

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

February 2, 2006  
4:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Terry Lukens, Co-Chair; Kurt Springman; Joel Glass;  
Doug Mathews; Jane Bennett; Sue Baugh; Steve Dennis;  
Norm Hanson; Earl Overstreet; Bill Ptacek; Dean Rebhuhn;  
Ken Schiring; Pat Sheffels; Laurie Tish

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mike Creighton, Co-Chair; Eddie Pasatiempo

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kevin O'Neill, Dan Stroh, Michael Paine, Department of  
Planning and Community Development; Kevin McDonald,  
Goran Sparrman, Kris Liljeblad, Bernard van de Kamp,  
Department of Transportation

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Gerry Lindsay

**1. Welcome and Review of the Agenda**

Mr. Springman called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. and served as chair until the arrival of Co-Chair Lukens.

**2. Approve Minutes from January 19, 2006 Steering Committee Meeting**

Mr. Schiring called attention to the sixth paragraph on page 6 of the minutes and asked to have it revised to read: "Mr. Schiring commented that the first BROTS Study was completed in 1990. It consisted of numerous transportation recommendations. The current Transportation Facilities Plan contains 14 BROTS projects that still have not been funded and constructed. It would be counterproductive for the committee to study modes of transportation and select routes and designs only to have individual portions funded while the balance of the package languishes for years to come. He suggested that the recommendations of the committee should be forwarded in an all-or-nothing package scheduled over several consecutive budget years but with guaranteed funding."

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Mr. Hanson. Second was by Mr. Dennis and the motion carried unanimously.

**3. Follow-up Questions and Discussion from January 19, 2006 Presentations on Transportation and High-Capacity Transit**

Kris Liljeblad, Assistant Director, Transportation Planning, introduced Don Billin with Sound Transit to address issues raised at the January 19 committee meeting.

Mr. Billin distributed some general information about the Sound Transit II planning process and noted that the Board is scheduled to adopt a draft plan by the end of March. The draft plan will

be sent out for public comment before being finalized in June, assuming the Board continues to move toward a November 2006 vote.

Mr. Billin also handed out information outlining some of the objectives used by Sound Transit in the development of the Central Link project in terms of the decisions made relative to the locating of stations. He noted that some of the objectives compete with each other; as an example he offered maximizing ridership and minimizing impacts.

Don Billin commented that rapid transit systems from around the country have used a range of station spacing criteria, anywhere from just under half a mile to over two miles. Most projects, however, have settled on the mile as the appropriate station spacing distance. That has been the standard for the Central Link project and is the standard for the initial Eastside rail convertible busway or light rail system planning.

Mr. Billin explained that in general, an at-grade alignment is preferred because it offers the easiest access for passengers and integrates well into urban environments. At-grade alignments support redevelopment opportunities and provide for the greatest degree of safety and security. However, elevated and subway profiles are considered when street right-of-way is not adequate to support an at-grade operation. That is a factor that will come into play on the Eastside given that the arterial network is largely underdeveloped and the fact that there are existing traffic capacity issues. Accordingly, most of the planning assumptions for the Eastside assume a system that is largely grade separated, primarily aerial but with the possibility of a subway alignment in the Downtown.

Mr. Dennis observed that the geography of the Bel-Red corridor is such that the area naturally divides between west Bel-Red and central/east Bel-Red. That geography tends to suggest station locations. He asked if the committee's schedule will allow for making a recommendation regarding station locations to Sound Transit before the Board makes a decision. Mr. Billin said the committee's schedule is way ahead of Sound Transit's planning process. If the Board continues to push for a November 2006 vote, and if that vote is successful, Sound Transit will then get into the detailed alignment and station location planning. The Bel-Red corridor study presents the city with an opportunity to shape the kind of land use densities that Sound Transit will look at in evaluating alternative alignments and station locations.

