting on June 26 at which Sound Transit talked about their alternatives. She said there was no mention of bus rapid transit and asked if it will be considered for the Bel-Red corridor. Mr. McDonald answered that King County Metro is looking at bus rapid transit in a couple of corridors in the city, primarily connecting the downtown with the Crossroads area along NE 8th Street, and north and south along either 148th Avenue NE or 156th Avenue NE connecting the Eastgate park and ride lot with Overlake and Redmond. No decisions have been made relative to the technology to be used for high-capacity transit serving the Bel-Red corridor, but the options are limited to light rail or rail-convertible bus rapid transit.

Ms. Tish asked if light industrial uses are prohibited in retail, commercial, office and housing zones. Mr. O'Neill said the land use designations shown in the alternatives are intended to form an outline of the preferred uses. He said a decision will have to be made, based in part on the guidance of the committee, about how existing uses should be treated in the event the existing land use designations change. Presumably in any of the designations it could be decided that existing uses should be allowed to remain where they are as new uses are permitted. Light industrial uses are not permitted new uses in retail, office and housing zones.

Mr. Matthews commented that if housing uses are permitted in the corridor, a fairly good-sized green space will be needed in the western and eastern portions of the area. The major recreational facility could work very well in the western area.

Ms. Tish asked at what point impacts on the school district will be considered. Mr. O'Neill said there have already been talks with the Bellevue School District. They have been supplied with the alternatives and the underlying growth assumptions. The EIS will be focused primarily on transportation infrastructure, but will include other infrastructures as well, including schools. The school district will be involved as the preliminary preferred alternative is developed.

Mr. Ptacek asked if there are formulas to determine the number of school-aged children per housing unit. Mr. Creighton said the school district is very adept at predicting school enrollments based on population figures. Mr. O'Neill said at the Council meeting on June 19 at which staff provided an update regarding the status of the alternatives and the action taken by the committee on June 12, the question was raised about the need to put a school in the Bel-Red area. He said that is an issue that would need to be fleshed out with the school district.

Mr. Glass proposed revising Alternative 4 to move the development node and pedestrian-oriented retail street from 130th Avenue NE to 132nd Avenue NE or 134th Avenue NE. The pedestrian-oriented retail street in Alternative 3 is on 130th Avenue NE, and the change would yield another variation that could be enlightening. Mr. O'Neill suggested that from an EIS standpoint the change would not make much of a difference.

Ms. Roland commented that the proposal would place the development node closer to the wetlands where the impacts might be greater. In that respect it might be a good idea to study those impacts in the EIS.

Mr. Ptacek observed that 130th Avenue NE is the only street that connects straight through to the Bridle Trails community.

Mr. O'Neill said the node may need to be moved to 136th Avenue NE rather than 132nd Avenue NE to get far enough away from the Goff Creek corridor. He agreed that moving the node would

make the two nodes in Alternative 4 further apart.

Mr. Dennis said the idea is interesting but the move would shove the walking distance radius into a narrower part of the corridor. The location of the western node as shown in Alternative 3 closer to the hospital makes the most sense.

Mr. Schiring agreed the depiction of the western node in Alternative 3 is valid. He said there are some valid reasons for moving the node off of 130th Avenue NE and could support moving it in Alternative 4 a block or two to the west.

Answering a question asked by Ms. Baugh, Mr. O'Neill said the EIS will consider the impacts of the various alternatives. The committee will want to consider the impacts and pick and choose from among the alternatives in developing the preferred alternative that fits within the range of identified and studied impacts.

Mr. Hanson noted that two of the alternatives have the retail pedestrian-oriented street on 130th Avenue NE and proposed that in Alternative 3 it should be moved a couple of blocks to the west on 128th Avenue NE to see what the impacts might be.

Mr. O'Neill said one idea considered was keeping the retail pedestrian-oriented street on 130th Avenue NE but moving it toward the south between Bel-Red Road and NE 16th Street; that could still be an option. The challenge with moving the node east or west is the probable impacts of having Goff Creek running through the middle.

Mr. Springman suggested that having a riparian corridor running through the node could prove to be visually and aesthetically interesting. He asked if having the node located on 130th Avenue NE will create more or less congestion. Mr. O'Neill said the retail pedestrian-oriented street vision includes narrow streets with on-street parking, not a major traffic thoroughfare. In that respect, the traffic impacts could be less.

Motion to move the pedestrian-oriented retail street east or west to one of the alternative north-south streets and assessing the impacts was made by Mr. Springman.

Kris Liljeblad, Assistant Director, Transportation Planning, suggested that approach would essentially create a new alternative that would have to be studied. He said the study budget will not accommodate that.

Mr. Springman withdrew the motion.

Motion to move the pedestrian-oriented retail street to the southern part of 128th Avenue NE was made by Mr. Springman. Second was by Mr. Schiring.

Torsten Lienau, consultant with CH2MHill, said the grid system shown on the maps does not actually exist. As part of the EIS work, the existing streets will be programmed in. A lot of technical work would be required to include any new streets beyond those envisioned in the alternatives. He pointed out that the pedestrian-oriented retail street will need to locate on a street that has a significant amount of traffic; retail will not locate where there is no traffic.

Mr. Springman amended his motion, with the agreement of Mr. Schiring, to locate the pedestrian-oriented retail street in Alternative 4 on 130th Avenue NE to the south of NE 16th Street.

Ms. Sheffels pointed out that the area on 130th Avenue NE to the south of NE 16th Street operates as the service core. She suggested it would make more sense to keep those uses where they are and put the pedestrian-oriented retail to the north of NE 16th Street.

Motion to locate the pedestrian-oriented retail street in Alternative 4 on the north end of 132nd Avenue NE was made by Mr. Hanson; second was by Mr. Glass.

Mr. Creighton called for a vote regarding the motion to move the pedestrian-oriented retail node in Alternative 4 to 132nd Avenue NE; six voted for the motion and seven voted against the motion. The motion failed.

Mr. Creighton then called for a vote regarding the motion to move the pedestrian-oriented retail node on 130th Avenue NE in Alternative 4 to the south of NE 16th Street; eleven voted for the motion and two voted against the motion. The motion carried.

5. Direct Staff and Consultants to Begin the DEIS for Alternatives 1, 3 and 4

Motion to forward to the EIS Alternatives 1, 3 and 4 as revised was made by Mr. Dennis; second was by Mr. Glass and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Next Meeting

- a. September 7 or October 5

There was agreement to hold open the September 7 date but to plan for the next committee meeting to occur on October 5.

7. Adjourn

Mr. Creighton adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.