CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

March 4, 2015
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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| COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: | Chair Laing, Commissioners Carlson, Hamlin, Hilhorst, Tebelius, deVadoss, Walter |
| COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: | None |
| STAFF PRESENT: | Paul Inghram, Department of Planning and Community Development |
| COUNCIL LIAISON: | Councilmember Stokes |
| GUEST SPEAKERS: | None |
| RECORDING SECRETARY: | Gerry Lindsay |

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Chair Laing for purposes of conducting an executive session to discuss potential litigation. The executive session ended at 6:32 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Chair Laing who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner deVadoss who was excused.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Peter Maxim, 12405 NE 2nd Street, said his property abuts Wilburton Hill Park. He said starting about 25 years ago people who lived along the NE 2nd Street and 128th Avenue NE used to have lots of ivy in their yards as a ground cover. They often threw their trimmings into the park. Now there is about ten acres of ivy growing in the park. Ivy is an allopathic material, which means its root system kills other plants. The parks department about five years ago made attempts to have some of the ivy removed but they have not pulled the ivy out by the roots, which means it has all grown back. The ivy has killed most of the groundcover plants in the park, which has caused most of the birds to leave and the animals to have nothing to eat. The Commission was urged to add money to the maintenance and operations budget for parks so the ivy can be removed before it takes over the rest of the park.

Chair Laing suggested the issue should be brought to the City Council's attention as well as to

the attention of the city manager.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Carlson, Mr. Maxim said the parks department has a policy against the use of herbicides. Unfortunately, to truly get rid of the ivy they are going to have to resort to their use.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to amend the agenda by striking item 8 and to approve the agenda as amended was made by Commissioner Hilhorst. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tebelius and it carried unanimously.

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

6. STAFF REPORTS - None

7. PUBLIC HEARING: Comprehensive Plan Update

Comprehensive Planning Manager Paul Inghram explained that the Comprehensive Plan is a single document that pulls together many of the city's different planning efforts and creates a coherent strategy for how to manage change and growth over the next 20 years. It is an important tool that guides decision making. The process of updating the document has been going on for the last two years and concerted effort has been put into reaching out to the public for input.

Mr. Inghram said the Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2004. Since then many things have changed in the downtown, in various neighborhoods, and in the city's commercial areas. The proposed update to the plan takes all of that into account. Some key structural changes to the plan are proposed, including a reworking of the vision statement in line with the adoption of a vision by the Council. The draft document updates and refines the city's growth strategy to take into account growth in the downtown as well as in the Bel-Red and Eastgate corridors. One significant change to the document is the inclusion of a new element focused on neighborhoods to provide a single place to address neighborhood issues. The policies in the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan were worked on by the cities six different boards and commissions; in all over the last two years there have been some 60 meetings focused on the update work.

Under the plan, the majority of growth in the city will occur in the downtown, with the next largest amount of growth occurring in the Bel-Red corridor. Very little change is anticipated to occur in the single family areas, which is in line with the policies aimed at protecting and maintaining single family. The land use map will remain largely unchanged, so the update work, while significant, does not represent a significant change relative to zoning. It does: provide more support for economic development; adds a new education subsection that recognizes the value schools have in the community; includes a new neighborhoods element that provides support for updating the subarea plans that allow neighborhoods to do planning at the local level; includes updated human services policies; and includes updated policies regarding housing that relate to housing affordability and the need for student housing options, particularly around Bellevue College.

The update rolls in changes that were developed by a citizen advisory committee for the

Eastgate/I-90 corridor that includes a number of changes to the Eastgate commercial area. There is no proposal to extend office into residential areas. The proposal does talk about changes to the office corridor to allow for a greater mix of uses and to encourage redevelopment, particularly in the area to the south of Bellevue College and north of the freeway.

A number of refinements are made in the proposal to the Transportation Element to address overall mobility. The changes include consolidation of four different subsections about transit and five different transportation project lists.

