

**CITY OF BELLEVUE  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

Thursday, February 7, 2008  
6:30 P.M. Regular Meeting

Bellevue City Hall  
450 110<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE  
Conference Room 1E-112

**PRESENT:** ESC Commissioners Carter, Helland, Kovoov, Larrivee, Mahon, Roberts, and Rogers

**STAFF:** Nav Ota, Phyllis Varner, Kit Paulsen, Joyce Nichols, Laurie Devereaux, and Pam Maloney

**OTHERS:** Paul Inghram, Virginia Garcia, transcriber

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**Dan Stonington, Cascade Alliance Conservancy, 4206 Ashworth Ave. N, Seattle.** Mr. Stonington spoke in support of policy S-BR-D9, “Consider the Bel-Red Subarea as a potential receiving site for regional Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).” The Cascade Alliance Conservancy (CAC) is a regional land trust, which has a leadership board that includes individuals from a diverse range of stakeholders including builders, environmental advocates and major employers in the region. The CAC attempts to move forward strategies that make great cities in the region and protect great lands. He encouraged the ESC to support and strengthen the policy language about TDRs because Bellevue could directly benefit from the program. Drinking water is a critical environmental service. In 15-20 years Bellevue will be using water from the Lake Tapps Watershed and a part of maintaining that water quality is protecting the White River Watershed that is upstream from Lake Tapps. TDR is a powerful tool to do just that. It is a tool that is up and running in King and Pierce Counties and other cities around the region, including Issaquah and Seattle. He urged the ESC to strengthen the language to “Designate” rather than “Consider” the Bel-Red Subarea as a potential receiving site for regional Transfer Development Rights to ensure that the City Council takes advantage of this tool.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Nav Otal announced a change in the agenda related to Item 6c, because Councilmember Davidson was not in attendance for that discussion. Therefore, this item will be moved to March. Councilmember Davidson was to discuss ESC roles and responsibilities related to conflict of interest.

Commissioner Larrivee moved approval of the agenda as amended. Commissioner Helland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**4. APPROVAL OF 1/9/08 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

Chair Rogers noted the error on the Public Hearing Minutes heading. Commissioner Larrivee noted a couple of grammatical errors with no bearing on the meaning of the minutes. Commissioner Larrivee moved to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Carter seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**5. APPROVAL OF 1/9/08 MINUTES**

Commissioner Larrivee referred to the second full paragraph on page 17. On the second line he suggested changing the word polices to policies and on the fourth line changing the word needs to need. Commissioner Larrivee moved and Commissioner Carter seconded as amended.

a. Follow-up Questions/Answers

Ms. Otal indicated that there was one follow-up question from Commissioner Roberts related to Allied Waste Action Plan. She said the City received the action plan, but there are several typos. Staff is working with Allied to get the typos corrected and then staff will provide the revised Plan to the ESC in March.

**6. REPORTS & SUMMARIES**

a. ESC Calendar/Council Calendar

Ms. Otal noted that last month the ESC agreed to move the Automated Meter Reading presentation to March.

b. Desk Packet Materials

Ms. Otal reviewed the desk packet materials:

- Conservation & Outreach Events & Volunteer Opportunities, and Planning Commission review letter commenting on the draft 2008 Stormwater Management Program.

- c. ESC Roles & Responsibilities – Discussion Postponed Until March, 2008.
- d. 2008 Stormwater Management Program Follow-up

Ms. Otal stated that this is follow-up to the public hearing. The Stormwater Management Program document has been available since mid-December. Staff made a presentation to the ESC last month detailing the main points.

Ms. Varner stated that tonight's NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit discussion would focus on the Commission's comments and recommendation to the City Council on the 2008 Stormwater Management Program. Ms. Varner provided a brief review of the activities up to now (Presentations, discussions, and Public Hearing on the 2008 Program). She then noted that the recommendation that the Commission would be discussing and formalizing tonight was for Council's Monday night meeting. Ms. Varner said the Commission's desk packets contained a letter to the ESC from the Planning Commission with their comments on the 2008 Program and a draft ESC Memorandum to City Council for discussion purposes..

Ms. Varner reviewed the Planning Commission letter to the ESC stating that the Planning Commission did not have specific comments on the actions identified in the draft 2008 Program and support the implementation of the program and the ESC's role in reviewing and making a final recommendation to the Council on the 2008 Program.

Ms. Varner reviewed the draft letter to the Council from the ESC. She asked if Commissioners had comments.

Commissioner Helland suggested removing the word "legal." He said he is not comfortable addressing whether it meets any legal requirement.

Commissioner Carter noted that the City cannot "assure" compliance just because the City has the document and stated that she is uncomfortable with the word "assure" in the recommendation paragraph.

