

KAN Special Meeting Regarding ST3

Minutes

11/23/15

Heritage Hall

7:00-9:00 pm

NOTE: Action items are highlighted in yellow.

Neighborhood Reps attending:

Central Houghton – Brian Staples (Chair); Lisa McConnell (Co-Chair) (KAN Co-Chair)
Everest – Anna Rising (Chair); Brian Marshall
Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance – Jon Pascal
Highlands – Karen Story (Chair) (KAN Secretary)
Lakeview – Angela Kahler
Market – Mark Nelson
Moss Bay – Bea Nahon (KAN Co-Chair)
Norkirk – Janet Pruitt
North Rose Hill – Margaret Carnegie (Chair)
South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails – Jim McElwee

City Staff attending:

Kurt Triplett, City Manager
Kari Page, Neighborhood Services Outreach Coordinator

Elected Officials present:

Mayor Amy Walen
Councilmember Dave Asher

Co-Chair Bea Nahon convened the meeting at 7 pm.

Bea explained that this special meeting was called to discuss Sound Transit 3 because we hadn't had time to discuss it at our November regular meeting, and we won't be meeting again until January, which is too long to wait on this time-sensitive issue. She further explained that only those at the table (KAN reps and city staff) would participate in the discussion. Audience participation would be limited to the public comment period.

Public Comments

Michelle Sailor, Market

- Asked for clarification about easements. Did the freight easement come first? Does it trump the Sound Transit easement? There is confusion about this.
- The Cross Kirkland Corridor connects neighborhoods. This is very important. She has concerns about fences or other physical barriers needed for buses. Would these disrupt the connections to the neighborhoods?
- She has concerns about buses running so close to property lines.
- She's concerned about environmentally sensitive areas and water drainage. How would these be addressed?

Opening Remarks

- Lisa commended city staff for stepping up and trying to put Kirkland on the transit map, and find ways to meet Kirkland's transit needs. She would like to see the same level of conversation and enthusiasm for the Metro Long Range Plan. She doesn't agree with all of the city's ideas, but applauds their effort.
- Bea said she feels the city is thinking about future transportation needs in a visionary way. She believes that KAN's primary role is to first be informed, then to discuss, and then to decide what action to take.

Presentation – Kurt Triplett, City Manager

- Since the majority of the KAN reps were at the open house on Thursday, he only summarized that presentation so as to allow more time for discussion.
- It may seem like this proposal has come out of nowhere, but the city has been working on it for about 5 years.
- The City's recurring citizen survey results have shown that people feel that traffic is getting worse, and the city isn't doing enough about it. It's the biggest performance gap for the city.
- The [Eastside Corridor Interest Statement](#) adopted in 2011 specified transportation on the corridor. This document is used in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Plan, and the CKC Master Plan to inform the city's decisions.
- Kirkland can't control when or if transit comes, so is focusing on the part of the corridor they can control, and leaving space for the required 30' transit easement.
- Transit on the corridor was first discussed by the city as far back as 1977. See [timeline](#).
- Sound Transit did not receive funding approval from the Legislature until June 2015, and they had to move very quickly to be able to get a package on the ballot by Nov. 2016.
- It's a \$15 billion, three-county package.
- Kirkland had to scramble to meet the August 24 Sound Transit deadline to submit candidate projects for Kirkland.
- Sound Transit initially said the most likely for Kirkland was *design* money for light rail, with *construction* money in an ST4 package (probably not until 2024).
- Kirkland suggested bus rapid transit (BRT) instead of light rail because it would be less expensive and could be implemented sooner.
- The city learned that buses were also more flexible, quieter, more environmentally friendly, and needed a smaller footprint.
- Sound Transit would prefer to build down the center of the corridor, but Kirkland is pushing back and wants them to build on the east side.
- The city hasn't taken a firm position on buses vs. light rail. They would like to know what the community prefers.
- The city wants to do both the master plan trail vision *plus* transit, not one or the other.
- The city prepared an [ST3 FAQ document](#) that is available online.
- **Sound Transit Timeline**
 - The Sound Transit workshop on Dec. 4 will include an overview of all candidate projects. It's the first time we'll know what Sound Transit's vision is, what transit would look like, and ridership data.
 - Sound Transit will make their final recommendations for ballot projects in March of 2016.
 - Between March and June, Sound Transit will do a precampaign to assess community support for the package.

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- Sound Transit will make a final recommendation in June for the ballot package for the November 2016 general election.

