

BELLTOWN HOUSING AND LANDUSE SUBCOMMITTEE (BHLUS)
MEETING NOTES
MEETING OF APRIL 13, 2009

DATE/TIME: Monday, April 13, 2009, 6:30 – 8:30 PM
PLACE: Centennial Tower Meeting Room, 2515 Fourth Avenue
ATTENDANCE: Ron Turner, Jeanne Krikawa, Geoff Wentlandt, Janis Ford, Gary Johnson, Bob Dunn, Janet Welt, Elizabeth Campbell, Chris Harley, Valerie Heide Mudre, Sara Wysocki, Jud Marquardt, Casey Hildreth, Glenn MacGilvis, Brice Maryman, Donald Harris, Greg Schuler

1. Ron Turner called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.
2. Third Avenue Planning: Geoff Wentlandt of the Seattle DPD and Jean Krikawa of Bumgardner Architects presented an update on the Third Avenue Design Study. Their recommendations for Belltown include (1) creation of building edge canopies particularly in the bus waiting areas; (2) abundant landscaping; (3) banner “opportunities”; (4) more pedestrian lighting; and (5) benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, etc. They have specific recommendations for traffic signals and marked crosswalks at Third and Denny and Third and Cedar where there are pedestrian safety issues. Funding for the various recommendations would come from Bridging the Gap and private owners. There is no independent funding for a comprehensive project. Implementation of the plan will be dependent on opportunities as they arise.
3. Street Fair: Brice Maryman said that Great Cities plans to organize a street fair in Belltown for one evening during the summer. They are targeting the second week in July. Great Cities will do most of the organizing. They are in need of a restroom site and food preparation area. The consensus of the members present was positive and some of the members volunteered to help.
4. Viaduct and Open Space: A joint letter from BHLUS, BBA, and BCC went to the Mayor requesting that open land in the Belltown area resulting from demolition of the Viaduct be substantially preserved as open space and green connections. We are requesting that we be put on the agenda for future discussion of this issue and want a “funding line” identified for Belltown open space. The City has acknowledged the letter and is inviting the Belltown groups to a community planning meeting that will be held in about a month with John Owen of Makers. Ron has also written a letter that the City property vacated by Casa Latina be considered as part of the open space plan.
5. Bell Street Park: Kris Snider of Hewitt Architects and Gary Johnson of the City of Seattle made a presentation on a proposed Green Street development between First and Fifth Avenues on Bell Street. Ron Turner provided the historical context on earlier long term planning efforts for green streets.

Gary Johnson said that a significant City Light infrastructure project planned for Bell Street this year influenced the possibility of realizing a significant green street development between First and Fifth Avenues, and the

Parks Department is willing to recommend the expenditure of \$2.5 million in Park's Levy money for the project.

Kris Snider discussed the general scope of the project. He emphasized that this would be a "street park", not just 2 glorified sidewalks going down the street. The goals would be to "tighten the traffic quarter" and make more room for pedestrians and landscape amenities. It was also stressed that funding would come from new Parks Levy money and not from the money that had been set aside for the community center. The project itself would reduce the number of vehicular traffic lanes to one, continue some parallel parking, and provide a 4-foot bicycle lane. The pedestrian sidewalks would then be improved with significant landscaping and other amenities. Most notably, the sidewalk running along the south of the street would be widened to nearly 30 feet creating a pedestrian parkway through the corridor.

The schedule is for implementation next year assuming approvals from the Parks Oversight Board and City Council can be obtained. The Departments of Transportation, Utilities, Parks, and the Mayor's office are all pushing together for this project. Besides the approvals, the next steps would be to contact property owners and businesses along Bell Street to solicit their comments and to ensure that they are fully briefed on the forthcoming improvements.

Members in attendance want to ensure that all of the adjacent linkages are looked at including the Viaduct land, P-Patch, dog park, etc., and that residents, property owners, and business people be contacted. However, there seemed to be a good consensus that the project move forward and Ron Turner asked for enthusiastic support and participation of the community.