One of the significant changes in the Capital Facilities Element is the attempt to include links to the city's various functional plans for water, sewer, and parks.

The two most talked about items related to the Utilities Element have been internet access and better mitigation of overhead power and telecommunication lines, with a preference for undergrounding.

A number of policy amendments are proposed for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element. One issue addressed is how to keep the city green while accommodating additional growth. Tree canopy and habitat restoration are both addressed in the policies.

The plan also addresses arts and culture. It continues some of the policies that are supportive of public art but it also looks at the need for arts facilities and provides support for a performing arts center.

Mr. Inghram said a number of comments from the public had been received from the online open house, the joint boards and commission meeting, and the neighborhood leadership gathering. He provided the Commissioners with written copies of the comments received to date. The comments highlighted a continued interest in undergrounding utility lines throughout the city; the need to address housing affordability; an interest in art as a city concept but also in the neighborhoods; making use of opportunities; continuing to acquire land for parks and open space; concerns about dealing with the impacts that come along with accommodating growth; ways to support neighborhoods; the need to preserve and increase the city's tree canopy; and the need to address safety and crime. At the recent East Bellevue Community Council there were comments made about traffic and walkability within neighborhoods; access to transit; tree protection; and concerns about single family room rentals. The online open house generated a comment in support of a National Hockey League team in Bellevue. Others advocated for creating a bicycle facility in the Eastside rail corridor; the need to improve mobility for those in wheelchairs; the BR-MO zone in Bel-Red and the FAR levels; concerns about the potential development of the Unigard site in Sherwood Forest; support for zoning changes for the Eastgate RV site; and support for changing the downtown southern boundary.

Motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Tebelius. Second was by Commissioner Hilhorst and the motion carried unanimously.

**P.1** Ms. Ellen Hegenauer , 15980 NE 8th Street, spoke as director of Harrington House, a transitional housing program for women who are pregnant or parenting. She thanked the Commission for the hard work put into updating the Comprehensive Plan and for including affordable housing policies in the plan. The draft Housing Element, however, does not do enough to address Bellevue's affordable housing needs and obligations. One of the best ways to address and prevent homelessness is to ensure affordable housing is available, especially for low- and

moderate-income families.

P.2 Ms. Agnes (last name not given), 15980 NE 8th Street, spoke as a case manager for Harrington House. She stressed the need for and importance of having affordable housing. She said she works with some amazing women who have amazing children who have invested a great deal of time and effort in stabilizing their families. They are connected with and work in the community, and many of them go to school and are otherwise engaged in the city. For all their hard work and effort, however, they cannot afford to live in the city. Affordable housing needs to be available for all such families.

P.3 Ms. Rebecca Bailey, 15980 NE 8th Street, said she works as a life skills coordinator at Harrington House. She said the women in the program work hard and make progress integrating into the Bellevue area while in the program, only to find when they are ready to leave there is no housing they can afford. The wait lists for affordable housing is up to ten years long, which means they must move to some other city. Often the commute from their new home is too far from Bellevue.

P.4 Ms. Alisa Batos, a Harrington House resident, agreed with the previous speakers. She said the women residents plan their lives around Bellevue and once they meet with success find they must move to some other city because of a lack of affordable housing. Bellevue is a great community and most would prefer to stay in the city.

P.5 Ms. M. Fraser , also a resident at Harrington House, said she moved to Washington from Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina to do contract work at Microsoft. She said she soon came to realize how great Bellevue is. She said two years ago she went through an ordeal that left her both a single mother and homeless. That brought her to Harrington House and back to Bellevue. If Bellevue will seek to invest in those like the residents of Harrington House, their children will invest in the future of Bellevue.

Commissioner Carlson said he is familiar with the work of Harrington House. He asked how many women and children have been helped over the years. Ms. Ellen Hegenauer said more than 350 have been served in the nine shared living units operated by Harrington House.

