

Minutes, Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods

October 11, 2023

Hybrid meeting: online and Peter Kirk room

Note: Action items are highlighted in **yellow**.

Neighborhoods attending:

Central Houghton	Lisa McConnell, Gary Greenberg
Everest	
Evergreen Hill	Johanna Palmer
Finn Hill	
Highlands	Launa Johnson
Juanita Neighborhoods	Margaret P., Leo Gilbert
Lakeview	Aaron Jacobson (KAN co-chair)
Market	Liz Hunt
Moss Bay	Bea Nahon
Norkirk	Janet Pruitt
North Rose Hill	
South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails	Chris Kagen

City Staff/Elected Officials attending:

- Rod Steitzer, Public Works
- Lt. Knafla, Kirkland PD
- LeAndra Baker-Lewis, Planning and Building dept.
- Janice Swenson, Planning and Building dept.

Guests:

- Deirdre Johnson, SRH/BT
- Susan Pappalardo, “YES! For Kirkland Pools and Parks”

7:08pm Introduction

- Difficulty with Zoom; the link was different than the one we usually have used. Aaron had to restart the mtg with the new link.
- Chair Aaron Jacobson called the meeting to order
- Round-the-horn introductions

7:10pm Public comments

- None.
- November meeting will be November 1 rather than November 8, due to conflict in room scheduling

7:11pm Police report

- Lt. Knafla presenting
- Israel/Palestine disturbance
 - The city did have prior notice of the assembly
 - No arrests made

- Q: If Kirklanders want more information, where should they go?
 - Police do post alerts to Twitter (X)
 - Comment: Posts are few on weekends
- Q: Gun threat in Juanita: Is there something we can do to increase funding for school resource officers?
 - Gun threats are not new. We handled it immediately and effectively, because we do have resource officers in the schools.
- Q: How can we get historical crime statistics?
 - Interactive crime statistics dashboard has data from the last two years.
- What else can police do for you?
 - Traffic monitoring. Limited resources, unfortunately, and complaints come from across the city. There are five units plus patrol units when available.
 - Loud vehicles, street racing. Patrol units will ticket egregious noise.
- Q: Safety on electric bikes: Are there rules around kids on e-bikes, no helmets, multiple riders?
 - No, there's not a lot extra we can do there, except on the Cross-Kirkland Corridor where extra rules apply.

7:35pm Capital Improvements Plan

- [Rod Steitzer](#) presenting
- 74 active projects, \$174M total investment
- Upcoming forum, online
 - Oct 24th, 12pm
 - See www.kirklandwa.gov/capitalprojects
 - See link to learn more about current project list and to register for the forum
- Four fire station projects in plan
- Safer Routes to School
 - Six consulting firms designing 18 of 40 projects, 18 more starting in 2024
- 100th Ave. NE
 - Groundbreaking was 10/2/23
- Lake Street Pedestrian Scramble
 - Construction starts March 2024
 - All-way pedestrian crossing during a dedicated light cycle
- Juanita Dr. corridor
 - Construction starting early 2024
 - New rapid flashing beacon crosswalk
 - “Continuous non-motorized facilities”
 - Buffered bike lanes (paint only)
 - Closing sidewalk gaps
 - (Leo): Paint doesn't protect bikes. There are better designs even for painted bike lanes, than what Kirkland typically does: for example, a single wider lane on one side of the road rather than two skinnier lanes.

