

Minutes, Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods  
June 13, 2018 Kirkland City Hall, Peter Kirk Room

Note: Action items are highlighted in yellow.

Neighborhoods attending:

Central Houghton	Lisa McConnell
Everest	Owen Paulus
Evergreen Hill	Johanna Palmer
Finn Hill	Bill Blanchard (KAN Co-Chair)
Highlands	Karen Story, Debbie Ohman
Juanita Neighborhoods	Leo Gilbert
Lakeview	
Market	James Jonakin, Mark B. Nelson
Moss Bay	Bea Nahon
Norkirk	Janet Pruitt (KAN Co-Chair), Heather Hendrix-McAdams
North Rose Hill	Margaret Carnegie
South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails	Chris Kagen

City Staff/Elected Officials attending:

- Dave Asher, Councilmember
- David Wolbrecht, Neighborhood Services Outreach Coordinator
- Adam Weinstein, Deputy Planning Director, Planning and Building Department
- Angela Ruggeri, Senior Planner, Planning and Building Department
- Allison Zike, Planner, Planning and Building Department

Guests:

- Grace Carlson, Transit Service Planner, King County Department of Transportation
- Michelle Plesko, Leadership Eastside (and SRH/BT)
- Lisa Hillman, Leadership Eastside (and Juanita)

7:05 pm Introduction

- Co-Chair Bill Blanchard called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.
- May 9, 2018 minutes accepted.

7:08pm Public comments

- <none>

7:08pm Zoning, Floor Area Ratio (FAR), and lot coverage issues

- Angela Ruggeri and Allison Zike presenting
- History: complaints about construction in Norkirk and Market led the City to consider regulatory alternatives to control lot usage
  - City chose floor area ratio (FAR)

- Square footage as a percentage of lot size
    - City rule is 50%, i.e., 8000 square foot lot can have house with maximum interior of 4000 square foot, after exemptions
    - Houghton has not adopted FAR
  - FAR is commonly used for commercial properties; unusual for residential
- Current thought: FAR is not working well
  - Lots of work for the City
  - Lots of work for developers
  - Not getting the intended result, which was to reduce size and bulk of houses being built
- FAR applies to:
  - Heated and non-heated spaces, incl. garages
  - Carports
  - Detached accessory structures (sheds, ADUs, etc.)
  - Vaulted spaces
- FAR does not apply to:
  - Attics with <5' height
  - Basements (ceiling is <6' above grade)
  - 100 sq. ft. exemption for stairways
  - Portion exempted for detached structures when 20' away from and behind the main structure
  - Porches, decks, walkways, patios (whether these are covered or not)
  - Question: Are there other exemptions for accessibility areas, e.g., an elevator? Answer: We would certainly look at that, and we're currently considering new rules to apply to this
- Height restriction is 25' in "old" parts of Kirkland, 30' in "newer" parts, including Rose Hill
- Examples in slide show of 50%, 50%+ FAR houses (50%+ in Houghton)
- What concerns does KAN have?
  - Kirkland has height limits; houses are digging below grade to allow three stories, which can create very steep driveways
  - People build flat roofs to meet the height limit and they're not a good design for this area
  - Developers (and homeowners, builders) use every exemption they can to build as much house as possible, and the result is not pleasing to many people
    - By building these big houses, we're ratcheting up the cost of housing
    - Would the market actually prefer smaller, more affordable houses? For example, would buyers in general prefer a 3,000ft<sup>2</sup>/\$3M house to a 4,000ft<sup>2</sup>/\$4M house? Would the buyer of the \$4M house actually prefer the \$3M house, but they're buying the \$4M house because that's what's available?
    - Size may not be as important as character, format, density, etc.
    - Do consumers no longer want yards? The nature of how you relate to your neighbors is different now

- Question: What establishes the character of a neighborhood? Answer: Neighborhood Plans to some degree; City Planning has influence as well.
- Developers say that they could make “more interesting” houses if the FAR requirements were lifted. Does that mean that they feel that today’s houses are not interesting? Does it mean that we’d see some real innovation if the rules were lifted?
- Asher: This is a good topic for further KAN discussion. (General agreement.)
- Chairs have a standing meeting with David for next Wed 6/20; Chairs to send out an email inviting other KAN members to a further discussion of this topic