Mr. Schiring said he came away from the previous committee meeting with the understanding that Sound Transit had already determined to a large extent where the alignment would run and where the stations would be located. Mr. Billin said those questions are still very much open; the planning is at a programmatic level focused on corridor, modes and the terminus. Once those decisions are made, Sound Transit will focus on alignment and station location questions, and that will be done through an environmental process involving public input. There are some major destinations in the corridor that Sound Transit wants to serve, including the Downtown, the Overlake transit center and out to downtown Redmond. Between those locations there are questions to be answered still, including where the guideway should run and where the stations will be located.

Ms. Sheffels asked if at-grade systems ever include re-grading arterials to go under light rail systems to avoid traffic conflicts. Mr. Billin said at-grade systems are always the most cost effective where right-of-way is available. Absent available existing right-of-way, the costs associated with purchasing new right-of-way must be weighed against the costs associated with elevated or subway alignments. Sound Transit has not looked at any instances of re-grading roadways to pass under light rail. The best configuration for at-grade systems along existing arterials includes having the trackway in the median of the arterial. That works well where there are no crossing arterials that have a heavy traffic flow. In south Seattle, the alignment along Martin Luther King Way is at grade in the median, but there are very few cross streets. In Portland there are a variety of at-grade configurations.

Ms. Baugh asked if Sound Transit has made any decisions relative to light rail as opposed to bus rapid transit. Mr. Billin said the Board has not made a decision in that regard. There continue to be two modes carried forward: one is light rail and the other is rail-convertible bus rapid transit.

#### **4. Information and Discussion Regarding Environmental Sustainability**

Senior Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald said the possibilities for implementing environmental sustainability deal with more components of the environment than just providing fish habitat in the streams. As the study area redevelops, there will be a number of opportunities to incorporate components of environmental sustainability; clearly the area was not developed initially with sustainability in mind. Redevelopment of the Bel-Red corridor can differentiate the area from other typical redevelopment strategies in Bellevue and the region. Through surveys, Comprehensive Plan support and through the Bel-Red corridor study, the public has thus far supported the idea of sustainability because of the community-wide benefits. Communities around the country are incorporating sustainability as areas redevelop, primarily because it is a good practice.

Mr. McDonald allowed that the term “sustainability” differs depending on who is being asked to define it. The United Nations has a definition that is applicable on a global scale; communities have definitions they feel apply to their situations; individual companies have an understanding of what sustainability means to them. According to the American Planning Association, environmental sustainability practices result in good communities in which to live; offer a variety of economic development opportunities; and maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity.

In the context of the Bel-Red corridor study area, there is a great deal of policy and community support for environmental sustainability. The Comprehensive Plan vision promotes the concept: the Environmental Element talks about a three-pronged approach to achieving sustainability through regulations, programs and incentives; the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element talks about multiple benefits that accrue to the community by incorporating environmental sustainability; and the Transportation Element calls for a multimodal transportation system,

allowing options for people to get around neighborhoods and between activity centers within the region.

Much has been heard from the local community. Many attending the November 9 community meeting touted the principles; the steering committee members have voiced some support for improving the wetlands and stream corridors and using them as assets in redeveloping the area; and a number of comments focused on sustainability were received during the SEPA scoping process. Sustainability is one of the ten principles developed by the City Council to guide the study.

Mr. McDonald said there are major stream corridors in the study area. They are part of a larger watershed that includes much of the northern part of the city flowing out of Kelsey Creek into Mercer Slough, which is part of the Lake Washington watershed, which in turn is part of the Puget Sound watershed. In the context of anadromous fish, including Chinook salmon, there may be resources available to the Bel-Red corridor from agencies and organizations that are working to support the continued viability of Chinook salmon within the Lake Washington watershed.

In 1965 the Bel-Red corridor was home to a lot of pasture and forest land. By 2003 the area had mostly hard surfaces in the form of driveways, roadways and roof surfaces. Some of the stream corridors in the area have been piped.