- (Ken) Please make it clear for pedestrians (and drivers pulling out of driveways) when there's a two-way bike lane; easy to look only to the left when stepping/driving out.
- I-405/85th investments
 - 60% design with Sound Transit
 - Construction begins Q2 2024
 - Adding a third lane between 120th and 122nd Ave., east of the freeway
 - Stormwater improvements
- 124th Ave. NE improvements, near the Totem Lake bridge
 - Begins early 2024
 - Flaggers will be out, and pedestrian and bike detour routes during construction
- Q: Is anything going on with 7th Ave.?
 - We're studying improvements. We'll do outreach when we have more ideas and proposals.
- Q: Are Safer Routes to Schools improvements mixed into the 85th St. work, to benefit Lake Washington High School students?
 - Some sidewalk improvements and a crosswalk improvement at the main entrance.
 - The three-level interchange at I-405 will provide improvements for pedestrian passage from Highlands to the high school.
- tointerchange and elsewhere?
 - Yes, we do put trees into our plans, and we usually end up adding more trees than we take out. At 85th St., for example, we're taking out 83 trees and putting in 144 trees, plus 3,400 plants that weren't there before.
- Q: Which side of 85th St. is getting the new lane?
 - North side will be widened; don't need to adjust width on the south side.
- Q: Stores to Shores Neighborhood Greenway: The city is presenting this as a nearly done design, and there's little opportunity to actually have input. Please involve neighborhoods earlier in the process.
 - The earliest point is at the Comprehensive Plan.
 - That's too early! Get local folks involved at the point when you're starting to engage consultants, so that they can be part of the actual design process.
- Q: Redmond does neon signs in the middle of the pedestrian areas, very visible to drivers. Does Kirkland consider those? (E.g., at the big downtown park in Redmond, when you're coming up to a crosswalk. Sign to remind you to stop for pedestrians.)
 - Not certain if we've discussed those.

7:58pm 2023 Neighborhood Plan updates: Juanita, Kingsgate

- Leandra Baker-Lewis and Janice Swenson presenting
- Overview of the purpose of Neighborhood Plans
- Land use
 - Maps of each neighborhood, showing mix of residential and other zoning

- Both neighborhoods are majority low-density residential, which does allow some missing-middle modalities such as multiplexes and accessory dwelling units
- Goals of plan updates
 - Complete by end of 2024
 - Reduce redundancy between neighborhood plans and comprehensive plan
 - Active and equitable public participation process (past process has had feedback that it didn't include the full community)
 - NOTE: If the city is successful in improved outreach, please let the neighborhood associations know how to repeat or piggyback the process. We're always looking for better engagement.
 - Combine public outreach opportunities when feasible (though each neighborhood will have its own working group and visioning event)
- Working groups
 - Sounding board for staff during the update process
 - Seeking diverse and active participants:
 - Commercial property/business owners
 - Renters, youth, employees
 - BIPOC community members
- Process
 - Update existing policies
 - Revise vision statements
 - Identify key study issues
 - Study land use change requests
 - Public outreach opportunities
 - Study sessions with Planning Commission
 - Public hearing to gather public comments
 - Planning Commission recommendations
 - City Council makes final decisions end of 2024
- Schedule (draft)
 - Key points:
 - Working group kickoff in October
 - Draft plans in 1Q24
 - Public hearing before Planning Commission 2Q24
- How can you participate?
 - Visit the city [website](#)
 - Watch for public participation events, such as the visioning workshops
 - Spread information by word of mouth
- Q: Who owns the “pen” when drafting the plan updates?
 - The city owns the plan, with great reliance on public input.
- Q: Is it required that plans adhere to current city code? For example, if a neighborhood has an innovative plan to address affordable housing, what ability is there to include such a thing in the neighborhood plan?
 - At the end of the day, the neighborhood plan has to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan ... but it's great to capture innovative ideas in the neighborhood plans.

- Comprehensive Plan status update (Janice)
 - Plan is updated every eight years
 - We are now in the phase of drafting goals, policies, environmental analysis
 - Fall 2024: adopt the revised Plan that guides future policies
 - Public hearing in April/May 2024
 - Nine topic areas (economic opportunities, etc.)
 - Neighborhood Plans are updated on a rotating basis
 - Aside from Juanita and Kingsgate, staff will make minor updates to the other Neighborhood Plans
 - Minor revisions recommended from Equity Review Report
 - Consistent format
 - Remove and consolidate history text in one place
 - Proposal: updating all plans at once on a 10-year cycle
 - The next community engagement focus area is Economic Development
 - Focus groups, surveys, etc.
 - Go to [Comprehensive Plan webpage](#)
- Q: How are we dealing with the Washington State change to eliminate low-density residential zoning?
 - We'll address that during the zoning focus of our community engagement process. Our zoning regulation changes from a few years ago (for missing middle housing) gave us a good start here.
- Q: A 10-year update cycle clearly would not allow the same level of input and attention for each plan. Why is the city cutting neighborhoods out of the process?
 - (Janice) City Council supported the idea of a more consolidated, unified city, with a lot of redundancy in the Neighborhood Plans. Council wants a city a more homogeneous city with no boundaries. We still want to hear from you, and everyone is encouraged to participate in the Comprehensive Plan update.
 - (Lisa) I would like to schedule a full KAN meeting to discuss the elimination of robust Neighborhood Plans, replaced by citizen amendment requests (CARs).
 - (Ken) This decision destroys Kirkland's neighborhood structure, so we need to reflect on this change.