P.6 Mr. Todd Woosley with Hal Woosley Properties, PO Box 3325, spoke on behalf of the Kramer family, owners of the Eastgate RV Park. He said the family would like to transition their property from what is becoming an obsolete use to a use that will provide more housing. He spoke in support of the policies, particularly those recommended by the Eastgate/I-90 CAC. The proposed policies will allow for moving forward with a zoning action to effect a housing opportunity.

P.7 Mr. Ross Klinger with Kidder Mathews, 500 108th Avenue NE, Suite 2400, spoke representing owners of the Trailer Inns RV Park and voiced his support for the recommendations of the Eastgate/I-90 CAC. The policies when translated into a zoning action will increase the supply of housing in the area; will accommodate growth; will support a greater variety of retail businesses at places such as Eastgate Plaza; will provide rental housing close to Bellevue College; will provide for a buffer between established single family neighborhoods and I-90; and will create a better jobs/housing balance in the Eastgate subarea.

P.8 Ms. Osha Morningstar, 10022 Meydenbauer Way SE, #315, said her home is right across the street from the yacht club. She said equity and inclusion should be part of everything Bellevue

does. She said she holds a Section 8 voucher from the King County Housing Authority and was not able to find a place to live in Bellevue until able to increase the voucher by $300, something that took a great deal of time and effort. She said she lived in a tax credit building in Auburn after moving to Western Washington from Eastern Washington. There were often fights outside the apartment and it was not safe to go out at night. Having buildings dedicated to low-income housing is not preferable to having low-income residents integrated into the community. Housing that qualifies as affordable under the HUD definition is often too expensive for low-income residents to afford. In planning new districts, such as the Spring District, careful consideration should be given to the unintended consequence of rising rents in an area that used to be affordable. The city should also do a better job of advertising its meetings, programs and services. With regard to sustainability, she suggested Bellevue should make composting mandatory like Seattle does; there are no recycling bins on the streets in the downtown. She also spoke against allowing Puget Sound Energy to cut down 295 trees to accommodate a new power substation. Mature trees decrease carbon by 70 percent over what juvenile trees can do. Consideration should also be given to allowing social service agencies to locate in the downtown.

**P.9** Ms. Nancy Qualley, 16231 NE 2nd Street, addressed the topic of affordable housing. She said the city certainly is not where it needs to be. She shared a situation in her family involving a member who got divorced and had medical issues. It took him six months to receive some financial and medical assistance, after which he was ready to be out on his own, but not in Bellevue because of the cost of housing. He ultimately moved to Dayton, Ohio. It should be taken into consideration that the need in Bellevue is much higher than what is available.

**P.10** Ms. Rachel Voelkle, 10604 NE 38th Place, Suite 215, Kirkland, spoke as the operations coordinator for Imagine Housing. She said the affordable housing non-profit develops affordable housing and supports the residents with supportive services. Currently the organization is providing housing for 485 families on 13 properties in east King County, three of which are in Bellevue. She said everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy and affordable home. Because Heather, a single mother of two, found living quarters through Imagine Housing, she is able to live close to her work and is able to spend more time with her family. The Velocity project was opened in September 2014 thanks in part to a partnership with Bellevue and Kirkland. The project has 44 parking spots for the 58 units, but currently only 38 of the parking spots are occupied, due in large part to the fact that the project is located near a park and ride facility. Where it is possible to build intentional affordable housing units near growth areas that include transit centers, the result can be fewer cars on the road and less congestion. According to the 2014 Washington State Department of Transportation corridor capacity report, it costs each person commuting into Bellevue up to $2500 per year in commute congestion costs when wasted time and gas are factored in. That statistic could be alleviated by providing affordable housing in the city, giving individuals and families the opportunity to live close to where they work. The Commission was thanked for including affordable housing policies in the updated Comprehensive Plan, but more work is needed to see affordable housing located in the downtown and in areas planned for housing growth.

Chair Laing noted that several in the audience agreed with the testimony.

Mr. Bob Knox noted his support for the comments made by the previous speaker.

