



City of Bellingham MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION

August 8, 2007

The Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission meeting was called to order by Kathryn Hanowell, Neighborhood Services Coordinator, on **Wednesday, August 8, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.**, in the Mayor's Board Room, Second Floor, City Hall.

APPROVED MINUTES

	<p>Attendance: Unless noted below, all were in attendance: Substitutions: Columbia (Edie Norton); CBD (Sheryl Russell); Absent: Sehome (Allen Matsumoto); Happy Valley (Jeff Sawyer); Mt. Baker (Robin Hitz); Samish (April Markiewicz); WWU (Brady Dykgraaf)</p>
	<p>Minutes approved from July 11th with Patrick McKee's addition. Kathryn recognized Mike Robinson, Howard Steiner, and Edie Norton for working on the League of Women Voters Candidates forum. She also noted to the group that Thom Pritchard had won a 450 mile canoe race down the Yukon River! [Congratulations, Thom!]</p>
	<p>Items from the Neighborhoods</p>
	<p>Alabama Hill – Received reconsideration request for sport court at Birch St, public input cut off is Aug 15th. Planning committee will have neighborhood planning meeting at Sept 15th at Bloedel Donovan. Spoke w/ Chris Comeau about traffic calming on Vining Street. Neighborhood has resisted further calming. St Clair recommended for traffic calming. Skateboard issue at Iowa Dr and St. Clair. People still driving over round traffic hump.</p> <p>Birchwood – Discussed bylaws at last meeting, in draft stage. Discussed neighborhood plan update work. Low level of enthusiasm. Will work on re-formatting and housekeeping and hope for new energy in fall with more substantive work in 2008. Kurt asked if a copy of the neighborhood plan could be provided in a Word document. Staff will address.</p> <p>Central Business District – Alley Concerts and Bite of Bellingham both successful. 1200-2200 in attendance at alley concerts. Guiseppes Restaurant won for best food, Nimbus for most original. Info station very successful. Chalk Art festival on Saturday. Residents continue to be concerned w/ infrastructure issues. Discussed traffic issues/ Vehicles of attendees to farmers market are blocking parking lot and South Bay Trail routes. Mail delivery issue for Morse Square because of limited vehicle access. Bollards prevent access and postmen must walk to deliver mail to the condo on the trail right of way.</p> <p>Columbia – Held summer quarterly meeting, discussed MYN program w/ speakers. Concerns voiced with privacy issues, believes can be resolved. Working w/ Cornwall and lettered streets on Fountain District redesign. Working w/ businesses. Newsletter recently came out, goes out to about 1800 residents.</p> <p>Cornwall – Picnic on Aug. 22. Working on Fountain District/urban village concept with business people, Columbia, and Lettered Streets.</p>

Edgemoor – Working on neighborhood survey. Proposed bylaw changes at last general meeting, will vote on final changes at Sept meeting.

Fairhaven – Have submitted bylaws to City, expanded membership. Very contentious process. Starting mediation in late August, reorganizing association. Still working on neighborhood plan.

Guide Meridian/ Cordata – Got crosswalk at corner of Horton and Cordata. Helpful w/ increased traffic. Finished neighborhood survey, summarizing contents. 156 responses. Mainly want more parks, not happy with traffic. 2 Night Out events. Privacy concerns also came up with MYN. Planning Commission hearing on proposal at NW & I-5 where Jerry Chambers business is. Dangerous for pedestrians. No crosswalks, sidewalks or bike lanes in certain areas. Affects residents of Sterling Drive. Think designation will move from level E to F. Kathryn noted that PW is planning major project for that intersection.

Lettered Streets – Had neighborhood garden contest. 27 entries, 12 will be finalists. Winner will be announced at August 19th picnic. Meeting with Planning Commission on rezone. Answer will be postponed to be coordinated with Old Town planning.

Puget – Racine St is going to be extended. City rec'd grant for supporting Puget improvements. Learned of this in newspaper.

Roosevelt – National Night Out Events well attended; Included a discussion on how neighbors could helping each other out with crime prevention. Will hold meeting on time banking.

Sehome – Police had identified suspects in recent assault involving vehicle. Presented summary draft of neighborhood plan at general meeting last night. Tim Stewart has recommended, and neighborhood agrees, to upgrade Samish Way from a Tier 2 to Tier 4 Urban Village.

Silver Beach – Noted Kathryn/ Malcolm/ Mayor/ Janice were huge help in putting on LWV forum. Picnic tomorrow w/ Robin Matthews to talk about the lake.