Kittie Ford with Herrera Environmental Consultants said the direction given her was to provide a snapshot of the ecological context of the planning area and to provide the committee with tools to inform the ongoing discussions about land use alternatives for the Bel-Red area. She said her work has focused primarily on the health of the streams in the study area. Five primary factors were taken into consideration: fish use, stream conditions, fish access, fish habitat conditions, and riparian conditions. Fish use is very important in that the presence of fish is a good indication of water quality and conditions suitable for fish.

Ms. Ford said existing information regarding the five primary factors that have been generated over the years was compiled. Rating criteria measuring the suitability of the habitat for fish was applied to the data. Valley Creek received the best overall rating; all other streams in the study area received ratings of moderate to poor.

The committee was shown a map of the Bel-Red area with the streams segments color coded by rating. The map included the locations where culverts partially blocked or block upstream fish migration. Taking Valley Creek as an example, Ms. Ford noted that while several of the individual stream segments received only moderate ratings, the creek system as a whole is quite good. In looking at streams as a whole, consideration is given to what is happening both upstream and downstream from the planning area.

Ms. Ford said the color coded map of the streams in the study area is not intended to serve as an indicator of where attention should be focused. Rather, the map is intended to serve as a tool for

determining tradeoffs in relation to other things that may be done that could have an impact on the streams.

The conditions in Valley Creek are good for the most part: the habitat sees the light of day, there is park land surrounding it, and there is relatively little pavement when compared to the other streams. There are Chinook salmon in the stream and the conditions both upstream and downstream are good for fish. Any efforts focused on improving Valley Creek will make a good stream better. Goff Creek received a moderate rating. The creek does not currently have Chinook salmon in it because there are barriers; if the barriers were removed, the salmon waiting on the other side would move up into the stream. A substantial portion of Goff Creek flows through a pipe; in one place the pipe flows under a building. The creek has good upstream habitat, and if the barriers were removed and if the stream were daylighted, it could provide substantial additional fish habitat.

The West Tributary was rated low because there is no upstream habitat and the in-stream habitat conditions are poor, though there is a lot of vegetation around portions of the stream. The advantage of looking at restoration opportunities along the West Tributary lies with the fact that very few property owners would be affected.

Mr. Dennis asked if the mid-point between the worst case scenario of having a creek in a pipe and the best case scenario of having fully daylighted streams with full buffers would be a sufficient improvement. He allowed that the mid-point would be a daylighted creek but with minimal buffers. Ms. Ford said there are a lot of things that contribute the health of a stream where the focus is on usable fish habitat. The constraints placed on streams by the existence of pavement and buildings make it much more difficult to provide the water chemistry needed to bring about quality conditions for fish. Hard surfaces in conjunction with inadequate stormwater management and treatment work against having good stream water quantity and quality. Where vegetation is not present, water temperatures rise too high. The primary purpose for having wider stream buffers is to ameliorate those conditions. Mr. Dennis commented that where the requirements are too onerous, it will be difficult to get property owners to agree to daylighting streams on their properties.

Mr. Rebhuhn pointed out that with six streams and a lake, the Bel-Red study area has some good things to work with. He suggested that the private sector will need to be given incentives for doing the right thing where the environment is concerned. If the incentives are attractive enough, the area could end up with daylighted streams, redevelopment that includes parks and open space, and a transportation system that encourages walking and riding transit. Mr. McDonald agreed and said repairing the stream corridors will have benefits to the community beyond just providing for fish habitat.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Ptacek, Kit Paulsen, Environmental Scientist with the Utilities Department, said the native American tribes have challenged the state with regard to culverts and hydraulic permits. Under state law, Bellevue is responsible for having all of its culverts passable for all fish. As part of the Bolt decision for treaty tribes in Washington state,

the tribes are allowed 50 percent of all harvestable fish and they serve as co-managers with the state of all fish resources. The Bolt decision also specifically includes the habitat on which the fish depend. That part of the decision has not yet been litigated in court, thus no one knows exactly how it will play out. The tribes review permits and processes, but just how that legally affects habitat is undetermined.