7:40pm      Resolution R-5319

- Adam Weinstein presenting
- “Resolution Related to Integrating Affordable Housing, Mixed-Use, and Transit-Oriented Development Opportunities into Neighborhood Plan Updates”
  - Adoption of the Housing Strategy Work Program
  - Prioritizing a complete range of housing choices, including affordable options such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and housing density around transit improvements
  - Recognition in the Comprehensive Plan of addressing 10-minute neighborhood focus
  - Recognition that Neighborhood Plans should address city-wide issues
- Resolution link:
  - [http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/City+Council/Council+Packets/060518/10c\\_UnfinishedBusiness.pdf](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/City+Council/Council+Packets/060518/10c_UnfinishedBusiness.pdf)
- Adam’s take-aways:
  - Neighborhood Plans are a good way to implement city-wide policies
  - All concepts are in the Comprehensive Plan, but it helps that these expectations are made clear to the community early in the Neighborhood Plan process
    - There were some complaints after the last Neighborhood Plan update that the City’s priorities were not well communicated up front
  - Not a one-size-fits-all approach
    - For example, one neighborhood with good transit access may lean heavily on TOD (transit-oriented design), while another (without good transit access) may lean toward cottage housing
    - The resolution doesn’t dictate exact numbers; it’s up to each neighborhood to determine what works best for them
- Condominiums
  - Condos are the entry-level choice for many people/families
  - Question: Is the City working with other governments to allow more condos? Answer: We are indeed talking about it. It requires addressing a lot of liability issues that currently discourage developers from building them. State law needs to change to fix this problem. The cities need to advocate for this.
- Absentee/Investment ownership

- This is a huge issue in some cities, e.g., Vancouver
- Answer: We're currently focused on increasing housing supply; some will get snapped up by investors, but that's not our focus right now
- There are policy/legislative ways to encourage or require resident ownership; we are not currently considering that
- The "Millennial Myth" that young adults don't want to own a home, they'd prefer to rent
  - Lisa: Not true! Young adults are buying houses at the same rate as older adults
  - They're renting because that's what's affordable and available, not because that's what they want to do

7:50pm      Metro North Eastside Mobility Project

- Grace Carlson presenting
- Working with Eastside communities
  - Starting this month
  - Baby step toward the larger "Metro Connects" initiative
  - Last year, had workshops and outreach (with Sound Transit) about routes to Seattle
  - Working toward September 2019 changes
- Metro is a bus agency and more
  - Integrate with multimodal transportation choices: trains, bikes, bikeshare, pedestrian, etc.
  - Some routes in this area are trying to do too much; this can make for long bus rides with multiple connections
- Rerouting Metro 255 to U District rather than downtown
  - Proposed change: transfer to light rail for downtown
  - Concerns that Metro heard last year from Kirklanders:
    - Longer trip, more transfers
    - Less convenient
    - Shouldn't we be encouraging high-occupancy vehicles (e.g. buses) on the streets, rather than moving them off the streets?
  - Stopping the 255 outside of downtown would free up some service hours, which Metro could reinvest in Eastside route service expansion
  - This plan is still a proposal, not finally approved
  - If this doesn't happen, and the 255 continues to go downtown, then Metro will likely use all relevant funding to maintain existing service; no funding available to expand service (route, hours, or frequency)
- 2019 changes
  - Downtown Seattle transit tunnel will close to buses in March 2019
  - Washington Dept. of Transportation (WSDOT) will permanently close the Montlake freeway stations in March 2019
    - There will be stops on the new Montlake freeway lid, but that's 5-6 years away
    - Changes to the Montlake Triangle (the area of the UW light rail station) are coming. Details:

[http://www.kirklandkan.org/uploads/4/9/4/4/49441039/2018\\_06-13\\_minutes\\_addendum\\_-\\_montlakehub\\_facts\\_20180220b.pdf](http://www.kirklandkan.org/uploads/4/9/4/4/49441039/2018_06-13_minutes_addendum_-_montlakehub_facts_20180220b.pdf)