South – Board approved of bylaw changes. Working on to have neighborhood survey ready for Sept. Attended presentation by Don Davis about disaster preparedness. Attended 50+ mobile home park residents' meeting. Would like to support Fairhaven neighbors in their work on their urban village. Would like to have dialogue about Fairhaven Urban Village; as well as dialogues around other Urban Villages.

South Hill – Asked that all plan amendments be scheduled at same city council meeting. Was Tim Stewart's initial intention, also to have all plan amendments go to PC at same time. Thom Prichard noted that everyone is at different stages. *[See Bob Ryan's comments later in meeting.]*

Discussion of continuity of process. Discussed neighborhood associations, membership dues in order to vote. Request clarification on appropriateness – Kathryn addressed issue: Attorneys tell us that case law isn't clear. Recommends that in an abundance of caution, don't require dues payment for voting, or keep dues to very modest amount. Several groups said theirs is \$10 and voluntary. Very successful home tour on July 28th. Each home had a docent; one participant fell down stairs and is requesting compensation from the association. Encouraged w/ John McGarrity pushing insurance issue for neighborhoods. Deadline for neighborhoods to contact John McGarrity to participate in

	<p>insurance program is August 17th.</p> <p>Sunnyland – Great July meeting, well-attended. New place – at Assumption Church. Picnic on Sept 9th in Sunnyland Park. Planning committee has finished review of neighborhood plan, reviewing WSDOT property proposals. Hoping to re-write plan as regards to site, in cooperation with new owners of site. Tree planting (Small and Simple Grant) going forward. James Street – neighborhood has been lobbying for crosswalks. Suggested to PW that it made sense to do crosswalks when they were doing overlay. Did get partial commitment from PW for James and Kentucky St (Hardware Sales) and James and Carolina St. (Youngstocks) for lighted crosswalks. PW will try to do in coordination with resurfacing project.</p> <p>Whatcom Falls – Waiting to see what happens w/ Stanford rezone request; went through PC, not gone to Council yet. Made another counter proposal to developer. Don't know what status is.</p>
	<p>Information from the City</p>
	<p>Old Town Master Planning – Presented by Tara Sundin</p> <p>Tara used a power point presentation to discuss Old Town Planning, assisted by Chris Koch who is working on plan as well.</p> <p>Urban Villages will be unique in city; all need: public realm and open space, engaging pedestrian space; variety of transportation options. Attributes of Old Town: existing street grid layout, small blocks, variety of topography and land forms, historic structures, proximity to downtown, Lettered Streets, waterfront, Columbia. Natural setting, transit access. Existing parks and open space, public investments made.</p> <p>In series of public meetings in 2005 – goals were established to maintain character, defining features, public view corridors, bike/ped improvements, building heights, design. Likes: history, funkiness, natural landmarks; Dislikes: traffic, noise, GP warehouse.</p> <p>Idea of plan is to provide predictability for area and encourage redevelopment in thoughtful way. New public plazas will be proposed into district. Not seeing use in Maritime Heritage they would like. Proposing expanded public space around old train station.</p> <p>Preserving view corridors through street grid system. Will also require establishing height limits/ street trees/ setting buildings back. Working on street design; wider sidewalks. Keep landmark buildings. Want to encourage wide range of uses, esp those that aren't auto-dependent, noisy, etc.</p> <p>Design standards – will require review of Design Review Board; also looking at upper story setbacks. Full blocks will be built out, but want to do it w/ design standards in mind so that bulk of buildings isn't felt on ground. Identifying height sensitive areas. Reducing street lane width in certain areas to make streets more bicycle friendly.</p> <p>Timeline: May – Sept: refining recommendations, meetings w/ stakeholders/ Commissions May – Sept: refining recommendations, meetings w/ stakeholders/ Commissions Fall – Planning Commission [MNAC would review proposals] Early '08 – City Council</p> <p>Q – On putting park in front of Lanny Little mural at Bay St. Property owner is interested in developing on site.</p>