**P.11** Mr. Warren Halvorson, 13701 NE 32nd Place, spoke representing himself as well as a committee of neighbors from Bridle Trails, Somerset, Woodridge, Newcastle, Lake Lanes and the Coalition

of Eastside Neighborhoods for Sensible Energy. He submitted to the Commission recommended changes to the Comprehensive Plan policies relating to non city-managed utilities. The policy language needs to take into account the facts that electricity is essential to the health of the city; significant changes are occurring in the electrical industry; vibrant and distinct neighborhoods need to adapt to change but also need to be protected; and the need to preserve Bellevue as a city in a park. He pointed out that most of the 14 recommended language changes involve only a single word.

**P.12** Mr. Norm Hanson, 3851 136th Avenue NE, said over the years he has worked with many different neighborhoods on electrical infrastructure and out of service times. He said he was encouraged by the vision in the Comprehensive Plan. A vision that many of the city's older neighborhoods have is to see their overhead utility lines undergrounded. The Comprehensive Plan should include support for the undergrounding of electrical distribution and transmission lines. Washington D.C. and San Diego are both currently involved in undergrounding their electrical transmission lines. Having such policy language would provide a base of support for the city to work with providers.

Chair Laing noted that several in the audience agreed with the testimony.

Commissioner Tebelius asked if the proposed new transmission line through Bellevue should be undergrounded. Mr. Hanson said New Jersey is currently undergrounding 18 miles of a 230kv transmission line, proving that it is not impossible. A longer one goes through Vermont. The city has done a great job in building the downtown, which has nine redundant circuits and no substations; the same vision should be applied throughout the city.

**P.13** Ms. Becky Lewis, 16552 SE 19th Street, said Bellevue prides itself on being diverse. In order to really be diverse, more affordable housing is needed. The Spring District would be an ideal location for affordable housing, but Wright Runstad is going to be allowed to pay a fee instead of putting in affordable housing. The Comprehensive Plan should have policies with teeth. They should call for using best practices in order to get affordable housing in all the right places.

Chair Laing noted that several in the audience agreed with the testimony.

**P.14** Mr. Chris Rossman, 10360 Main Street, spoke on behalf of the Wolf Company which is currently in the process of developing a mixed use building with approximately 350 housing units at the corner of Main Street and Bellevue Way. He said in addition to market-rate multifamily housing, the Wolf Company also develops moderate-income senior housing and affordable housing throughout the West Coast. The Eastside market has been identified as having a need for both housing types. He voiced support for looking at areas in the city outside the downtown core to provide residential density.

Commissioner Carlson commented that everyone would like to see more housing available for low- and moderate-income people. There certainly are concerns about grown children being able to afford to live in the city they were raised in. He asked Mr. Rossman what he would suggest the city should do to help make more such housing happen. Mr. Rossman said affordability is not unique to Bellevue or even the Puget Sound region. The fact is the economics are challenging to anything beyond maximizing a return for investment. Everything from the cost of land to the cost of development, and several things not controlled by the development community, goes into the mix and determines what housing will cost. Success has been found in developing affordable housing through partnering with communities and/or large stakeholders

within a community to help subsidize the costs. Seattle uses the multifamily tax exemption program to target more moderate-rate housing in exchange for a tax exemption over a 12-year period. The program appears to be the best win-win option. Regulatory requirements relative to building and zoning codes do not have a big impact, but the cost of permits and impact fees certainly do.

Commissioner Hilhorst asked what do stakeholders look for. Mr. Rossman used the Bay Area as an example and said the large tech companies located in what is essentially a suburban location have changed the dynamics of the neighborhoods. Unfortunately, because of the economics behind the companies and the salaries they pay, people not affiliated with those companies have a very hard time living in the community. What Wolf Company and other developers have done is to work with large corporations to help create various alternative housing options based on the notion that those very corporations are the ones that helped to create the affordability gap. There are tax credits and exemptions used as well.