- Concern: cost of adding a transfer to the trip
  - If you have an ORCA card, the transfer is free
  - A cash rider with a paper transfer has to buy a new light rail ticket
  - Low-income and senior riders have access to low-cost ORCA cards
  - Metro is considering making “try-it-out” ORCA cards available, so that people can see how well it works
- Concern: addressing Kirkland’s broader transit issues
  - We’re building transit-oriented development (TOD) and putting in bus rapid transit (BRT) in Kirkland
  - We have to think about transit to places other than Seattle
  - Grace: yes, we need to have a regional, multimodal approach
- **KAN action: encourage your residents to take the survey:**
  - <http://www.Kingcounty.gov/metro/north-eastside>
  - Needs and priorities for the Eastside
  - Take the survey by June 24, 2018
- Next Metro outreach event: Kingsgate Library, 6-8pm, 6/20/18

8:25pm      City Updates

- David Wolbrecht presenting
- “Neighborhood USA” conference
  - Birmingham AL
  - City staff attended (Kari, Jeannie, David, Christian)
  - Workshops, lectures, seminars, etc.
  - Kirkland received a 3<sup>d</sup>-place award for Neighborhood Physical Revitalization Program
  - Announcement link:  
[http://www.nusa.org/Nusa/assets/File/Port%20St\\_%20Lucie%20Grand%200Prairie%20and%20Memphis%20Win%20Best%20Neighborhood%20Program%20Awards%20BHAM%202018.pdf](http://www.nusa.org/Nusa/assets/File/Port%20St_%20Lucie%20Grand%200Prairie%20and%20Memphis%20Win%20Best%20Neighborhood%20Program%20Awards%20BHAM%202018.pdf)
- Mayor’s Budget / State of the City event, 6/11/18
  - Video of the event:  
<https://youtu.be/uykeZ7eiH8s>
  - Board-game exercise for budget planning
  - Planning to try the board game again at the 6/27 Wednesday Market
  - Bea suggested another beta test; it’s not quite ready for primetime
  - **David: Send around a video of Kurt’s presentation on the budget, for distribution to residents** – DONE 6/13/18
  - PowerPoint slide deck:  
[http://www.kirklandkan.org/uploads/4/9/4/4/49441039/kan\\_budget\\_state\\_of\\_city\\_with\\_mayor\\_6-10-18.pdf](http://www.kirklandkan.org/uploads/4/9/4/4/49441039/kan_budget_state_of_city_with_mayor_6-10-18.pdf)
- Gun safety Town Hall
  - Wed 6/20, 6pm (doors open at 5:30pm)
  - BBQ hot dogs, courtesy of Kirkland Police Dept.
  - City Council wants to hear directly from community members

- Town Hall will be recorded
  - David to consider/investigate the opportunity for a live feed
- Will also have focus groups and online survey after this event
- Sparks grants
  - Four grants awarded, using all available funds
    - Kirkland Reads, kickoff during Welcoming Week, invite the community to read the book “Spare Parts”
    - Expanded “Crossing Kirkland” on 9/8/18
    - Biz Diversity: reaching out for community inclusion
    - Expanded Norooz celebration (Persian New Year, March 2019)
- Crossing Kirkland celebration
  - Sponsors for 6 stations
  - Selfie booths
  - New: the “Kirkie” Award
    - Come up with a non-motorized mode of transportation that you (single or group) can take down the trail
    - Not too wide – the trail is narrow in places
    - There will be categories
    - Flyer with rules and call for entries:  
[http://www.kirklandkan.org/uploads/4/9/4/4/49441039/kirkies\\_call\\_for\\_entries\\_2018.pdf](http://www.kirklandkan.org/uploads/4/9/4/4/49441039/kirkies_call_for_entries_2018.pdf)
  - New community participation mural planned for space along the Corridor, near NE 85<sup>th</sup> St.
  - Looking for someone to help coordinate music for the event; send volunteers to Johanna
- Welcoming Week, September 2018
  - “City Hall for All” on Sept 15<sup>th</sup> – the City’s event for the week
  - “Welcome to Juanita” event hosted by Juanita Neighborhood Association
    - Sept. 15, 12-3pm
    - Edith Moulton Park, in the new gazebo (corner of 108th Ave NE and NE 137th Street)
    - Free food (pizza, sub sandwiches and Greek food) and entertainment, prizes and games, info and freebies from local businesses
    - Pets on leash are welcome, and the park has been renovated including a new off-leash trail system to try
    - <http://ericmembers.org/events/welcome-to-juanita>
- KAN forming a sub-team on strategy for communications
  - How to help neighborhoods communicate better with their residents
  - Possibly meeting over the summer
  - If interested in participating, contact David