	<p>Julie – David Syre’s property – Boss Tweed and surrounding areas; height limits will be addressed w/ his properties. Patrick – How many dwelling units? Traffic planning? A - Still analyzing height limits based on feasibility. EIS looked at 500-1500 units. Patrick – traffic on F Street? – A – Holly and F street anticipate buildout over next 20 years, but not substantial. Grid system helps ease some of traffic pressure. Q – Is train station part of historic registry? Is BNSF willing to part w/ building? A- City administration has been in conversation w/ BNSF about acquiring building. Not sure about historic registry. Q For pedestrians – adequate street lighting? Q – Burying utility wires? A – hope to, but need to have \$\$. Q – Where does light industrial go once its replaced? A – Area is zoned commercial; right now it’s a recycling business that city staff has been working very closely with. Louise said council has discussed looking at industrial land supply, and may need to be valued more. Environmental – worked for many years to address concerns around landfill. All buildings have to be built to earthquake standard; Ecology has issued consent decree that we can build in this area. Tara can come back in a few months to report on subarea plan. Further questions and comments can go to Chris Koch or Tara Sundin.</p> <p>Remarks from Councilmember Bob Ryan Councilmember Bob Ryan – thanked group for their work. Noted he started his political work as president of Birchwood Neighborhood Association. Key to Bellingham’s success is our neighborhoods. Livable neighborhoods promote livable city. Neighborhood plan amendments – if they are minor amendments, they could come to council at the same time. If they’re major, they can’t come to council at same time, especially if it requires a public hearing. Want to spread out consideration. Comment on insurance discussion. When attorneys for private developers don’t get what they want, they are more inclined to go after neighborhoods and not just city. Q on budget for Neighborhood Services Program - \$150,000. Groups purpose is input on comp plan. Bob feels that neighborhood plans need to get done so that neighborhoods determine how each of their neighborhoods work.</p>
	<p>Reports from Mayor’s Office</p>
	<p>Linda Storck, Administrative Officer Introduced herself to the group. Lived in Bellingham since early ‘80s, began w/ city in Finance Department – Was Finance Officer. Director of Judicial Branch, then Support Services. One reason Linda was happy to take on this role is hearing Kathryn’s update on what neighborhoods have been doing at recent DH Meeting. Important part of work will be to participate in this process. Linda will be participating in selection process for new NSC. Linda said members of MNAC will most likely sit in on interview process for NSC.</p> <p>Neighborhood Services Coordinator Report – City will be providing an additional \$300 in 2007 for neighborhood support grants{total of \$1,000}. Encouraged associations to take advantage of additional support grant. Q – Is it better to submit expenses one by one, or larger list? Please have expenses in sooner rather than later, but bundling expenses helps. 50 neighborhood night outs. Several neighborhoods had several events. MYN – committees now have Block Watch Captain lists. Highlighted items in JSYAA. PW – looking for families to be on BTV10 to highlight water use. Ordinary family. Want family with kids, and also students living together.</p>

	<p>Neighborhood Plans, Comp Plan Work</p>
	<p>Puget Neighborhood Plan Update- Jim McCabe Recommends that we postpone for another month. Neighborhood is split into 2 camps. Received developer's traffic study yesterday. Planning Commission hearing has been moved to Sept 13th. Discussion on what neighbors think. One of the main concerns is traffic getting in and out. Motion to table (postpone) by Doug, second by Steve. Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Urban Village Planning Update –Greg Aucutt, Senior Planner Tier 2 – city center, Barkley, Fairhaven Tier 2 – WF, old town, Sunset Square/ James, Northwest/Bakerview WF: Next step will be issuance of draft EIS Others: not being worked on at this time. Others – Samish Way – in Sehome. Fountain district.</p> <p>Kurt – suggested showing examples of what urban villages look like. Louise – suggested putting together photos comparing different buildings. Steve – good first step at fleshing out urban village concept. Brad – clarified that there may be some confusion by people thinking that each neighborhood is going to have to accommodate an urban village.</p> <p>Q - Formula for calculating building height and economic feasibility? A- No formula, but depends on location.</p> <p>Kathryn noted that Len Johnson, Waterfront Project Manager, will be at next meeting to discuss waterfront issues.</p> <p>Cathy noted not seeing a good, broad visual presentation for Fairhaven. Asked if City could put something together. Vince noted that when they (Fairhaven Neighbors) met w/ Tim Stewart – one determination was that city would finance mediation, and also promised to create Fairhaven design review district. Greg said there is a Fairhaven design review district, but there's been discussion to make it more comprehensive. Cheryl noted issues that density and infill may affect on climate change. Is anyone thinking about this and taking it into consideration? Tom – noted that City can approve a non-conforming use, without appeal process for neighbors. [Developer can appeal the denial but neighbors cannot appeal the approval]. Flaw in review process. (506 Potter)</p> <p>Reviewing Neighborhood Plan Amendment Proposals in Future – Greg Aucutt Did process work; appears to be varying levels of interest. How can group best review proposals and make recommendations? Greg really wants group to have meaningful input.</p> <p>Patrick – noted neighborhood can propose to amend neighborhood plans once a year. Neighborhoods can also work section by section. Mike expressed the concern that they need familiarity with areas referenced in plan. Vince suggested scheduling walk through in neighborhoods. Jim noted difference between neighborhood association vs developer bringing proposed changes. Mark – useful to review both because both have implications on broader city. Issue will be discussed at later meeting.</p>

	Kathryn: Noted developer proposals and implications of discussing them w/out developer present.
	Adjourned at 9:05 p.m.