

BEL-RED BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNER PANELS DISCUSSION GUIDE  
SUMMARY NOTES  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2007

**BUSINESS PANEL: 4:00 TO 6:00 PM**

Kevin McDonald, Facilitator  
Diana Canzoneri, Scribe

**Introductions round-robin around table (and also observers)**

**Moderator introduces self and staff/council/steering cmte members present.**

Betty Spieth, Langton/Spieth Consulting

Ken Mattson, Len's Automotive

Len Mattson, property owner on 136<sup>th</sup>.

Jillian Hansen, Chown Hardware

Brian Kelly, Kelsun Distributors, on 130<sup>th</sup>

Bob Lynch, general surgeon at Overlake Hospital and working on project at a med-office building on 130<sup>th</sup> & Bel-Red.

David Murray, Working with Dr. Lynch on project on 130<sup>th</sup> and Bel-Red.

Bob Hale, Robert Hale and Company--wholesalers on 132<sup>nd</sup>.

Luke Fu, Acupuncture Clinic on 116<sup>th</sup>, near Overlake Hospital

In the first question, we'd like you to consider the **land use components** that are essentially *the same* across the action alternatives (for example, the area of Medical Office along 116<sup>th</sup>, or the general fact that development in each of the action alternatives is concentrated in nodes, although the location of the nodes varies).

**Are you generally supportive of including these components in the preliminary preferred alternative?**

**[Follow-up if needed: is there a particular feature common to the action alternatives that you strongly feel should be excluded?]**

- Aspects of the common elements are already present in the area, but need to enhance streams
- Medical offices are fine on 116<sup>th</sup>, and professional offices are fine south of Bel-Red Road, and should not be limited to those locations.

Still on the subject of **land use components**, but moving onto the land use components that *vary* between action alternatives, such as the specific location of development nodes or the concept of a "services core" in Alternative 1, or the "light Industrial" sanctuary in Alternative 2.

**a) Is there any land use component you particularly want to see either included or excluded in the preferred alternative?**

*and*

**b) Is there input you'd like to provide the steering committee regarding land use variables that could themselves be done in varying ways, such as the amount of development in transit nodes, the character of urban design, or open space enhancements?**

- Include planning for uniform building height: 4-5 stories would be maximum desirable, otherwise associated density will impact traffic. Building height is also a consideration if a zone for services or light industrial is retained, as there are needs to get larger vehicles in and out.
- Transportation system limits development
- Character of urban development is important to consider. Bel-Red Road is nice, but the character of corridor and the state of its streams are in rough shape. There will be a lot of work to be done to improve this and the recreational aspects of the corridor.
- Services are important to retain, especially since they are located close to downtown, so people don't have to drive far to obtain them.
- Aging population represents growing demand. It would be beneficial to have nursing homes and assisted living housing located near the hospital. Existing ones are too far away.
- Also put mixed use housing/retail and condos/businesses closer in.

- Light industrial uses would have lots of trucks, potentially impacting the mobility of autos
- Some small scale manufacturers could be priced out of the area due to land costs.
- Is there enough space retained for services uses and light industrial uses in options 1 and 2? With restrictions on space, we're going to be pushed harder to use just the space we have efficiently. Our opportunities to grow in this area is going to be limited.
- Transportation considerations to serve trucks with long containers will be critical if any kind of service or light industrial core is retained. Will need to consider transportation in and out of both goods and customers.

Shifting to the subject of **transportation components**, the work done to date has identified an ambitious set of transportation infrastructure projects, which are, with slight variations, common to all action alternatives. This set of transportation projects is sufficient to support the land use components outlined in any of the three action alternatives at an acceptable level of service. Omitting any of these projects could constrain the amount land use growth possible or could increase congestion beyond [what, under standard ratings is] an acceptable level of service

**Is there any transportation component you particularly want to see either included or excluded in the preferred alternative?**

- Owns a business on 120<sup>th</sup> Ave NE – ideas for improvements to that street are good, especially for bicyclists - it's dangerous for them on that street now as cars go fast and there is little or no shoulder.
- NE 16<sup>th</sup> Street does not yet exist – will require property acquisition. Concerned about potential displacements.
- Improved synchronization of lights is needed to improve traffic flow into downtown. Bel-Red Road to NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street to Bellevue Square route is particularly bad.
- Understand that one impetus for the Bel-Red planning process is being engaged in light rail planning process. What is Sound Transit's timeline, and when would light rail be in service?
- Light rail can create a sense of community and can support unique businesses, plus housing. No car – no problem. It is good alternative transportation.
- Bike lanes with just a white line are not safe – prefers to ride on the sidewalk. When designing bike lane corridors, separate them from the cars to some degree.
- As a truck driver, prefers not to have bikes on the road.

Shifting back to looking at the **land use alternatives**, when the Steering Committee develops a preliminary preferred alternative, they are not limited to picking an alternative *wholesale*, although they can do that if they wish.

**We're wondering if there is a land use alternative you would suggest they build from—retaining the basic layout, but perhaps substituting components of other alternatives.**

***In other words, is there one particular alternative you would use as the basis upon which to build a preferred alternative?*** [As needed, ask follow up why questions, get specifics on alternative #, which features to substitute, if any.]

- Alternative 1 has the services core – which is good but it also would be good to have services clustered around at least one of the stations. Not just residents, but also commuters could bring their car in for service, then hop on the train to work.
- Build service/LI uses core around one of the light rail station nodes. Don't need housing around every single station. With 3,500 new housing units, people are going to need services. I would choose alternative 1, but include enough land space for services.
- In addition to auto services, services like drycleaners are also needed near stations.
- Alternative 1 is bothersome because there is no light rail serving the office campus component. A station needs to be put there, which will help reduce traffic.
- People would not mind walking a quarter mile to a light rail station, but ½ mile is too far.
- There's got to be a transit stop very near the hospital. There many people who are physically challenged, and to them, even a quarter mile is a heck of a stretch.
- Alternative 1 embraces a mix of uses, and allows for the services core. Light industrial is getting squeezed out.
- Wonder if its realistic to expect Sound Transit to have two light rail stations.

- Some services are more compatible with having housing adjacent or under them: a guy tuning cars and replacing spark plugs is probably okay, but not a body shop underneath an apartment building .
- It makes no sense to say that your services have to be in one area.

In a few moments, we are going to wrap things up with a request to help us identify—if possible—some areas of consensus to communicate to the Steering Committee. However, before we do that, I want to ask:

**Are there any other comments or ideas not already expressed that you'd like to offer the steering committee as they start their work on developing the preliminary preferred alternative?**

- Appreciates the auto repair services, although it's difficult to make these look attractive. We need a place to keep these "ugly" services. Pressure will be strong to get rid of them.
- Area near Trader Joes has a lot of different services, which is good.
- Could there be multiple services core areas, perhaps one at each end of the corridor?

As we noted, staff will be the Steering Committee will be working in late March and early April to develop the preliminary preferred alternative.

**Based on the panel discussion we've had this [morning/afternoon], are there two or three main areas of consensus that this group would like to convey to the Steering Committee to help them develop the preliminary preferred alternative?**

- Like services uses. Look at multiple ways of preserving them.
- Put in a light rail station near the hospital
- A combination of two or three in terms of transit stops would be nice. Keep light rail stations close together so people can walk to them and minimize transfers.