

Minutes, Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods
May 10, 2023 Hybrid meeting: online and Peter Kirk room

Note: Action items are highlighted in yellow.

Neighborhoods attending:

Central Houghton	Lisa McConnell
Everest	Walter Jaccard
Evergreen Hill	Johanna Palmer
Finn Hill	Bill Blanchard (KAN co-chair, stepping down after June meeting)
Highlands	Karen Story
Juanita Neighborhoods	Mark Nelson, Margaret Bouniol (for Leo Gilbert)
Lakeview	Aaron Jacobson (KAN co-chair)
Market	Liz Hunt, Ken MacKenzie
Moss Bay	Bea Nahon
Norkirk	Janet Pruitt
North Rose Hill	
South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails	Chris Kagen

City Staff/Elected Officials attending:

- Don Robinson, Sr. Community Engagement Coordinator
- Lynn Zwaagstra, Parks and Community Services Director
- Adam Weinstein, Director of Planning and Building
- Scott Guter, Senior Planner
- Lindsay Levine, Senior Planner

Guests:

- Deirdre Johnson, SRH/BT
- Jim Hoff, SRH/BT
- Judith Beto
- Mari Bercaw

7:01pm Introduction

- Chair Bill Blanchard called the meeting to order
- Round-the-horn introductions

7:05pm Public comments

- None

7:06pm Parks ballot measure

- Lynn Zwaagstra presenting
- Video of Parks Funding Exploratory Committee (PFEC) project
 - Year-long engagement, 45 community members
 - Establish priorities for parks, gardens, recreation, etc.

- Define needs, wants
- Park Board added its recommendations
- [Survey](#) now active, closing soon
- Questions
 - What are the funding options?
 - Bond or levy
 - A levy “lid lift” is a lift of the 1% cap in the first year, and funded items must be specifically dedicated to line items. Subsequent years are subject to the 1% cap. The reason for this is that the funded items have large up-front capital costs. Not using the lid lift would mean that it would take 40 years to fund all of the requested items.
 - The recent fire measure was funded this way
 - Is Evergreen going to have a ballot request for funding as well?
 - They’ll be deciding soon.
 - Has the city considered partnership with organizations like the YMCA?
 - That’s difficult. Kirkland manages its own facilities as a rule.

7:26pm State legislation on housing

- Adam Weinstein presenting
- “Missing Middle” housing bill awaiting Governor’s signature
 - Allow more homes per lot
 - Most cities have been building apartments and single-family homes
 - [Seattle Times article](#), 3/26/23, focus on Kirkland, Burien, and Edmonds
- Kirkland’s 2020 policy enactments mean that we don’t need to do much if this bill passes
 - Duplexes, triplexes, cottages, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
 - We now allow these modes in all residential zones
 - Reduced parking requirements
 - Added design guidelines
- State bill
 - Requires allowing 4 units of middle housing on every residential lot
 - 6 units/lot if within ¼ mile of a major transit stop, or if at least 2 units are affordable
 - This is one area where we are not now compliant
 - No onsite parking requirement within ½ mile of major transit stop; no more than 1 space/unit on lots of 6K sq.ft. or less, no more than 2 spaces/unit on lots larger than 6K sq.ft.
 - We would need to reduce our requirements to match
- Other bills
 - HB 1181: Climate Change and Resiliency Element in Comprehensive plans
 - HB 1293: Design review must be logically integrated with permit review and involve no more than one public meeting
 - HB 1337: Permit 2 ADUs per lot (what Kirkland does today)
- Questions

- What about overriding neighborhood HOAs and covenants?
 - The bill says that if you have those rules in place, they can remain. You can't make new rules after the bill passes.
 - Anti-discrimination laws in the 1960s struck down racially restrictive covenants
- HB 1293 and “one public meeting”: if issues are defined, how will they be resolved?
 - It would mean we have to do a lot of up-front design work with applicants so that one meeting suffices for the design review board (DRB). We feel that our DRB process works well as it is and don't want to change how we do business, but we will if we have to.
 - If one project includes multiple buildings, does that mean one review for all of the project, or per building? – That's vague for now, would need to be determined.