Chair Rogers took issue with the word "mandate" in the recommendation. He also suggested inserting in the beginning of the last sentence of the recommendation the following: "While the Commission acknowledges there is more the City does currently in managing the quantity and quality of runoff in Bellevue, and may choose to do more in the future to contribute to the health of Bellevue's streams and open water bodies, as well as wildlife that use these and downstream water bodies," the ESC recommends... Chair Rogers said the City is doing more than what is required in the Clean Water Act and may do more in the future. He said it

is a signal to the Council that the ESC believes the program that exists today is good, but there may be more that they want to do.

Commissioner Roberts noted that the memorandum sounds as if the ESC only discussed it once. Ms. Varner agreed to change that.

The ESC agreed to revise the draft off line and send a final draft around to members tomorrow. Additional comments would also have to be submitted to Ms. Varner by the end of the day because it is going to the Council for Monday's meeting.

Commissioner Roberts moved to approve the letter as amended. Commissioner Helland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

e. Bel-Red Policy Update Paul Inghram and Kit Paulsen

Paul Inghram, Bel-Red Policy Manager, provided an update on the January 31, 2008 Open House and information about the February 27, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting, which the Boards and Chairs have been invited to attend.

Mr. Inghram reviewed the activities related to the Subarea Plan up to this point. He also summarized comments that were made at the Open House. He said there was interest in stream enhancements that combine open space and trails. There was also interest in the benefits to Bellevue Citizens of partnering with art. The Arts Commission liked the idea of sustainability and green infrastructure in the Subarea Plan, and that public art may be integrated with it.

Other comments included preserving streams as a top priority and opening up streams. Eighty people signed in at the Open House. There was a good mix of people. Some of the property owners that staff have not seen before attended as well as familiar neighborhood residents. People stayed for long periods of time and asked questions, such as, "How is this going to work?" "What is the zoning to be?" and "How much is it going to cost?"

Ms. Paulsen said that Parks and Environment were addressed at the same table at the Open House. People were interested in the concept of open space, trail and streams and wanted to know more. People were really engaged and there was a range of comments from wanting more quiet areas to wanting to know the costs.

Mr. Inghram said people from the affordable housing community also attended.

Mr. Inghram noted there was a Planning Commission meeting last night, focused on affordable housing, where three experts were invited to speak.

A couple of them noted the importance of making housing attractive for families by including parks and open space.

Mr. Inghram said the City would continue to receive comments and that the Open House was just one way to reach out to the community.

One of the questions was, “How do we pay for it?” Mr. Inghram said that one of the topics at the Council retreat will be the capital financing aspects, and getting some feedback and direction on which financial tools the City should pursue to pay for it.

Chair Rogers asked how program funding may work for the phased development of more public facility infrastructure. Right now the City is working with a consultant to identify the overall increase in value in the area. That value, in theory, can be funneled back into the capital program. One challenge is that development comes in parcel by parcel, and if an impact fee system or even a utility rate is imposed, that would occur over time. Therefore, the City may consider debt financing for the initial improvements that have to occur.

Mr. Inghram asked the ESC to focus on the environmental policy section. He said he hoped that the ESC would make a motion recommending the environmental policies to the Planning Commission with highlights or comments, understanding that there would be further refinement.

ESC commissioners reviewed staff proposed changes, comments and discussion on the policies.

### **Review of Bel-Red Subarea Environment Goals and Introduction**

Ms. Paulsen stated that this section looked good, but that the last paragraph of the Stream Corridor Restoration could be clarified. There are projects planned for the other streams in the area; therefore it should say, “While there are opportunities along each stream corridor, the greatest opportunities for enhancement in the near term have been identified along the West Tributary and Goff Creek.”

Commissioner Larrivee asked why are these the greatest opportunities. He said there is a value judgment analysis implied in the term “the greatest opportunities.” He suggested qualifying why it was the greatest. Ms. Paulsen said the West Tributary has larger parcels so there is more flexibility for redevelopment to occur farther from the stream. Goff Creek is in a high development mode and so there may be early redevelopment interest.

Chair Rogers stated that he believed the staff discussion language regarding opportunities helped clarify what the policies are and should be added with some modifications where appropriate.

Mr. Inghram suggested adding, “The anticipated order of redevelopment provides” the greatest opportunities....

Commissioner Carter suggested adding the reasons why they are the greatest opportunities.

Ms. Paulsen suggested maintaining “restoration opportunities have been identified for each stream in the corridor.” Staff agreed to clarify why these provide the greatest opportunities.

Chair Rogers asked that language be added that states “integrate and connect public parks and public spaces to private development provide opportunities for natural resources, education and art installations.” Ms. Paulsen said this could be added to the first paragraph.