Q&A (note, items that are indicated as “KAN” originate from questions e-mailed prior to the meeting)

- Anna: Why not put buses on the west side instead, to minimize view obstructions for property owners.
- Kurt: City prefers east side location for transit to avoid the giant sewer pipe, and to give trail users the view. Buses could have a low view profile.
- Anna: Wonders if more people currently access the CKC from the east side or the west side.
- Kurt: You need more safety infrastructure for light rail than for buses. There would be a 3-10 minute gap between buses (10 minutes if Sound Transit only, less if Metro buses used the trail), allowing time for safe crossing by users. This level of design detail is not done yet.
- Margaret: What does the “rapid” in Bus Rapid Transit mean?
- Kurt: It does not mean high speed. It means frequent service on dedicated routes (not shared with cars), and pay before you get on to minimize stop time.
- Jon: The city is advocating for improvements on the CKC *and* 405. If CKC transit were to be on the ballot and pass, what analysis is done after the election?
- Kurt: Environmental and design analysis can take 5-7 years, and it could be 10-15 years before construction occurred.
- KAN: Compare and contrast buses on the CKC vs. 405.
- Kurt:
 - Sound Transit proposed buses on 405 and light rail on the CKC.
 - The Sound Transit vision for 405 is Everett to Renton service with no new stops in Kirkland. Because Sound Transit only builds expensive “flier” stops, the most Kirkland could hope for would be one new stop at NE 85th St.
 - Sound Transit is not planning any supplemental bus service; they leave that to local buses. Kirkland is pushing Metro to provide a circulator service.
 - Kirkland is generating transit dollars but not receiving our share of transit service.
- Jim: What percent of cars in the Kirkland crawl on 405 live in Kirkland?
- Kurt: Doesn't know breakdown, but can find out. The majority of Kirkland residents work elsewhere, and the majority of Kirkland workers live elsewhere, so much of the crawl is us.
- Jim: Are we working with Bellevue to extend transit to Bellevue?
- Kurt: Yes, to the Bellevue Transit Center. There are good ridership numbers for this.
- Jim: Is the City of Bellevue working with us?
- Kurt: The Bellevue Council and the Sound Transit board's three eastside members are discussing it, but have not taken a position. Redmond is very interested in an 85th connection to Kirkland.
- Mark: Sound Transit views their role as moving people from Everett to Renton and letting local transit take care of the rest. So why are they interested in the CKC, which is local?
- Kurt: The CKC is a hybrid that could be used by either Sound Transit or Metro, but neither of them may help us. CKC transit competes well with other projects in terms of ridership and economics.
- Mark: The likelihood of getting Sound Transit money for 405 seems higher.
- Kurt: But Sound Transit already owns a right-of-way on the CKC, so they wouldn't have to purchase any land.
- Mark: But they might zip through Kirkland on the CKC with no stops.

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- Kurt: Light rail is not local, and there would be few Kirkland stops; putting local bus service on the CKC is possible if there are no rails; Metro likes the idea of running buses on the CKC but would need Sound Transit's permission.
- Janet: The new 405 hot lanes do not serve Kirkland (we can't get between Kirkland and Bellevue using them). Has this concern been expressed?
- Kurt: Yes, and we've told everyone they can't keep bypassing us.
- KAN: What about environmentally sensitive areas?
- Kurt: Sound Transit would have to comply with state and local rules. The CKC master plan calls for environmental enhancements. The CKC is not in good environmental shape now (muddy wetlands, invasive plants, drainage issues). Kirkland is committed to the vision of a greener Kirkland.
- Lisa: Sound Transit is getting a new CEO. Are they aware of the issues here in Kirkland?
- Kurt: We don't yet know where they stand.

Neighborhood Reports

- Everest: Emailed links to their list and discussed at a meeting. Some people don't want bus fumes and don't want to share the trail with buses. Fear of additional transit parking in the neighborhood. Lots of emotional pushback until people learned more and discussed; then most seemed to come to terms with CKC buses and see benefits.
- Houghton: Discussed at meeting. Want to know where riders would come from, and how CKC buses would help congestion. Fear that CKC transit would be regional and not local, would take away space from master plan amenities. Would there be setbacks required? What does the Sound Transit easement say? Many people who use the corridor are not aware of the proposal; could the city do outreach on the CKC itself? Would service on surface streets be lost? Emerson campus uses the 255 on 108th and there is concern about moving service to the CKC.
- Market: No neighborhood input yet, but Mark echoes Michelle's comments (see Public Comment).
- Lakeview: No neighborhood input yet, but wonders if bus or light rail is safer; is worried about parking at access points, and property value impact for adjacent homes.
- Highlands: Sent email to list. Responders seemed relatively well-informed. 19 against buses on the CKC; 6 OK with transit on the CKC; 2 OK with light rail but not buses; 1 might support transit if their concerns were allayed. Concerns included safety, loss of green space, Sound Transit poor fiscal record, high cost, impact to homes, lack of control over end result, delays at crossing, reducing neighborhood connections. Supporters mentioned need for more transit, existing roads too clogged for buses, better proximity to stops.
- Finn Hill: Focus is on neighborhood planning right now. Board is not feeling well-informed and doesn't want to take a position until they are. Sense that CKC transit does not affect their neighborhood. They have transportation challenges to get on and off their hill. Surface streets are too clogged for buses.
- South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails: Asked board to survey their neighbors. #1 comment was that the process is very short and the issue is complicated. Board members don't feel they have enough design details to form an opinion. Board is aware of the easement and legal obligations, but many residents are not. A common sentiment was 'give us back our Metro service and we don't care what happens on the trail.'
- Norkirk: Emailed the neighborhood. Responses were about 3:1 for transit on the corridor. Those who opposed felt strongly. Those who were in favor of transit said they had come around once they had more information. Fears include loss of green space, safety, and

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parking. Pros said: if it's going to happen, they want to help shape it; we need more transit options; we must have separated trails, environmental mitigation, preserve character of trail, and guaranteed reduction of congestion; could we have a trolley.