7:14pm Comprehensive Plan update: Housing and Human Services

- Lindsay Levine and Scott Guter presenting
- Plan update is underway for 2023-24
 - e phase: Jan 2023 to Sept 2023
 - Doing focus groups, surveys, community conversations, events, schools, public comments, community organizations
 - Engaging priority populations: BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, seniors, etc.)
- Regional changes
 - Projected to add 1.8M people by 2050
 - Kirkland: +13,200 households
 - Meanwhile, household sizes are becoming smaller
 - Region is increasing in diversity
 - Legacy of discrimination
 - Racist covenants
 - Redlining
 - Restrictive zoning
- Housing affordability
 - Housing production costs have risen
 - Lot availability, building costs, etc.
 - Applies to affordable home prices and affordable rent
 - State requires that cities enact goals and policies that plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels
- Human Services element of the Comprehensive Plan
 - Define the city's role in fostering diversity and equity
 - Support nonprofit organizations that serve life needs for all populations
- Comments
 - (Jim) Seniors: in South Rose Hill, within 2 miles of my home, nearly all of the new construction is multi-level housing. How will seniors live in these homes?
 - And the new, large houses are less affordable
 - And the houses sometimes sit vacant and have non-resident owners

- Jim gets stopped in his front yard by people driving by, asking if they can buy his single-story rambler (not agents, just people driving around)
 - (Johanna) I wouldn't be able to afford my house today. So I don't want this to be about which generation did what. Young tech workers are driving the prices up just as much as anyone else.
 - (Karen) Property taxes. It's untenable to make a house affordable but then make the tax so high that they can't afford to stay.
 - (Ken) Some people are feeling like they're being forced out of Kirkland, being encouraged to leave so that others can come in.
 - Do you know what's behind that feeling?
 - No. Just an observation that when the city is trying to attract people, the current residents can feel rejected.
 - (Aaron) The city has said in the past that we would easily meet housing targets. But since then, housing prices have gone through the roof. We may need far more policy action so that people can stay here.
 - (Bill) My neighbors are afraid that a house up for sale will be developed into multifamily housing.
 - (Adam) No one is ever forced to sell a single-family lot for multifamily development.
 - We don't ever want people to feel forced out. Please let us know if you have specific examples.
 - (Deirdre) South Rose Hill is a feeding frenzy right now. These multifamily units are being built with tiny garages that people can't park in, so cars are constantly shuffling around.
 - (Liz) Seeing multi-units on single lots in our neighborhood, too. My concern is that infrastructure is not keeping up with the density: parking, transportation, etc.
 - (Janet) On the other hand: there are a lot of big houses with just two people in them.
 - (Jim) A comment I hear: The city is allowing high density because it wants the property tax revenue. The profit margin on new housing is outrageous.
 - (Lisa) For Human Services: Really appreciate the human service personnel who go out on police calls, would like to see that expanded even further.
- Surveys
 - There are separate surveys for each piece of the Comp Plan update:
 - [Housing and Human Services survey](#)
 - [Transportation and Land Use survey](#)
 - The surveys overlap; be alert for which are open at any time

8:10pm KAN leadership elections

- Co-chairs, secretary
- Secretary: Chris Kagen
 - Moved by Aaron, seconded by Bill

- Passed by hand vote
- Co-Chair: Aaron Jacobson
 - Moved by Lisa, seconded by Ken
 - Passed by hand vote
- Co-Chair: Call for nominations or volunteers
 - None

8:13pm Candidate forum committee

- Bea Nahon presenting
- Reminder to **do IRS 990 forms ASAP!**
- We will know by end of next week who has filed to run
- Liaison with candidates
- Scheduling for October
 - Avoid overlap with other candidate forums (Rotary, Downtown, etc.), neighborhood meetings, and Seahawk games
- Venue
 - Last time, the city provided the Zoom access—but that meant that we couldn't record the event and make it available to those who couldn't attend. May want a different arrangement this time.
- Publicity/Marketing: early, often, regular
 - Also soliciting questions to be provided to the Moderator team
- Technical details
- Moderator, format, and question selection
 - Anna Aubrey has volunteered to moderate again
 - Bea is happy to do the facilitation (timing, etc.)
 - Question selectors must have ZERO connection as an endorser, donor, or campaign team member – and must keep questions confidential
 - Anna and Bea can do this
 - **Anyone interested in participating, please contact Anna and Bea**
- Moved by Aaron: Anna and Bea have full rein to make arrangements
 - Approved by voice/hand

8:22pm Neighborhood Safety Plans

- Don Robinson presenting
- Any official changes to the program have to be approved by KAN
- Final projects for 2023:
 - MK-1: Crosswalk/Sidewalk extension on Waverly Way (\$40K)
 - MB-1: RRFB (rapid flashing beacon) on Lake x 10th Ave. S (\$240K)
 - EH-1: RRFB on 24th Ave. at Kingsgate Library (\$320K)
 - Toby Nixon has a modification request; pending review
 - NK-1: 7th Ave. Walkway (3d & 4th) (\$32K)
 - SRHBT-3: Sidewalk connection on NE 80th at 126th Ave. NE (\$31K)
 - This was #6 on the list, but #5 was an RRFB and couldn't be funded with the available funds. SRHBT-3 is less expensive.
- \$40K of funding left over for contingency, overrun

