

Minutes, Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods

November 13, 2024

Hybrid meeting: [online](#) and Peter Kirk room

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

Neighborhoods attending:

Central Houghton	Greg Young
Everest	
Evergreen Hill	
Finn Hill	Bill Blanchard (KAN chair), Scott Morris
Highlands	Gary Bustinduy
Juanita Neighborhoods	Margaret Bouniol
Lakeview	Judy Beto
Market	Ken Mackenzie, Liz Hunt
Moss Bay	Bea Nahon, Jeanne Large
Norkirk	Janet Pruitt
North Rose Hill	Susan Davis
South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails	Jim Hoff, Chris Kagen (KAN secretary)

City Staff/Elected Officials attending:

- Daniel Lazo, Sr. Community Engagement Coordinator
- Jim Lopez, Deputy City Manager, External Affairs
- Erika Mascorro, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Manager
- Jay Arnold, Deputy Mayor

Guests:

- Heather Montpas
- Deepa Garg

7:04pm Introduction

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

7:05pm Public comment

- [Susan] Need to press the City on zoning allowances for affordable housing
  - 10% required affordable housing
  - Developers can get multi-family tax exemptions and additional market-rate units when they provide affordable units
  - Result: Developers are getting away with really low tax relative to the housing that they're creating
  - The burden then distributes to the rest of the City
- [Greg] Baseball/Softball competition between neighborhoods!
  - What would it take to get such a thing going?
  - Maybe at 4<sup>th</sup> of July?

- [Greg] Would like to hear updates from Lake Washington School District on upcoming projects

7:13pm City updates, Neighborhood Safety Projects, grants

- Jim Lopez and Daniel Lazo presenting
- Ask Kirkland website
  - New website for queries, virtual assistant (chatbot)
  - Demo: live testing of some test prompts. Good performance!
  - Only reads from the City webpages (hundreds of pages!) as source, doesn't read PDFs yet
  - Ask of KAN: Try this tool, give feedback when the site goes live
- Kurt Triplett comments at 11/6/24 City Council meeting, reviewed as a video clip (these notes are a summary of the video clip)
  - A Neighborhood Association communication may have verged to campaign advocacy
  - This can be an issue for the City because of the relationship of the City to Neighborhood Associations
    - The City provides insurance for NAs: a blanket policy that allows NAs to do business "as the City" in some sense
    - City Attorney is looking into the exposure for the City
  - How do we define the relationship between City and NAs?
    - There's a formal test for whether NAs are "agencies"
    - City feels that they need to assess the exposure
    - Public Disclosure laws are a bright line: NAs cannot cross those lines
  - [Comment after the video by Susan] PTSA had a similar issue, between the State organization and the local organizations. Was the issue about distributing a communication that seemed to be in conflict with a City position?
    - [Jim] "Not a paper clip" can be used for public votes
    - [Ken] The communication in question did not advocate for any vote or position. It offered information and links, the same as other City communications routinely do.
- Neighborhood Safety Program (NSP) [Daniel]
  - The first major deadline is 12/2/4 for submission of proposals from each NA
    - Each NA can submit two projects, up to \$7K per NA
  - Tuesday-Wednesday, February 4-5, 2025 Project Conferences
  - Friday, February 18, 2025 APPLICATIONS Due
  - Friday, February 25, 2025 Staff Technical Evaluation
  - Wednesday, March 5, 2025 Neighborhood & Panel Team Meeting at Kirkland City Hall
  - Friday, March 21, 2025 Neighborhood Panel EVALUATIONS Due
  - Friday, March 28, 2025 Final Neighborhood Panel & Team Meeting
  - Tuesday, April 5, 2025 City Council Presentation
- Reimbursements under neighborhood grants

- 12/15 deadline to submit reimbursement requests
- City Council does understand the importance of the grant program

7:52pm      Ignite Kirkland

- Bea Nahon presenting (trustee, Kirkland Parks and Community Foundation)
- Recent projects
  - Fisk Family Park
  - Repainting Pride crosswalk
- [Ignite Kirkland program](#)
  - 27 non-profits have submitted grant requests
  - Finn Hill NA submitted, because they are an eligible 501(c)3
- This Week in Kirkland had a video podcast highlighting the program
- [Susan] I object to a recent effort by Liveable Kirkland to get funds for bike valets. Offer the money instead to this foundation.