Commissioner Larrivee noted that he did not like using the passive voice. Specifically, the last sentence of the first page is passive, “Restoring 50 to 100 feet of natural streamside vegetation that incorporates a public trail network is anticipated to provide multiple benefits, enhancing fish and wildlife habitat, improving water quality, increasing open space and neighborhood buffering.” Staff agreed to rewrite in more active language.

Commissioner Helland asked if these policies would only apply to the Bel-Red Corridor and asked how they might work or not work in other areas of the City. Ms. Otal stated they are specific to the subareas. She said the Council may consider a broader stream restoration program, but Bel-Red is the first phase.

Mr. Inghram said the City's comprehensive plan includes an environment section, which provides for environmental protection, the use of natural drainage systems, etc., throughout the city. He added that the policies being reviewed tonight are specific to Bel-Red.

Chair Rogers suggested adding the following after the first sentence in the first paragraph, “this can be expressed most vividly and consistently with the redevelopment vision for the area, by integral inclusion of stream and wetland restoration and natural drainage practices.”

Commissioner Carter suggested eliminating the word “most.”

In the next sentence, Chair Rogers suggested changing the word “protect” to “enhance” to say, “New Development and reconstruction in Bel-Red should enhance sensitive areas.”

Mr. Inghram said he would need to examine the legal implications of the proposed changes in terms of what can be required of new development and new construction.

## **Review of Policies**

Ms. Paulsen explained each of the specific policies and staff proposed changes.

S-BR-D1 - No staff proposed changes.

Chair Rogers suggested changing the last phrase of the first sentence to, “as a means to enhance the natural environment and provide multiple public benefits.”

S-BR-D2 – Staff added the red text, because the language implied that it applied to just private parties.

Commissioners discussed whether to include the staff discussion text and agreed to leave it out, as it provided a level of detail unnecessary for this document.

Commissioners agreed to change the policy as follows: “Protect and enhance wetlands and other designed critical areas in Bel-Red, through the use of development regulations and incentives and, potentially, public funds.”

S-BR-D3

Chair Rogers stated that related to policy D3 there is a statement in the introduction to Natural Drainage Practices, that he disputes specifically where it states that natural drainage practices do not work in all settings. According to Chair Rogers, it can work anywhere. There are lots of places where soil conditions are highly constrained, but improvements such as green roofs are still feasible. He proposed the policy to state, “Natural Drainage Practices may be constrained based on existing site conditions and must be designed to account for those conditions as part of the development.”

Ms. Otal stated that the NDP language may require an evaluation from Legal.

After some discussion, the Commissioners agreed not to add the discussion section that is in blue print, but would reflect Chair Rogers’ concern in the introduction.

S-BR-D4 – Staff added the words “could investigate.” Commissioners discussed these words and agreed to change it to “might evaluate.”

S-BR-D5

No changes from staff. Chair Rogers suggested changing the word “coordinated” to “effective.” Ms. Paulsen suggested the following language, “Consider opportunities for off-site or coordinated stormwater mitigation, as a means to provide for a more effective approach.”

S-BR-D6 – Staff added under the discussion in the second line, “such as.”

S-BR-D7 – No changes.

S-BR-D8 – No changes.

S-BR-D9 – No staff proposed changes.

Commissioners considered the proposed language change from oral communications that would change the first word “Consider” to “Designate.” Mr. Inghram stated that the City does not know how this would be implemented. In concept the City is supportive of it, but there are complexities about how it works and how it could work within Bel-Red and that's why they chose the word “Consider.” More needs to be done to figure out how it would work. Mr. Inghram agreed to include the word “Actively” before “consider.”

Mr. Inghram stated that the policies could come back in March with an opportunity for further tweaking. He asked that the ESC make a motion with the discussed changes.

Chair Rogers indicated that he intended to attend the next Planning Commission meeting. He said he has a draft memo that he would present.

Chair Rogers noted that there are things happening very fast with regard to the environment, such as green buildings, energy conservation, etc., that were not known five years ago. He said that in five or 10 years from now when the corridor is developed there will have been more environmental advances. As such, the policies should acknowledge the potential for opportunities that may arise in the future because our expectation of what can happen is based on current knowledge and our current vision may be aiming low.

Commissioner Carter suggested indicating in the policies that the City has to keep up with the state of the art, and it must understand what that is. Ms. Paulsen suggested adding language expressing the need to stay in front of environmental advancements. In the introduction. Ms. Ota stressed that this language needs to be general and not specially call out natural drainage practices since that is only one of many means to achieve the goal.

Commissioner Helland moved to recommend forwarding the Bel-Red Subarea policies, with the ESC changes discussed, to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Carter seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

f. Steam Team Update

Laurie Devereaux, Stream Team Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation of the Stream Team Program, including 2007 highlights, which fall into three categories: education, monitoring, and restoration.