8:40pm Liaison Reports, Hot Topics, Roundtable

- Transportation liaison (Lisa) – Transportation Commission discussing:
  - Bikeshare possibilities
  - 132<sup>nd</sup> improvements

- 85<sup>th</sup> improvements
- For the Love of Kirkland
  - Play in the Rain playground ideas
    - Lowest estimate: \$70K, high end \$120K
    - Looking for funding through the Kirkland Parks Foundation
    - Considering various locations as pilots
- Bill would like to have the City host a Tiny Home Show
- Neighborhood topics
  - Finn Hill: Purchased 5 acres of land on Goat Hill; celebration planned for 6/24/18, 3-4pm, with ice cream! 12098 89<sup>th</sup> Place NE, Kirkland.
  - SRH/BT: Neighborhood Plan Update process underway. Lots of Bridle Trails people show up at the public events.
  - Everest: Street improvements/construction are underway.
  - Norkirk: Play in the Rain is coming.
  - North Rose Hill: Also embroiled in the Neighborhood Plan update.
  - Central Houghton: 7/12/18 6pm, 50-year Celebration event, at Fire Station 22 (108<sup>th</sup>-St.). (Celebrating Houghton joining with Kirkland.) **Bring old Houghton photos and other memorabilia if you have them**; they'll be scanning and preserving anything they get. Sno-cones, ice cream trucks, etc.
  - Highlands: Had the neighborhood garage sale.
  - Juanita: Taking an active role in Welcoming Week. Looking at upgrades at Juanita Beach playground.
  - Evergreen Hill: Moved monthly meeting to 6/27 to avoid conflict with the Town Hall. Discussing stormwater drainage, including a specific improvement near the Cross-Kirkland Corridor, with a possible park improvement aboveground.
  - Market: Keeping an eye on redevelopment of the Wendy's space on Central. Leadership transition underway, with James Jonakin here tonight.
  - Moss Bay: The Wendy's is actually in Moss Bay, with the most likely plan being a residence-over-retail with a Bartell on the ground floor. This should fit under current zoning. At the last neighborhood meeting, discussion of the new 85<sup>th</sup>-street bus-rapid-transit (BRT) station. The plans call for using land not currently owned by Metro/ST, and no disclosure of how that land will be acquired.

9:10pm      Closing

- Adjourned at 9:10pm
- Next meeting: September 12, 2018

Upcoming agenda items, events, deadlines

- Agenda items
  - FAR lot ratios, continued discussion
  - Communication and Outreach Strategies
  - Review the KAN website, guidelines, policies
  - Parking reduction proposal from Totem Lake study
  - Attainable Housing update

- CERT/Map Your Neighborhood
- New police Neighborhood Resource Officer
- Parks Director – Lynn Zwaagstra
- Welcoming Week Projects – plan for September
- Totem Lake Park / Totem Lake Mall
- Community Conversations
- Disaster Preparedness Coordination
- Parking Survey – Part II
- “For the Love of Kirkland” project status review, follow-up
- Parking, including parking spillover from crowded areas
- Events
  - 6/20/18, 5:30-8pm: Town Hall on gun safety and community safety, Lake Washington High School theater
  - 6/20/18, 6-8pm: Metro North Eastside Mobility Project open house, Kingsgate Library
  - 6/24/18, 3-4pm: Finn Hill neighborhood party, Goat Hill, with ice cream! 12098 89th Place NE
  - 7/12/18, 6pm: Houghton 50-year Celebration event, at Fire Station 22, 6602 108th Ave NE
  - 9/8/18, 11am-4pm: Crossing Kirkland celebration
  - 9/14/18 – 9/23/18: Welcoming Week
    - 9/15/18: Kirkland “City Hall for All”
    - 9/15/18, 12-3pm: “Welcome to Kirkland,” hosted by Juanita Neighborhood Association, Edith Moulton Park