- Projects will go to bid for all projects together, not as individual projects
- 2021 projects are just nearing completion now; there was a bit of dead time
- (Jim) Note that this year's budget is two years' worth; the usual bucket of money is half of this. RRFBs are so expensive that they chew up the budget. We used to be able to get more projects done across more neighborhoods, with a cap of \$50K.
 - So, what can we do about that?
 - RRFBs used to cost \$20-\$50K, even seven years ago. (Lisa:) That's when the Feds stepped in to set regulations, and that's when the early vendors couldn't compete and the price shot up. (Don:) The quality of the materials has also risen in durability and dependability.
- (Lisa) I'd like to see past NSP reps reconvene for a forensic about what should be changed moving forward. Hold such meetings over the summer, perhaps, and then come back to KAN with recommendations in September (as the new cycle kicks off in October).
 - (Don) Should include people from the neighborhoods in that conversation, too. Community members don't have enough visibility into the process, feel that it's being done behind closed doors.
 - (Don) Only KAN could change the parameters of the program, so KAN would need to make any new policies.
 - (Lisa) If the 2023 project list didn't have the RRFBs on it, there would have been enough funding for every other project on the list. People get very passionate about their projects, in this very popular and successful process.
 - (Liz) How do we achieve a recommendation for changing the program?
 - (Don) KAN needs to determine that. There's no change coming in funding nor in how the technical scoring is done, so the main thing to be discussed is the type of projects and whether to regulate the types of projects that go into consideration.
 - General agreement: Best to hold a meeting in June. Invite former NSP reps, KAN reps, neighborhood association chairs, and perhaps any interested parties (Don's recommendation).
 - **Don to add NSP to the June KAN meeting agenda.**
- WA DOT has approved installing a permanent fence at the Houghton Park & Ride.

8:51pm Neighborhood Services

- Don presenting
- Houghton Park & Ride
 - WSDOT has approved installing a permanent fence
 - WSDOT will stop hauling immobile cars off of the freeway and dumping them at the P&R fenceline
 - The county wants to maintain an easement in case they ever change the NE 70th St. offramp from I-405, but that won't stop the city from moving forward with considering the site for aquatics and recreation
- Matching grant applications
 - **Contact Don if you want help** with the applications

- Neighborhood picnic dates
 - Please send dates to Don, to get on the Council calendar

8:30pm Roundtable

- Everest: none
- Finn Hill (Bill)
 - Raised \$25K for the NA (which is a 501(c)3) – annual budget of about \$50K/year
 - DennyFest planning underway: Aug 26, noon to 5pm
 - Food trucks
 - Dog Show/Parade
 - Magician
 - Kid activities
 - The Finn Hillbillies band
 - Land at top of Goat Hill was slated for development, which is now not happening; now raising money to buy 4 acres from the private owner
 - If you want to contact new residents, there are real estate resources that can provide a list for free; see Bill if you want to do that. Finn Hill had 200 new residents this year.
- Juanita (Margaret)
 - Recommend the short course that the city holds on understanding comprehensive planning
 - Welcome event on September 16
 - City Fruit did a presentation at our last meeting
 - Connect home-grown fruit
 - Advise and assist pruning
- Market (Ken)
 - Meeting next Wednesday, tree code on agenda
 - Held a neighborhood garage sale and Easter egg hunt
- Evergreen (Johanna)
 - Still waiting for 132nd Square park to open
 - Lots of construction projects going on
- Lakeview (Aaron)
 - Need to re-invigorate the neighborhood association (including retrieving residents who go to Houghton NA meetings)
- Norkirk (Janet)
 - Garage Sale was a real hit
 - Did a newsletter that brought in ~100 new members
 - Doing coffee meet&greet that have attracted a lot of people
 - Summer picnic is always a people draw, too
 - Returning to in-person meetings
- SRH/BT (Jim)
 - Houghton Park&Ride was the big topic at this month's meeting
- Houghton (Lisa)
 - Held elections

- Houghton Village: gathering hard data about the old PCC site, surveyed 200 people in the neighborhood. Recommend getting this kind of data
- Highlands (Karen)
 - Electric leaf blower initiative is under consideration, eliminating gas-powered blowers by the end of 2025
 - Please spread the word
 - Talk to yard service companies to let them know as well
 - “Quiet Clean Kirkland” group is working on this
- Moss Bay: none
- Totem Lake: none

9:13pm Closing

- Adjourned at 9:14pm
- Next meeting June 14, 2023