Commissioner Walter asked if there are any government grants available for the construction of affordable housing. Mr. Rossman said the affordable housing product Wolf Company offers is not a tax credit product and the company does not seek government grants. Incentives offered to developers, such as tax credits and exemptions, yield the same results.

Commissioner Tebelius allowed that the cost of land on the Eastside is quite high and is in limited supply. Mr. Rossman said the dynamics of housing density and the costs to build housing is always reflective of the macro economic impacts. Land is cheaper in Phoenix and it costs less to develop there, but the revenues generated from the users of the development is less as well. In the end, the economics are not much different. In the current development cycle on the Eastside, however, the cost of the land does not support any use the Wolf Company develops outside of market-rate housing.

..15 Ms. Alicia Campo, 11018 NE 11th Street, spoke representing Downtown Action to Safe Housing, a non-profit affordable housing developer. She said those who work in Bellevue should have the option of living in Bellevue. The significant job growth projected for the next 15 years covers a variety of income levels. It will be critical to create a housing strategy plan that supports affordable housing throughout the city. It is concerning that the Commission has rejected many of the housing policies suggested by staff and housing advocates. The city's affordable housing policies should be strengthened by creating a housing strategy plan, reconsidering some of the housing policies suggested by the staff and housing advocates, and partnering with ARCH and member cities to implement a new dedicated revenue source to increase public funding for the ARCH housing trust fund. The city should take advantage of the effective housing tools other cities have employed to ensure that current and future workers in Bellevue will have the option of living in Bellevue.

**P.16** Ms. Rae Levine, 700 108th Avenue NE, spoke as the interim executive director for Sophia Way, a Bellevue-based organization that works to help women move from homelessness to independence through the provision of shelter, lifeskills training and supportive services. Sophia Way operates a 21-bed supportive shelter operated at St. Luke's Lutheran Church on Bellevue Way, a transitional communal house hosted by the East Shore Unitarian Church in Bellevue, and is involved with the Eastside emergency winter shelter for women and children. The agency supports woman housed in market-rate units as well. She said she is often asked if there are really homeless women in Bellevue. While they are not openly visible, there are homeless women in Bellevue who are even as old as 70. There are also homeless children living in

Bellevue. The winter shelter during the current winter season has seen an uptick in the number of families in need of shelter. People are most often homeless because they cannot afford housing. Many have incomes because they work but still they cannot afford housing. Everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy and affordable home. The draft Housing Element talks about affordable housing, but the policy language could be strengthened by adding specifics. A plan for the city's share of very low- as well as moderate-income housing should be included. There should be a commitment to implement a range of development incentives to help promote affordable housing. Steps need to be taken to increase the amount of funding available for affordable housing. The direction nationally for providing services and helping people who are experiencing homelessness move toward independence is toward providing housing first and services second. Everyone from the federal government to local jurisdictions and human services agencies are embracing the approach. The new direction will not be successful, however, unless there is more housing available.

Chair Laing noted a dozen or so hands raised in support of the comments.

Commissioner Walter asked if affordable housing units should be congregated around transit or interspersed throughout the city. Ms. Levine said being close to transit is very important. Low-income housing that is congregated into a single area makes the residents stand out; it is better to have units spread out. While there is general support for moderate-income housing, the real need lies is for low- and very low-income housing.

**P.17** Ms. Mickie Larrimer, 4053 149th Avenue SE, spoke in favor of integrating affordable housing into neighborhoods. She said the Eastgate is home to residents from a variety of incomes and the community is benefited as a result.