8:32pm Public Aquatic and Recreation Center

- Susan Pappalardo presenting
- Review of Proposition 1 positive viewpoint
 - 86,000 square feet
 - ~\$108.5M in 2025 dollars
 - 54 years since Kirkland has built a new public pool (outdoor only, 3 months/year)
 - 10,500 on waitlist for swim lessons
 - 4,200 on waitlist for gyms, fitness, and community spaces
 - Puts Kirkland residents first: local rates, registration priority, scholarships, keeps costs/revenue in Kirkland

- Partnership opportunities are possible
- Significant public outreach and planning to arrive at this plan
- Property tax levy: \$0.28/\$1,000 of assessed value
 - \$10.8M annually for operation and maintenance
- The Sammamish facility is not comparable: smaller. YMCA profits go to Greater Seattle YMCA, not Sammamish. ...
- Review of viewpoint against Prop 1 (Ken presenting)
 - See www.goodkirkland.org for information
 - In favor of a sensible pool and rec center
 - Description of a basic pool and rec center
 - Sammamish built theirs from reserve funds, no new levy or bond
 - Kirkland's plan adds "Maker spaces," 200-person meeting room, commercial kitchen, classrooms
 - Funding
 - Build with taxpayer money, then levy for ongoing maintenance and operations
 - Already spending \$9M to buy the Houghton Park&Ride
 - Prop 1 adds a bunch of extra small stuff to make it attractive: pickleball courts, etc.
 - Usage fees: city isn't talking about these
 - Annual family membership, over \$1,200
 - Ongoing subsidy
 - Sammamish partnership with the YMCA
 - More expensive annual membership fee (\$1,800), but no tax burden
 - The Y is part of the community (e.g., free access on Sundays for residents)
 - Bond financing is better
 - The proposed levy will increase every year, to its 1% lift lid, potentially forever
 - A bond will sunset
 - In the city's own survey, 60% preferred a bond over a tax increase
 - Kirkland's population has grown at 10% over the last 10 years, and it's leveling off – but the budget has doubled and is continuing to increase
 - Kirkland reserves are over \$100M and growing
 - This Prop 1 income represents a 63% increase in the city's parks budget
 - Many of the small Prop 1 elements are already addressed in current budget, or could easily be addressed
 - The location is wrong
- Q: If the proposition fails, what's the fallback plan from PFEC?
 - (Susan) PFEC is done. There's no process for following up if this fails.
- Q: Taxpayers pay for bonds. How is it different from a property tax?
 - (Ken) Payments on the bond are fixed, no annual increases, and shared across the properties by proportion. If new construction creates new properties, your payment goes down. And at the end of the bond, the

payment goes away. A bond requires 60% approval, and the city is concerned that they might not get that.

- (Susan) Other regional cities have difficulty passing bonds, so that did influence the decision to use a levy. The Council will indeed use a bond for construction of the facility; the levy is for ongoing maintenance and operation.
- (Ken) Using a levy to reduce the membership costs is unfair to residents who won't use the facility.

9:03pm Roundtable

- Everest
- Evergreen
- Finn Hill
- Highlands
- Houghton (Lisa)
 - Candidate forum upcoming at next mtg
- Juanita (Leo, Margaret)
 - Welcoming event last month was successful
 - Trees removed on 124th St. (near QFC): Can't replace the trees because they're under new electric wires
- Lakeview
- Market (Liz)
 - Good meeting last month
- Moss Bay (Bea)
 - KANdicate Forum, October 14, 2pm
 - Please advertise on your neighborhood outreach channels
- Norkirk
- SRH/BT (Chris)
- Totem Lake

8:07pm Closing

- Adjourned at 8:07pm
- Next meeting November 1, 2023