Department of Parks & Community Services Director Patrick Foran allowed that there are three primary drivers behind the Bel-Red corridor study: economic development, land use/transportation, and environmental issues. He suggested that in working through each driver, it will be important to think about how the park system that could evolve in the area could coordinate and collaborate with and add value to the individual drivers. Parks & Community Services has normal operational responsibilities related to the issue of environmental sustainability; those responsibilities apply to the acquisition of property, land management, establishing greenways, and developing education programs. The department has been able to leverage the regulatory environment that circles around all environmental issues to yield additional and multiple benefits for the community by designing the park system around those elements.

Continuing, Mr. Foran said one of the foundations of the parks system in Bellevue is the establishment of greenways connecting sensitive areas, watersheds, streams and forests with a series of large open spaces that are themselves connected by trails. The multiple values that have been established include public access, recreation, historical and cultural preservation, environmental education, and community support of and interest in volunteer environmental stewardship programs.

Mr. Foran described the Bel-Red area as being “aesthetically challenged”. The area is strategically located, is home to a number of necessary businesses, and houses many human services and arts organizations. The eclectic blend of uses in the area are useful to the residents of Bellevue, but there are some serious environmental concerns. The topography is varied enough to generate interest and excitement and offers wonderful opportunities for constructing certain kinds of parks and recreation facilities. The area presents a number of hard barriers to economic development and social connectivity, areas with which the parks system and community services system can assist. The area has experienced profound environmental degradation that is completely out of character with Bellevue as a community that prides itself in environmental stewardship.

Mr. Foran pointed out that within Bellevue the Lake Hills Greenbelt and the Wilburton Hills, Kelsey Creek and Mercer Slough systems are all interconnected. The Mountains to Sound Greenway trail system is being developed along I-90, there are dedicated bicycle trail systems along SR 520 and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue plus large regional parks such as Marymoor Park, Bridle Trails State Park, and some 5000 acres of public open space and recreation facilities in the Cougar Mountain and Coal Creek areas. All of those systems converge in the Bel-Red corridor. With careful planning, the riparian corridors, storm drainage systems and non-motorized

transportation systems, along with parks and open space amenities, can serve as linkages and enhancements to the values of each of the various individual systems.

The Bel-Red area also provides opportunity for the city to develop parks and recreation facilities on a community-wide scale. Currently, all neighborhoods in which there are recreation facilities constructed are completely overwhelmed on the weekends. If sports fields and similar recreation facilities were to be created in the Bel-Red corridor, the pressure on the neighborhood facilities could be greatly relieved.

Mr. Rebhuhn suggested that a developed park system could serve as the major driver for the entire Bel-Red corridor. It could act as an economic and transportation driver, would be supportive of diversity, and would be something that could be very special and really make a difference.

Mr. Lukens asked what the capital requirements of such a venture might be. Mr. Foran said all of the other drivers are going to generate most of the revenue necessary to bring about the improvements. The idea would be to add elements of public use, access, recreation and parks along with the multimillion dollar projects as they come on line; given the overall scale, the parks component would be a minor piece.

Ms. Tish allowed that while the parks infrastructure may be minor when compared to the overall redevelopment potential, it must be kept in mind that the redevelopment will be funded by private parties. A park of any size will require the spending of a lot of money on the part of the city. There certainly is no money set aside in the city's coffers to be used to buy up all available land in the Bel-Red area. Assuming that there will be a park system in the corridor, Mr. Foran said isolating the development costs from the overall cost of redeveloping the area, the percentage will be relatively small. Individually, however, parks projects are very large. The Bellevue community has a history, however, of supporting development of the parks system, and the city has shown a willingness to acquire properties deemed to be of value and to develop recreation systems that are nationally recognized. Much will depend on the will of the community to see something for the Bel-Red corridor that is dramatically different from what is there currently.