**Education:** There were 59 educational program events and 267 participants, including teachers, families, and volunteers. The main message is that storm drains drain into streams, lakes and wetlands. If people understand this they will keep non-point source pollution out.

**Monitoring:** Laurie assigns volunteers only work that is useful. They monitor CIP programs at Coal Creek streams, collect bugs, or participate in on-going monitoring. There is always a purpose to the monitoring that is done and she credits this for wide participation. Ms. Devereaux reviewed the different types of monitoring, which include photo monitoring, Peamouth Patrol, Macroinvertebrates, Salmon Watchers, and Electrofishing.

Commissioner Larrivee noted an added benefit of monitoring is the community-building that occurs among the participants.

**Restoration:** There were 137 volunteers. Volunteers do different things, including removing weeds and planting plants. BCC Volunteers moved 2500 plants for Earth Day preparation. The numbers for restoration are down compared from last year because in 2006 there were two Eagle Scout Projects. This year's Eagle Scouts put down storm drain markers, which is tallied under general outreach rather than Stream Team volunteerism.

Ms. Devereaux described the Incubator Project, which is in its third year. It is a unique partnership and includes education and an experiment. Dale Griffith, a private citizen, built a pond in his back yard several years ago, high in the Kelsey Creek basin. Two natural streams flow into the pond. Volunteers herd fish from an incubator to Kelsey Creek. 30,000 eggs are placed in the incubator for the first two or three months of their life, isolating them from flow, temperature and pollution problems.

Ms. Devereaux discussed outreach to streamside property owners, including the Critical Areas Handbook, which is now complete. The book addresses what property owners need to know about living near stream corridors and doing a restoration project. Ms. Devereaux is planning to hold a streamside property owner workshop in March. The workshop will

discuss the incentive program, permit process – fee waivers, general stream information, and teach them about native plants.

The value of volunteers is estimated at 430 volunteer units. This number is higher if you include family members that accompany a particular volunteer. This totaled over 1000 volunteer hours. The dollar value is over \$22,000 worth of donated volunteer time. The value would be higher for people who worked on more technical jobs. Volunteers made 1072 field visits to streams last year, 925 were by Salmon Watchers. Additional value that the volunteer program provides is ongoing maintenance and monitoring of restoration and CIP projects. It helps us meet NPDES requirements and WRIA 8 salmon recovery recommendations. The knowledge and education that volunteers receive is priceless. There is a Stream Team newsletter that goes out to 1600 people. The Park's Connections brochure includes a color article about the Stream Team program, and has wide distribution.

The next step is public outreach. Based on a phone survey, 48 percent of the City's residents still think stormwater goes to sewer for treatment, or do not know where it goes. Ms. Devereaux is working with Redmond, Shoreline and Kirkland on focus groups to test outreach materials and logo effectiveness.

## **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Commissioner Roberts requested that people with short presentations be allowed to present before those with long presentations or the main business of the meeting, so they don't have to be kept waiting for a long time.

Commissioner Larrivee reported on the Light Rail Best Practices Committee. The Committee visited light rail systems in California. It helped committee members better understand the problems. They went to San Jose and saw some of the challenges they faced. They came back with a suggested list of best practices. Based on the field trip and other input, a list of best practices is being developed for the East Link System through Bellevue. It is unclear what the end product will look like.

Chair Rogers said there is much information available about how the systems work and experience in other areas in terms of what has worked to develop policy recommendations. The Committee will go to Portland at the end of this month.

Commissioner Larrivee said that in terms of identifying best practices, so much depends on the particular alignment, yet the Committee is not charged with defining that. It is still a work in progress.

Commissioner Larrivee noted that what they do know is that the light rail system would come off Mercer Island and then go to the Bel Red area. It

would also go through downtown. Chair Rogers said it would go along the slough, single family residential neighborhoods, downtown, and the Bel-Red Corridor.

**8. NEW BUSINESS – none.**

**9. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE REPORT**

Ms. Otal stated that the fleece jackets the City provided to the ESC were in recognition of the work it did to help the Department get its accreditation.

There is a memorandum in the desk packet from Randy Thompson on the Water Comp Plan. The ESC recommended adoption of the Water Comp Plan in 2006. Then it went to King County for review by the Utilities Technical Review Committee. In April it will go to Council for adoption. There is only one minor policy change under "Service Reliability." Staff have underlined the change that King County staff suggested and staff concurs with. The change is, "connections between adjacent water distribution or water systems should be encouraged to improve reliability and reduce vulnerability to loss of water service. Staff will add this to the Comp Plan. There is no action required by the ESC.

Ms. Otal noted that she would not be here for the March meeting. Wes Jorgenson, Assistant Director, Engineering will be in attendance.

**10. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS –none**

**11. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Larrivee moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM.  
Commissioner Carter seconded. Motion passed unanimously.