

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

October 5, 2005
7:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Bonincontri, Vice-Chair Mathews, Commissioners Bach, Orrico, Sheffels

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Lynde, Robertson

STAFF PRESENT: Nicholas Matz, Department of Planning and Community Development; Kevin McDonald, Department of Transportation

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chair Bonincontri who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Lynde and Robertson, both of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consensus.

4. STAFF REPORTS

Senior Planner Nicholas Matz distributed to the Commissioners copies of emails received regarding the Crossroads Center Plan, and copies of the Factoria Area Transportation Study (FATS) executive summary.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

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

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Factoria Area Transportation Study

Senior Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald said the primary recommendation and overall theme of the study was to develop more of a vibrant, urban neighborhood in Factoria, well integrated with uses that are on the ground, supported by transit, pedestrian oriented, and with a variety of mixed uses. In June the City Council accepted the Factoria Area Transportation Study (FATS) update final report and directed staff to begin implementation.

Mr. McDonald said several early implementation projects have been identified and initiated. Trees were recently planted in the raised median along Factoria Boulevard. The type of trees planted were chosen specifically because their roots will not interfere with the underlying Olympic Pipeline. A landmark trailhead for where the I-90 trail meets Factoria Boulevard is currently under design. A new midblock crossing for SE 38th to the east of Factoria Boulevard is also under design to help facilitate pedestrians from the nearby large office buildings in getting to and from the shops and services along Factoria Boulevard. Pedestrian countdown signals are being installed at two intersections.

Implementation of the FATS update will also require amendments to the East Bellevue Transportation Plan (EBTP) and the Factoria Subarea Plan. There are a number of outdated policies in the EBTP that need to be removed, but the major changes to the plan will be focused on projects related to pedestrian/bicycle mobility, transit use, roadway capacity, and intersection and safety issues. The Transportation Commission endorsed the plan in September and forwarded it on to the Planning Commission.

Mr. McDonald said the transportation plan comes with a project list and a map. The projects are all keyed by letter code and number that appears on the corresponding map. In addition, each project has a verbal description. With regard to the Factoria Subarea Plan, FATS recommended policy amendments to the land use, transportation and urban design components. The opportunity was taken to reorganize the subarea plan somewhat by revising the format and removing redundant policies.

The primary reason for the FATS update was to determine whether or not there is adequate transportation capacity to expand the mall by 100,000 square feet of retail. The study demonstrated that there is adequate transportation capacity within the existing roadway network to allow for the mall expansion. There was also a recommendation to change the zoning for a small area to the north of SE 38th from General Commercial (GC) to Community Business (CB). Most of the zoning in the area is CB or the special F-1 or F-2 zoning. Because of the interest in applying urban design guidelines throughout the corridor, and because the GC zone is exempt from design review, it was concluded that CB is the appropriate zoning for the parcels along Factoria Boulevard.

Mr. McDonald said the FATS update also contemplated changing the District 2 boundary. He said the current boundary includes the Greenwich Crest neighborhood, the Mockingbird Hill neighborhood, and areas south of Newport High School. The FATS Update recommended policies in the Factoria Subarea Plan, however, are primarily intended for the commercial district. The recommendation of the study was to restrict the District 2 boundaries to give it a commercial flavor; the residential areas should be folded into District 1.

One of the policy considerations focuses on consolidating driveways along Factoria Boulevard. Many of the parcels have more than one driveway; several of the strip mall developments have more than two driveways. The net effect is a safety issue for both pedestrians and vehicles. The FATS update recommends consolidation of driveways as redevelopment occurs to reduce the overall number of curb cuts along Factoria Boulevard.

Other policies promote the improvement of transit facilities and services, call for establishing a boulevard streetscape for Factoria Boulevard, and call for the establishment of gateways. The policies call for working with King County Metro to enhance the environment for pedestrians waiting for buses. There are also policies aimed at capturing some of the bus traffic that currently travels on I-405 and I-90 but which does not stop at Factoria by creating flyer stops to facilitate getting to and from the mall and the office complexes.

In addition to the recommendation to change the zoning for parcels along Factoria Boulevard so that design review will apply to all new developments and redevelopments, there are policies that call for a maximum building setback along Factoria Boulevard, encouraging buildings to be located closer to the street, the provision of weather protection and improved connections for pedestrians, and the incorporation of plazas and open space. Parking is a large consideration given that under the current development scenario most parking is located between the building fronts and the sidewalk; FATS recommends reversing that order, an approach that would allow for some parking adjacent to the buildings and the consolidation of parking access points. The urban design policies also call for improved pedestrian amenities and making it easier for pedestrians to get across Factoria Boulevard; one way to accomplish the latter would be by constructing a grade separated overpass at the intersection of SE 38th and Factoria Boulevard connecting the office areas with the shopping areas.

Commissioner Orrico asked if any of the parking could be located underbuilding. Mr. McDonald explained that much of the Factoria area is constructed on top of filled wetlands. He said the FATS recommendation did not specify how parking should be located with respect to building underbuilding. Nothing in the recommended policies, however, precludes underbuilding parking.

Commissioner Orrico asked if the 2002 Land Use Code Amendment that set up the future of Factoria Mall is in any way altered by the FATS update. Mr. McDonald noted that during the course of the FATS community involvement process, many held the idea that the opportunity to reopen the 2002 discussion had come. It was made very clear at that time, however, that at the direction of the City Council, the discussion would not be reopened. No rezone will be required to achieve the additional 100,000 square feet of retail; the direction from the Council and the recommendation from FATS is sufficient to allow the mall redevelopment to proceed.