Ms. Baugh stated that parks are absolutely integral to the texture of the city; they are in fact what separates Bellevue from other communities. However they come about, parks elements will need to be a component of any redevelopment scenario.

Mr. McDonald said energy and resource conservation is one of the major components of sustainability. The Bel-Red corridor offers the city the opportunity to revise an existing urban area and accommodate growth without resorting to sprawl. The neighborhoods can be designed to accommodate a variety of uses and to be walkable, and the buildings within them can be designed for energy and water efficiency. Employee productivity has been shown to be higher in buildings with high-quality indoor environments. Multiple transportation options must be developed to support development in neighborhoods focused on smart growth.

The US Green Building Council has standards for what constitutes green buildings. Many developers are looking to incorporate the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system into their buildings to make them more marketable, but they are also discovering the environmental and economic benefits associated with them. Green buildings contain such components as green roofs, solar energy, non-toxic building materials, and water conservation measures. Smart growth options include multiple transportation choices, water conservation through use of native plants that need less water, mixed use urban environments, and transit-oriented development projects.

Mr. McDonald said it has been shown in case studies from around the country and the world that sustainability makes good economic and environmental sense. While the capital expenses are generally higher up front, there is a greater payback over the long run. Sustainability enhances quality of life, both on the community scale and on the individual scale. Examples of where communities have taken sustainability to a high level include the redevelopment of Stapleton airport in Denver; the North Macadam Central District in Portland; the Southeast False Creek area of Vancouver; and the Vulcan Real Estate project in the South Lake Union area of Seattle.

Ms. Sheffels asked if things such as pervious sidewalks would be considered in a sustainable redevelopment of the Bel-Red area. Mr. McDonald said water that flows off of all impervious surfaces must be channeled and managed. Pervious pavement offers the opportunity for rainwater to infiltrate the soil right where it falls. However, in many areas of Bellevue the soil conditions are such that infiltration does not always work. Pervious pavement is an element of sustainable development, but in Bellevue it will be necessary to take each opportunity on a site-by-site basis. He noted that the city is currently in the process of developing a pervious asphalt pathway on 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE through the Bridle Trails neighborhood. The mile-long pathway will include adjacent swales in addition to pervious pavement to allow most of the stormwater falling on the site to infiltrate where it falls to help protect the quality of the water in Valley Creek.

Mr. Hanson suggested that one of the hard barriers the Bel-Red corridor faces is SR-520. Among other things, the freeway is a barrier to connectivity. If a lid were constructed over the freeway, a viewpoint park could be developed that would provide for connectivity.

## **5. Sustainability Case Study: South Lake Union**

Co-Chair Terry Lukens introduced this topic, and informed the committee that South Lake Union is designated as an urban center in Seattle's comprehensive plan, and the scale and density of development that is contemplated for this area is likely quite different than what might occur in Bel-Red. However, South Lake Union is an interesting local case study on how elements of sustainability have been directly utilized in planning and development.

Strategic Planning Manager Kevin O'Neill introduced Richard Gelb with the city of Seattle and Sharon Coleman from Vulcan Real Estate. He said Vulcan Real Estate has a long history of

planning and faces a unique set of circumstances. Their property holdings are proximate to downtown Seattle in the same way the Bel-Red corridor is proximate to downtown Bellevue, and they face major transportation constraints similar to those in the Bel-Red corridor. He noted that both the public and private sector development community in Seattle has been consciously incorporating many of the sustainability principles and concepts in planning and development.

Mr. Gelb said he works for the city of Seattle's Office of Sustainability and Environment focused on urban greening, aquatic resources, and the climate change initiative. He said that to some extent the role of his office is to facilitate cooperation among the various departments to achieve sustainable development goals. In many ways, the city has been playing catch-up with the private development sector and the residents who value sustainability approaches to developing neighborhoods.