- North Rose Hill: No neighborhood input yet.
- Moss Bay: Discussed at neighborhood meeting. No clear sense of preference at meeting. Categories of interest include safety, noise, connectivity, financial sustainability of local connection service, width of corridor so that no "taking" would occur, how much clout or control Kirkland has, can we join with other cities to have more clout. Communication received after the meeting indicated that most favored CKC buses.

Discussion and Role of KAN

- Kurt: Wants to come to all neighborhood meetings, so please invite him (contact Kari).
- Bea: It sounds like most neighborhoods need more information before they or KAN could take a position, if at all.
- Lisa: KAN's role is to get information to our neighborhoods between now and March. We're not ready to take a position.
- Kurt: The Sound Transit process is hard to understand. It's a fluid, ongoing process. He suggests that KAN email Sound Transit with a statement, when we have one.
- Karen: Our role as neighborhood leaders is to help disseminate information to as many people as possible, which requires actively growing our email lists. We can also help people digest this complex issue by breaking it down for them.
- Karen: Why does Kirkland not have a rep on the Sound Transit board?
- Kurt: The law specifies who can be on the board, and how they are chosen. They must all be elected leaders. Ultimately the County Executive decides who they are. Now there are three Eastside reps: Bellevue, Redmond, Issaquah. Kirkland keeps asking for a spot when one opens up. Kirkland used to have a rep.
- Lisa: If KAN puts out a statement, it could say that Kirkland wants transit service for Kirkland included in the ST3 package, and that Kirkland would vote for it if Kirkland got service. Sound Transit wants and needs our votes, so we could tell them what we would vote for. But we would want to see specific details before we would support the measure.
- Bea: Kirkland's vote is clearly contingent on getting service, but not service at any cost to the vision for the corridor.
- Mark: How did we get to having a special meeting on ST3 when it was on the KAN Nov. 11 agenda?
- Bea: It was not on the Nov. 11 agenda. It was going to be on the January agenda, but we realized we couldn't wait until January.
- Mark: Make sure information is posted on the city website. The main discussion tonight is about the CKC. He is not prepared to take a position on anything specific for Kirkland in ST3. He would need to be better informed. It seems like this meeting is just the city manipulating us to get our approval.
- Karen: The meeting was KAN's idea, not the city's. She in fact expected a lot of pushback to the city about the proposal.
- Anna: People don't have enough information to decide how they feel.
- Janet: Our role is to inform and educate our neighborhoods, and to share our ideas with the city.
- Jon: Agrees with Janet. More important than knowing if people agree or disagree is knowing WHY. Not a black and white issue. We need more informed discussion. He'd like to see the discussion elevated to a regional transportation discussion. He thinks it's important for

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people to know the history of CKC transit. He'd like to know what Kirklanders submitted to Sound Transit on the recent ST3 survey.

- Brian S: Does "subarea equity" come into play?
- Kurt: Subarea equity means that revenue generated in a given subarea should be spent in that subarea, roughly. But this policy could change because some areas that need service can't generate enough revenue to pay for it.
- Jim: We need to get more information out and opinions back from residents before we could take a position.
- Kurt: Technology is changing and the transportation plan can't take this into consideration because too much is unknown. There may be self-driving cars that could drop you off at the bus stop and go back home and park.
- Lisa: Should KAN continue the discussion and wait, or send a letter to Sound Transit now?
- Karen: We should focus on getting information out to residents.
- Brian: Don't forget businesses too. Transit is a social justice issue. We must poll the people who work here but don't live here.
- Anna: For example, parking for Kirkland Urban may not be free for workers.
- Bea: Understands the passion people have about public property and how it is used. The difference here is that we don't have control over the CKC transit outcome. We should compile a list of what Kirkland MUST HAVE in order to support a Sound Transit package that includes CKC transit. How can KAN help the city make that happen?
- Kurt: Kirkland has to have transit in ST3 without being able to specify what it is. If we say no to CKC transit, Sound Transit may pull the plug completely on Kirkland. KAN can continue to help get the word out. Sending Sound Transit a list of "must haves" is a great idea.
- Kurt: City staff love the CKC as much as residents do, and want to make it better, not worse. He spends more time in meetings dedicated to improving the CKC than in meetings with police, fire, etc.
- Kari: Another thing KAN can do to help the city is to help stop false information and rumors by responding with correct information.
- Mark: FAQs are powerful. The city could create one to address misinformation.
- Kurt: City staff don't have time to respond to everything on the internet (and are not always treated well when they do) so would appreciate our help with this.
- Lisa: Put an FAQ on the city home page or the CKC page, as this is where people would look first.
- Bea: Let's focus on getting info out to our neighborhoods, and feedback to the city. Does KAN need a twitter account?

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

- Neighborhood Safety Program project ideas due December 1, 2015, applications available January 21, 2016, completed applications due February 9, 2016

No December meeting. Next regular meeting is January 13 at the Justice Center.

Meeting adjourned 9:10.