

Minutes, Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods

September 11, 2024

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

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

Neighborhoods attending:

Central Houghton	Lisa McConnell
Everest	Ray Jonas
Evergreen Hill	Johanna Palmer
Finn Hill	Bill Blanchard (KAN chair)
Highlands	Gary Bustinduy
Juanita Neighborhoods	Margaret Bouniol
Lakeview	Judy Beto
Market	Ken Mackenzie, Liz Hunt
Moss Bay	Bea Nahon
Norkirk	Janet Pruitt
North Rose Hill	Susan Davis
South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails	Deirdre Johnson, Jim Hoff, Chris Kagen (KAN secretary)

City Staff/Elected Officials attending:

- Daniel Lazo, Sr. Community Engagement Coordinator
- Jim Lopez, Deputy City Manager
- Diana Hart, Government Affairs Manager
- Erika Mascorro, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Manager
- Jon Pascal, City Council
- John Tymczyszyn, City Council
- Sara Shellenbarger, Parks

Guests:

- Dr. Jon Holmen, Superintendent and CEO, Lake Washington School District
- Lindsey Yocom, LWSD board

7:05pm Introduction

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

7:07pm Public comment

- None

7:08pm Building excellence—2024 construction levy

- Dr. Holmen presenting
- Three-phase plan
 1. 202 Construction levy
 2. **2024 Construction levy** (“Building Excellence Phase 2”)

3. Evaluation of modernized facilities and enrollment patterns

- Goal: Ensuring access to excellence and success
 - 2nd-largest district in WA state
 - 94.4% on-time graduation; goal is 100%
 - 5K staff
- Values and beliefs: community, results, stewardship, open, conservation, collaboration
- Facility advisory committees in 09-202, and in 2023-ongoing
 - Also have School construction input teams (SCITs)
 - Also have professional design advisory input
- Sustainability and conservation: #1 school district in solar implementation, 3% reduction in gas, 30% reduction in energy use, exceeding energy codes by 20%, \$20.2M utility costs saved
- Does the condition and age of a building have an impact on student outcomes?
 - Yes, design and construction do play a role
- Initiatives
 - Health and safety – updated HVAC systems, restrooms, safety enhancement
 - 21st century needs/modernization
 - Sustainability and efficiency
 - Student capacity – rapidly growing district for many years; catching up now
- Specific projects: aging facilities, reliance on portables, outdoor hallways, lack of shared instructional spaces, low natural daylight, ingress/egress issues
 - Alcott Elementary, Redmond (unincorporated King County): 12 portables, poor heating, overcrowded
 - Kamiakin Middle School, Kirkland: 7 portables, adding 330 capacity
 - Samantha Smith Elementary, Sammamish: 8 portables, adding 207 capacity, enclosing hallways
 - Evergreen Middle School, Redmond: Adding 207 capacity, partial reuse of the gym
 - Fieldhouse and community pool at Juanita High School, Kirkland: Built 1971, used by community organizations; refurbish pool and infrastructure
- State funding
 - The state provides 2-4% of the overall project costs for rebuilding aging buildings; zero funding for new schools
- Levy
 - Total: \$676.9M
 - Tax per \$1K property value
 - Currently \$2.52
 - Rising to \$2.90 with this levy
 - For a house with \$1M assessed valuation (AV), \$2,520 → \$2,900 annually
 - This is one of the lowest tax rates in WA state
- Q&A

- [Ken] Coordination between Kirkland city and the school district is not what it should be. Missing opportunities to add property to the schools when it becomes available.
 - In 2015, we wanted to open three new elementary schools in Kirkland, but the bond measures failed. Phase 3 of our current plan is to return to evaluating those needs.
- [Chris] What alternative transportation initiatives is the school district pursuing, rather than parent drop-off?
 - We have four electric buses and are planning more. We rely on district resources, contractors, and parents; no other community partnerships.

8:00pm Comprehensive Plan

- KAN discussion; Bea initiating
- Issues have been quite contentious lately; would like to get back to focusing everyone on the good of the city, bringing down the temperature
- One proposal: a forum
 - Bring together KAN, city staff, community groups (such as Liveable Kirkland, Cherish Kirkland)
 - Discuss the issues of today
- [Lisa] Include groups with specific relation to specific issues, such as Metro for transportation issues
 - [Gary] Recommend keeping organization participation (Metro, ...) to a small number; don't overburden the room with organizational input
- [Chris] What do you envision as a format? Something like the city's Community Conversations, "World Café" style, formal speakers?
 - [Bea] Something more formal, with an emphasis on everyone getting a chance to really hear and understand the viewpoints in the room
- [Susan] The land use plan is setting up for more growth than the City needs; not taking into account the concerns from the recent city survey with concerns for overdevelopment and transportation burden
 - [Margaret] The Moss Bay presentation by Adam Weinstein and Alison Zike was helpful in exposing false assumptions and misinformation about the City's latest policy initiative (studying transportation corridors). Recommend distributing the video of that presentation to KAN.
 - [Susan] I didn't appreciate Adam using the term "wonky" four times in his presentation last night for South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails. These discussions should never be "wonky," they should be comprehensible and clear.
 - [Jim L.] Wonky is not great, but Adam is great.
- [Gary] Let's say we put together a forum with neighborhood associations (NAs), agencies, etc. Would the output of that forum have greater weight to City staff than individual input?
 - [Jim L.] Perhaps collective wisdom would come from such a forum. There are also a lot of positives from meeting with individuals.
- [Ken] Let's revisit the community survey and the public concern for overbuilding and traffic burden, the sentiment that City staff and council are not managing

growth well. The frustration and anger are an outgrowth of the city's inability to respond to the will of the voters.