Mr. Gelb said the drive for sustainable neighborhood redevelopment has benefited from being in proximity to the places people want to be, including civic recreation and employment centers. The South Lake Union area has a very strong neighborhood cohesion and has invested heavily in drainage infrastructure in the form of a combined sewer/overflow control project. The South Lake Union area is also adjacent to the Cascade neighborhood which some ten years ago served as a pilot for a mixed land use and zoning approach that has proven to be quite successful.

The South Lake Union neighborhood is relatively underserved by transit. There has been an historical reluctance shown for master planning in the neighborhood because of the concerns tied to the Commons project. It has been necessary, therefore, to back into some planning in ways that could have been more efficient had the neighborhood been more supportive of the master planning context.

Mr. Gelb said a streetcar transportation system will be developed to serve the South Lake Union neighborhood via a Local Improvement District (LID) and city investment. It will benefit the local community and will provide connectivity with the downtown area. Transportation demand management programs have been extended to the area to include smaller businesses and property owners. The existing neighborhood plan is being updated, and some rezoning is anticipated to facilitate the mixed use model. The area is home to an emerging biotech cluster, and investments have been made in the Cascade Park.

The city is seeking to provide incentives in the form of development bonuses for LEED buildings, and also wants to see some of the historic buildings in the South Lake Union area preserved and renovated. Particular attention is being paid to the pedestrian/freight mobility balance. There is an emerging interest in developing an eco-industrial park and promoting green businesses as an economic development strategy, and for utilizing rights-of-way as open space resources. Consideration is also being given to sustainable development demonstration zones in which there would be incentives aimed at generating a mix of amenities in a particular geographic node.

Mr. Gelb said the principle of sustainability is aimed at optimizing the built environment to achieve both natural system enhancements and community benefits. There has been some locally grounded research lately focused on the mix of uses that best optimizes ecologic, economic and community benefits; the work has been funded by federal agencies as well as King County, and Seattle has been part of the study group. The findings suggest that cities need to get better at zoning approaches that better distribute destinations, including housing, retail and employment centers. Achieving economic and ecologic diversity is beneficial, and policies should be developed which will facilitate a multiplicity of economic and ecologic niches.

The Seattle parks department is one of the branches of city government that is starting to think more holistically about the triple bottom line of environment, economy and community, and it is getting more analytical about how to determine when the midpoint where sustainability is at its greatest is about to be achieved. In making decisions about where and how to invest capital dollars, the city is increasingly using a model that looks at the life cycle cost of investments, taking into consideration the total cost of ownership. A life cycle analysis model is also being applied to the total environmental impact of investment options, and similarly capacity is being developed to look at the social benefits from a life cycle perspective.

Ms. Coleman informed the committee members that Vulcan Real Estate was founded in 1986 by Paul Allen. She said the organization operates on the philosophy of a triple bottom line: financial, community and environmental accountability. Vulcan's holdings in the South Lake Union area comprise some 60 acres, most of which is underdeveloped. The area is close to I-5, close to the downtown, and is adjacent to some very densely developed communities. Growth of the area has been limited primarily by the boundaries that define it, namely I-5, SR-99, Denny Way and Lake Union.

Vulcan early on established goals for its South Lake Union holdings. They include creation of a mixed use environment, transit-oriented development, and creation of a new economic engine to provide jobs at all levels. Between 2004 and 2005 Vulcan delivered over 650,000 square feet of new development, and over one million square feet of office/research/retail space has been leased since 2003. In just the last six months some 256 condominiums were leased.

One of the key attributes of Vulcan's success has been its approach to sustainable development. The company looks at sustainability at the macro level and understands that the most important thing it can do is build in urban environments where people live and within walking distance of where people work, shop and recreate. At the micro level Vulcan incorporates LEED standards in its buildings and focuses on public transportation. Open space and localized recreation uses are vital components of sustainable neighborhoods. Cascade Park, which is in the Cascade area of South Lake Union, was for the most part uninviting a year ago before it was transformed, in part with \$650,000 in funding from Vulcan and its partners. The park now has a running stream and a playground that is heavily used. Vulcan has also committed \$10 million to South Lake Union Park, a 12-acre park on the edge of the lake; construction on that amenity will begin in the summer of 2006 and will become a jewel in the South Lake Union area.