8:00pm      K2044 Comp Plan process

- [Agenda had planned for Neal Black to lead a review of the Plan process; he was unable to attend.]
- Open discussion and questions
- [Scott] When does the packet come out?
  - The Friday before the week of the Council meeting
- [Bea] Jim L., what is the most effective way to send messages to Council, given the large amount of material they already have?
  - [Jim] I recommend the Our Kirkland portal, but feel free to reach out directly to a councilmember.
  - [Jay] I can say that I do read everything but I can't respond to everything. The most helpful feedback at this point is specific language changes (change this word, etc.).
- [Greg] Can you give an update on the material changes that are coming?
  - [Jay] There will be amendments in the housing and land use sections; haven't heard of changes elsewhere. The Planning Commission's work is done; all feedback at this point should come to Council.
- [Gary] What's happened with the issues that KAN has been tracking?
  - [Bill] The things we discussed at the breakfast last month and in email are being taken seriously. Jon Pascal is driving much of our perspective at Council.
- [Susan] I'm concerned that not all NAs have the same need, so I'd like to see what KAN is recommending.
  - [Bill] I'll send you a summary.
  - [Susan] I object to the proposal for land use exceptions for religious organizations.
- [Bea] Once we see what's in the packet in the way of proposed amendments, is it too late to suggest additional amendments?
  - [Jay] It wouldn't be too late, as one can suggest more amendments from the dais.

- [Jay] I haven't seen what's in the packet yet. Looking forward to seeing it myself.
- [Greg] What grade would you give the staff and leadership on the process so far?
  - [Jay] I have a list of feedback that I will provide, but nothing I'm ready to talk about right now. I'm focused on the policy in front of us.
  - [Heather] I've submitted some recommendations to Daniel.
- Post-mortem process
  - [Liz and Ken] Want to make sure that **KAN participates in the post-mortem process** to gather learnings, feedback
  - [Jay] City Council does not currently have an established process; Neal has expressed interest in arranging such a thing. There is no meeting currently scheduled.
  - [Bill] Perhaps we can do our own process.
  - [Heather] I recommend that a third-party consultant be engaged, as the City is itself a stakeholder in the process.

8:15pm      Neighborhood Grants and Neighborhood Safety Program, revisited

- Video clip from City Council meeting
  - 5 categories: community building, comms and operations, physical improvement, neighborhood identity, and leadership training and education
  - Last year, granted \$6K. \$12K available this year.
    - [Liz] Actually, it's \$10K across a two-year cycle.
  - Should these funds be limited only to NAs?
    - There's less involvement from NAs than in the old days. Only three NAs participating—that suggests to me that we should open up the availability to other organizations.
    - I'd like to hear from KAN.
    - Not every neighborhood has a robust NA.
    - Why aren't NAs using these grants? Perhaps that's the question to ask.
    - If we open up the eligibility, we may need to increase the dollar amount available.
  - Should we also open up the process for Neighborhood Safety Program (NSP) grants, to organizations other than NAs?
    - Anyone can submit a project to be considered.
    - The process for evaluating and approving the projects does center on the neighborhoods, though.
  - Are rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) funded in the NSP?
    - No. But the Crosswalk Upgrade Program has 20-year funding in the Transportation Strategic Plan.
    - KAN recommended removing RRFBs, to allow more funding in the pot for more projects.

8:40pm      Roundtable

- Central Houghton

- Have had a strong run of neighborhood meetings, good attendance. Focus on educating the community, participation in decisions.
- I'm new to KAN, would like to know that the City takes KAN feedback seriously.
- Should RRFB funding be reconsidered, if we feel that they really are an important safety improvement?
- Everest
- Evergreen Hill
- Finn Hill
  - September meeting about the Comp Plan: Adam fielded a lot of questions. Lots of people don't want sidewalks, for example.
  - Finn Hill Green Loop: Council approved purchase of some property on Goat Hill, essential for trail connection.
- Highlands
  - Water pressure has decreased 35-40% at some houses. City doesn't have a broad solution.
  - The 405 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project is complicating access to the neighborhood. The contractor and the city each control different traffic lights, so they're not coordinated, and backups are common.
- Juanita Neighborhoods
  - Board turnover lately, including the secretary and treasurer.
  - Want to get younger folks involved. Recognizing that childcare is a barrier to many for attendance.
- Lakeview
- Market
  - Attempting to update paperwork with the state to protect directors and officers of non-profit organizations.
  - Next public mtg: Parks Dept will give an update on projects.
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. W is torn up for sewer work; people have been having problems with basement flooding and water being abruptly shut off.
  - Stores to Shores Greenway construction will kick up soon.
- Moss Bay
  - Did a neighborhood survey, soliciting what people want from the NA (meeting content, meeting formats, etc.)
  - Had a public social mtg at a pub, good success.
- Norkirk
  - Things have been quiet. Next meeting in December won't even have speakers, just celebrating together: gift wrapping, Lego projects for kids, etc.
  - Our board is growing. Janet would like to get younger members engaged in KAN as reps or rep alternates.
- North Rose Hill
  - Remodeled firehouse coming soon
  - Greenway is in place, but people don't understand it. Need to educate people on it.

- We sometimes send out messaging through the local PTSA in support of issues like NSPs.
- South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails
  - Public meeting last night had 34 people in person. Chief Harris gave a presentation responding to submitted questions. Two councilmembers attended.
  - We're moving forward. Expanded our board. Using more communication to boost attendance.

9:01pm      Closing

- Erika has been attending KAN meeting while Daniel has ramped up, will no longer regularly attend.
- Adjourned at 9:01pm
- **No meeting in December**, by voice vote. Next meeting is January 8, 2024