Commissioner Sheffels called attention to Policy 13 and proposed that it could be clearer if revised to read “Incorporate provisions for transit and non-motorized transportation when designing arterial capacity improvements.”

Commissioner Sheffels asked if the 100,000 square feet of retail space will be phased in over time. Mr. McDonald said the 2002 zoning action approved an additional 51,000 square feet of retail space, and 685 residential dwelling units. The additional 100,000 square feet of retail space was predicated on FATS finding that the transit system can handle it. There is no phasing component for the additional 100,000 square feet of retail space, but there is a phasing requirement for the 51,000 square feet of retail space.

Commissioner Bach referred to Policy 11 and asked what “alternative parking” refers to. Mr. McDonald said the policy exists in the current Factoria Subarea Plan. The reference is primarily to church parking lots where daytime commuter parking might be provided.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bach concerning parking behind strip retail developments, Mr. McDonald said the consultant recommended parking that is visible from Factoria Boulevard and perpendicular parking adjacent to the buildings in addition to parking located behind the buildings. Commissioner Bach allowed that a configuration of that sort should work.

Commissioner Mathews asked what incentives are included to encourage business owners to redevelop their sites with the buildings closer to the street front. Mr. McDonald said having the policies in place does not equate to a mandate for redevelopment. A number of charrettes were held with the local business owners, and it was in fact their idea to create a more walkable,

transit friendly, pedestrian-supportive Factoria Boulevard.

Commissioner Sheffels noted that residents of the residential areas to the west of the mall site have for many years been concerned about traffic in the Factoria area. She asked if they participated in the FATS update and if they were satisfied with the final recommendation. Mr. McDonald answered that a number of active residents from the Mockingbird Hill neighborhood participated in the study, and many of the project ideas in the EBTP came from the neighborhoods. They were satisfied that their concerns were heard and that a number of their project ideas made the final list. The reasons why some project ideas suggested by them did not make the final list were fully explained.

B. Comprehensive Plan Amendment
– Crossroads Plaza

Mr. Matz informed the Commission that the Crossroads and Wilburton subarea plan CPAs are no longer in the 2005 work program to allow sufficient time for full consideration. The Puget Sound Energy Utilities Element CPA is to be worked on outside of either the 2004 or 2005 work programs.

Mr. Matz said it appears the Crossroads Plaza CPA will be withdrawn. The property owner has also been entertaining an opportunity to redevelop the site as an office use. That approach would allow for the addressing of urban design issue.

C. Comprehensive Plan Amendment
– Lochwood Commons

Mr. Matz said the proposal is to change the designation from Office to Multifamily-Medium to allow for between 15 and 20 dwelling units per acre. Policy WI-5 in the Wilburton subarea plan allows for choosing between office and multifamily for the site, with the caveat that if developed as office there must be a residential appearance.

Mr. Matz noted that multifamily use on the site would generate fewer PM peak trips than an office use.

Commissioner Sheffels observed that the subject property has some very steep slopes (near the Main Street side of the property). Mr. Matz said that these areas on the site do not appear to be of sufficient size to affect proposed density. Nevertheless, this factor will be reviewed in the building development stage and a likely outcome is that the development will be sited as close to 118th Avenue SE as possible. In response to Commissioner Sheffels, he said the city will not allow the site access from Main Street.

Commissioner Bach asked how a development with 14 dwelling units could generate only seven PM peak trips. Mr. Matz said the ITE manual multiplier for estimating trips is 0.51 PM peak trips per dwelling unit.

D. Comprehensive Plan Amendment
– Tax Lots Triangle

Mr. Matz explained that the owners of the Tax Lots/Belvedere development arranged to swap some property with King County, specifically those lots shown on the map as 9003 and 9178, for the purpose of locating a large stormwater retention facility on 9003 and bringing the roadway into the city. Staff is currently working to add the site to the PAA and create a Comprehensive Plan designation through the CPA process, rezone, and annex the triangle-shaped site and

roadway. One of the key steps necessary to provide long-term guidance is the establishment of a Comprehensive Plan designation for the site. There are two assurances in place, the proposed Comprehensive Plan action and the adoption of a Development Agreement that stipulates special zoning conditions.

Commissioner Bach asked what the “Village Overlay” depicted on the (Newcastle) map is. Mr. Matz said when the city created the long-range Newcastle Subarea Plan in 1986, it transitioned in the 1983 King County Newcastle plan. The focus of the county plan was to locate density in the area in three large villages, each with a combination of high-density residential and low-density residential, and commercial uses. A fairly large village area on the map was drawn within which it was agreed that a specific village conglomeration would be considered. The village at Lakemont has been developed but does not fill out the full village boundary on the map. The second village turned into Tallus in Issaquah, and the third village that was supposed to be on the golf course never materialized, largely because the city of Newcastle incorporated and developed a different plan.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bach concerning the Single Family-Low designation for the area around the tax lots, Mr. Matz said the village overlay area is all designated Single Family-Low even though there is high-density housing that has been developed. The idea was to create an overall density of R-3.5. As developed, the overall density is in the neighborhood of R-2.8. The actual density on the tax lots will likely be closer to R-2 under the development agreement.

- 8. NEW BUSINESS – None
- 9. OLD BUSINESS – None
- 10. PUBLIC COMMENT – None
- 11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bonincontri adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Staff to the Planning Commission

Date

Chair of the Planning Commission

Date