**P.18** Ms. Karen Tennyson, 12617 NE 87th Place, Kirkland, said formerly served on the Planning Commission in Kirkland and as chair of ARCH and currently serves on the board of the Housing Alliance. She said ending homelessness and providing affordable housing is her passion. The King County Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness has reached its tenth anniversary, and ironically there are now more homeless in the county than when the plan was launched. The cities on the east side of Lake Washington have often worked together to achieve goals that would have been impossible if taken on alone. Efforts should be put into working together to develop a permanent funding source for affordable housing for the Eastside. Bellevue should follow the lead of Redmond, Issaquah and Kirkland, each of which has mandatory affordable housing regulations in their plans. It is the only way to truly get affordable housing. Kirkland has mandatory affordable housing in every apartment building in the downtown. People spend their money where they live, not where they work, so it makes economic sense to provide housing in Bellevue for people who work in Bellevue. Everyone benefits when everyone benefits.

Chair Laing noted about a dozen hands were raised in support of the comments.

**P.19** Ms. Kristi Becker, 10116 SE 6th Street, spoke as associate director of housing and case management for Hopelink. She added her support to the statement made earlier that everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy and affordable home. Over the past few years Bellevue's diversity has been increasing and the needs for low-income neighbors have been growing. There has also been an increase in the number of families struggling to locate affordable housing in Bellevue and east King County. Families are often having to pay a high percentage of their income for rent, leaving very little for basic needs. The waiting lists for

affordable housing are often over two years. Many working families that are exiting the homeless housing units offered by Hopelink are unable to locate affordable housing in the community in which they live and where their children go to school; they are often forced to relocate, and the result can be instability in the household. Bellevue has been a good partner in helping Hopelink serve low-income families in Bellevue. Hopelink provides food, housing, emergency financial assistance, heating assistance, employment services and education. The package of services is designed to help people stabilize whatever crises they have experienced and to help them build the tools and skills they need to finally exit poverty. Affordable housing is a key factor to their success. The Commission was asked to strengthen the affordable housing policies in the draft Housing Element; to plan for the city's regional share of very low-, low- and moderate-income housing, and to commit to implementing a wide range of development incentives for low- and moderate-income housing.

Commissioner Tebelius asked what qualifies as an affordable rent for a low-income family. Ms. Becker said the range for those earning 30 to 60 percent of area median income is between $445 and $950 per month.

Chair Laing noted several hands were raised in support of the comments made.

**P.20** Mr. Wade Johns, 6652 Lakeshore Drive, Dallas, Texas, spoke representing Alamo Manhattan which is developing a project at 106th Avenue NE and Main Street. He said the firm shares in the vision of the pedestrian corridor that will run from old Bellevue down Main Street to 112th Avenue NE. The firm has the immediately adjacent Par 5 site under contract as well. There are some ambiguities as to where exactly the zoning lines are that cross the Par 5 site. The solution outlined in the recommendation of the staff should be approved. He also agreed that affordable housing is important and progressive cities around the nation, including Portland, Oregon, are finding ways to address the need. Bellevue should reach out to those cities to see what they are doing.

Chair Laing said several hands were raised in support of Mr. Johns' comments.

**P.21** Ms. Kayla Schott-Bresler, 1402 3rd Avenue, Seattle, spoke on behalf of the Housing Development Consortium of King County. On the question of whether it is better to have affordable housing units in individual developments or integrated throughout the community, she suggested the answer is both/and rather than either/or. Neither solution will address the problem entirely. Many non-profits are doing a great job of providing affordable housing units in developments such as Velocity, but there is room for mixed-income developments in places where developers can help contribute to solving the affordable housing needs of the community. There is clearly a need for affordable housing in Bellevue as well as in other Puget Sound cities, and there is also an interest in tackling the problem. There are already many tools available for use, and much will depend on the degree to which the city commits to using those tools. ARCH and the city staff have done a good job of laying out the tools for the Commission. She added that she and the representatives of other organizations focusing on the affordable housing topic are anxious to hear the Commission's discussion.

Chair Laing clarified that the Commission will begin its deliberations on March 11 and will continue them either March 18 or March 25.

**P.22** Ms. Leslie Schofield, 3030 Bellevue Way, spoke representing St. Luke's Lutheran Church. She said the church houses the Sophia Way day center and residential center, hosts Congregations for

the Homeless, and has hosted tent city twice. The church sees homelessness every day. The Commission was urged to do low-income and affordable housing.