Ms. Coleman said streetscapes are very important. Thirty percent of the land area in the South Lake Union neighborhood is taken up by city street right-of-way. For most of its projects, Vulcan works with the city to create wider sidewalks, adds a lot of greenery and incorporates bio-swales. Sustainable neighborhoods are also connected to other neighborhoods, thus there is a need for adequate transportation choices. A streetcar connecting the South Lake Union with the downtown and the Fred Hutchinson center will begin construction in the summer of 2006; in Phase II the streetcar will connect with the University of Washington. Half of the \$47.5 million cost for the project will be paid through an LID, much of which Vulcan will pay for.

Ms. Coleman said the South Lake Union Discovery Center was opened in 2005. The community center highlights the vision of Vulcan for the revitalization of the South Lake Union neighborhood. Over 80 percent of the building was constructed using recycled materials; the building houses exhibits on how recycling works, includes pervious pavements, and bio-swales to treat storm water runoff.

It is important to Vulcan to incorporate LEED standards in its buildings. The standards are just as important for the tenants in that the buildings are very efficient; they incorporate natural daylight, natural ventilation, under-floor air distribution, and energy efficiency.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Overstreet, Mr. Gelb said the primary drivers for sustainable redevelopment have been the interest of the local residents and the level of commitment within the development community. The development approach clearly is attractive to the community, and the city is doing all it can to catch up with the necessary infrastructure.

Ms. Baugh pointed out that Vulcan has an advantage in the fact that half of the South Lake Union neighborhood is under a single ownership. She asked what incentives are needed for an area like the Bel-Red corridor where there are multiple ownerships. Mr. Gelb said walkability and all infrastructure features that promote health are key to sustainable developments. Affordable housing is important as well. The measures that will provide benefit to residents and property owners alike need to be bundled. Ms. Coleman added that property owners care about the value of their properties. Incentives that allow for greater density in exchange for sustainability will always be taken seriously by the development community.

Mr. Gelb agreed and stressed the importance of the city providing amenities commensurate with the allowed density. Seattle is looking at developing an open space impact fee that will allow the development community to support the creation of open space as the area becomes more compact. Seattle also offers height and density development bonuses where the LEED standards are achieved.

Ms. Sheffels asked if redevelopment of the South Lake Union neighborhood has involved tearing down existing buildings. Ms. Coleman said there are a number of historic buildings in the neighborhood. Vulcan seeks to preserve all buildings that merit saving, in part to maintain the character of the neighborhood.

**6. Next Meeting(s)**

- a. March 2, 2006

Mr. O’Neill said it is hoped the meeting will take place in the new City Hall. He reviewed with the committee possible agenda topics.

- b. HCT Tour Preferred Date

It was agreed the tour should be scheduled for March 10.

**7. Public Comment**

Mr. David Plummer said he has the distinct impression that the city has delivered to the committee members a very narrow view of the transportation aspects of the regional transit project. He urged the committee to ask the city to make contact with the Eastside Transportation Association, an organization with a number of professional engineers that are able to provide a different viewpoint. Sound Transit is focused on delivering either light rail or bus rapid transit.

Ms. Pamela Toelle indicated her appreciation for the committee’s conversation about the environment. She said she watched King County Metro clearcut the land for their park and ride in Overlake. She asked the committee to carefully consider who the light rail or bus rapid transit system is intended to serve ultimately. If the intent is to serve existing populations, a link will have to be established with Crossroads given the pattern of current travel demands.

**8. Adjourn**

Mr. Lukens adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

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Chair of the Steering Committee

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Chair of the Steering Committee

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Staff to the Steering Committee

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