- [Liz] I think a forum is a great idea and it should have been done a year ago, eight months ago. In decoupling policy from zoning, Kirkland is creating a difficult process. Kirkland is the #3 most dense city in WA state, and we're setting up for more intense densification. It's a big hole to climb out of.
- [Janet] Can we slow down the process? Much of this tension is coming from the rapidity.
- [Jim H.] This is moving to a decision in December. No forum can affect it in this timeframe. Kirkland already has growth plans and doesn't need to add these transit-oriented corridors for further densification. The residents at our SRH/BT meeting last night expressed fear and dismay. To me, this feels like opening my door to someone who will then walk into my house and do whatever they like.
- [Johanna] And we had the school district here tonight, which highlights that we don't have consideration for the burden of the density on schools.
- [Lisa] This is related to the neighborhood plans moving to a community amendment (CSA) process. We're losing the time and space to have conversations about change and process, to vent and listen and engage.
- [Bea] This feels to me as a loss of trust. I'd like to get us back to gaining trust, having a process that works for most.
- Action: Bea and Bill to arrange a breakfast meeting that anyone can attend, to brainstorm how to move forward with this topic.

8:30pm Legislative update

- Diana Hart presenting
- Legislative process
 - State legislature meets for 105 days in odd years, 60 days in even years
 - Biennial budget passed in the long session, amended in the short session
 - Three budgets: operating, capital, and transportation
 - Ping Diana if you want to discuss details of how bills become law
 - Thousands of bills are pending in current short session: new bills and bills delayed from the long session
- Kirkland engagement
 - Council
 - Legislative Work Group (LWG), subgroup of Council (Curtis, Sweet, Black)
 - LWG supporting staff: policy generalists
 - Subject matter experts (SMEs)
 - Community interests
- Legislative agenda
 - Develop draft priorities, then full council discussion of priorities, then return to Council for approval and share the agenda with the delegation
 - Principles: protect shared state revenue sources and promote the city's policies from Comp Plan, all other plans and policies

- Priorities
 - Tools to create housing
 - Robust behavioral health services
 - Property tax cap lift
 - Capital budget funding request
 - Transportation reprogramming
- Summary of actions this year
 - Three bills to advance behavioral health
 - \$300K for Everest Park
- Q&A
 - [Susan] City always wants to remove the 1% property tax cap. This should only be addressed by vote.
 - The latest thinking is to tie the cap to inflation and cap it at maximum 3%. Not sure how a government would advance a voting ballot measure for this.
 - [Bea] Housing mandates and comprehensive plan?
 - Lots of legislation over the last few years to increase housing stock and affordable housing; not so much in the last year. Bills HB 1110 from the recent session and HB 1220 from a few years ago addressed this.
 - [Susan] How many other states are requiring planning for affordable housing?
 - Don't know. The state is using several different levers.
 - [Chris] Does the city use professional lobbyist?
 - Yes, two. We get approached once in a while. We participate in stakeholder groups that include lobbyists.
 - [Ray] Can you offer more detail about Everest Park?
 - It was funding for renovating bathrooms. And the Cross-Kirkland Corridor crossing at Slater and 132nd St. is to improve crossing near the Toyota.

8:50pm KTUB reopening

- Sara Shellenbarger presenting
- Re-opened the facility 9/3/24
 - Art room, multi-purpose room, event spaces
 - Weekly drop-in schedule
- Celebration Wednesday, 9/18/24, 5:30-7:30pm
 - Performances, art activities
 - Ongoing monthly open houses on first Tuesdays, starting October 1, 6:30-8:00pm
- Vision: engaging youth in the KTUB facility
 - Middle-school and high-school teens
 - Diverse youth: BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.
- See www.kirklandwa.gov/KTUB for more information
 - Donations are welcome
 - Sponsorships as well

8:55pm Neighborhood Safety Projects

- Jim Lopez presenting
- Apology for dropping the ball in July on notifying NAs

7:06pm City Hall for All, 9/14/24

- Daniel Lazo presenting
- City staff available: city services, art exhibits indoor
- Local business
- Food and culture, incl. pop-up market
- Big trucks (fire, garbage, school bus, aid unit, etc.)
- Sustainability showcase (e-vehicles, e-bikes, kid activities, fixer fair)
- Story hour with Mayor Curtis and the Kirkland Library Board
- Neighborhood associations
 - Tabling is available; five NAs signed up
- Need volunteers
 - Contact Daniel if interested
- Bike valet is available

9:02pm Roundtable

- Bill will solicit roundtable updates by email

9:02pm Closing

- Adjourned at 9:02pm
- Next meeting is October 9, 2024