Chair Laing noted several hands were raised in support of the comments.

**P.23** Mr. Bob Stanberry, 3030 Bellevue Way, also spoke representing St. Luke's Lutheran Church. He highlighted the need for affordable housing in the community. He said Bellevue could become a leader and show King County, the state and the nation how to provide housing for everyone.

Chair Laing noted that several hands were raised in support of the comments.

**P.24** Ms. Michelle Wannamaker, 4045 149th Avenue SE, said she had come to comment on allowing office to encroach on the single family homes to the south of I-90 in the Eastgate area, but was happy to learn that would not in fact be the case. She asked, however, about the boundaries for the Eastgate subarea.

Mr. Inghram explained that the boundaries that are currently in existence define the Eastgate subarea as well as the Southeast Bellevue subarea. He said there is a proposal on the table to change the boundaries to reflect boundaries based on schools and other aspects.

Ms. Wannamaker commented that overall the draft Comprehensive Plan is a very well written document and represents a great deal of time, thought and effort. She thanked the Commissioners for their work.

**P.25** Ms. Loretta Lopez spoke as president of the Bridle Trails Community Club. With respect to the citizen engagement section, she stressed that inviting citizens to participate in all aspects of government is a bedrock of Bellevue. There is a clear need to make that known. With regard to the neighborhood goals and policies, she stressed the importance of ensuring police, fire and emergency services provide high levels of public safety. She questioned how policy N-11 will work with the housing policy HO-16 which allows for attached and detached accessory dwelling units in single family districts where consistent with neighborhood subarea plans. The fact is most neighborhood subarea plans do not address detached accessory dwelling units, so some clarification should be added. The position of the Bridle Trails Community Club relative to detached accessory dwelling units is that they are in effect a zoning change from single family to multifamily without notice. Policy HO-X-4 speaks to allowing seniors to stay in their homes and neighborhoods is a very good idea, one that can be accomplished by policy HO-16 through allowing attached accessory dwelling units.

Answering a question asked by Ms. Lopez, Chair Laing explained that the Commission will continue to take comment from the public for as long as its deliberations continue, which is at least until March 18.

**P.26** Mr. James McEachran, 15029 SE 47th Street, said he serves as chair of the Human Services Commission. He stressed that in everything the city does, human services is key to the ultimate success. Speaking personally, he said it was very rewarding to see the success Imagine Housing has met with.

Chair Laing noted that several hands were raised in support of the comments made.

P.27 Mr. Faisal Jaswal, 4452 Factoria Boulevard, said he serves as assistant dean of student programs for Bellevue College. He thanked the Commissioners and the city for being a valid and robust partner with Bellevue College. The work of the Commission is needed and is being well received. He said he works with countless numbers of students who are homeless in conjunction with community partners that work to provide shelter and housing. The hope is that the city will maintain a robust stance in terms of policies and actions in support of building a future that will support the type of community everyone wants to see in the future.

Chair Laing noted there were many hands raised in support of the comments.

P.28 Mr. Bob Knox, housing development project manager for Imagine Housing, stressed the need for land use policies and designations that will allow development to take place in the neighborhoods where land acquisition costs are less. Additionally, allowing for exemption from impact mitigation fees related to utilities and utilizing the tax exempt programs can significantly reduce the cost of developing affordable housing. There are federal tax credit programs available, but access to grant dollars is at the state level rather than the federal level; funding is limited and the process is very competitive.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Hamlin. Second was by Commissioner Hilhorst and the motion carried unanimously.

8. OTHER BUSINESS - None

9. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

10. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Hamlin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hilhorst and it carried unanimously.

Chair Laing adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Paul Inghram
Staff to the Planning Commission

5/13/2015
Date

Aaron Laing
Chair of the Planning Commission

5/13/15
Date

* Approved April 8, 2015