6. Miscellaneous Business:
 - a. The Mayor recently walked through Belltown and engaged with many citizens and business people, particularly over crime issues. He also attended a BBA sponsored breakfast, where the major discussion topic was the proposed First Avenue Streetcar.
 - b. Glenn McGilvra spoke about the needs of the P-Patch. There is interest in expanding the P-Patch to perhaps 1 acre. There are 80-100 people on the waiting list
 - c. There are no active design reviews in progress for Belltown.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at around 8:30 PM. The next meeting will be Monday, May 11, 6:30 – 8:30 PM at the Centennial Tower meeting room.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Schuler
206-268-4013

BELLTOWN HOUSING AND LANDUSE SUBCOMMITTEE (BHLUS)
MEETING NOTES
MEETING OF MAY 11, 2009

DATE/TIME: Monday, May 11, 2009, 6:30 – 8:30 PM
PLACE: Centennial Tower Meeting Room, 2515 Fourth Avenue
ATTENDANCE: Ron Turner, Elizabeth Campbell, Glenn MacGilvra, Valerie Heide
Mudra, Bob Dunn, Alexandra Dunn, Bea Kumasaka, Janis Ford,
Tom Graff, Barbara Gray, Lydia Heard, Greg Schuler

1. Ron Turner called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.
2. Bus Bulbs: Ron said that BHLUS was scheduled to have a presentation from the City at this meeting on planned “bus bulbs” at six locations on Third Avenue. However, the presenters were unable to make this meeting.
3. Pedestrian Master Plan: Barbara Gray from the Seattle Department of Transportation distributed a draft Pedestrian Master Plan on pedestrian movements throughout the City. Mission of the plan is “to make Seattle the most walkable City in the nation.” Goals include:
 - i. Safety: reduce the number and severity of crashes involving pedestrians.
 - ii. Equity: make Seattle a more walkable city for all through equity in public engagement, service delivery, accessibility, and capital investments;
 - iii. Vibrancy: develop a pedestrian environment that sustains healthy communities and supports a vibrant economy;
 - iv. Health: raise awareness of the important role of walking in promoting health and preventing disease.

Six strategies are included in the plan which can be reviewed on their website:
<http://www.seattle.gov/mostwalkablecity.htm>.

Comment period is until June 15.

Tom Graff noted that the South Lake Union to Elliott Bay Trail needs to be shown on the plan. This would also pass by the Seattle Center and the Sculpture Park.

4. Bell Street Parkway and Other Park Business: The Parks Department Levy Oversight Committee has recommended that \$2.5 million be provided for the Bell Street Parkway between First and Fifth Avenue, and this funding measure will now go for Seattle City Council approval. Hearings will be held at the next meeting of the Levy Board on Tuesday, May 26. The Parks Department is a strong advocate for this, and so the chances of Council approval are high. It was noted the Glenn MacGilvra and Elizabeth Campbell had presented a proposal to expand the Belltown Pea Patch and Cottage Park at the Oversight Committee meeting (see below).

5. New BCC Chair: Richard Nordstrom, the incoming chair of the Belltown Community Council, has requested a community assessment of where Belltown is and what the Belltown community agenda should be. This would be good timing because of the present slackening pace of development. He wants to start with a series of informal discussions on the sense of the community which may review the 1985 Neighborhood Plan. The plan is to start this review in July; it will take about a month.
6. P-Patch and Cottage Park: The proposed expansion of this was discussed as advocated in particular by Elizabeth Campbell and Glenn MacGilvra. Glenn said that the concept of this proposal was in the formation stage. They are currently looking at options for designs and sources of funds. Weber Thompson Architects is interested in taking a look at this. Tom Graff said that work on this proposal is of benefit to Belltown because it serves to reiterate the needs for public space and parks in Belltown. He said that those looking to buy land are in a favorable position because land prices are relatively inexpensive. Elizabeth emphasized that it was not their intention to compete with the Bell Street Parkway for attention and funding.
7. North Portal: Tom Graff also reported on the issues surrounding vacant public spaces once the Viaduct has been removed. There is a meeting of designers in July to start looking at this. There is also a “North Portal Committee” being formed which will need representation from Belltown. The committee will be looking at the area between Battery and Roy streets. One of the major agenda items will be restoration of street grids, which will be a very involved subject. The Port is aggressively pursuing continued truck accessibility through the area.
8. Design Review: Ron Turner said that nothing much seems to be going on because of the state of the economy. There is a proposed expansion of the City Church, currently in the IBEW building on First Avenue; this appears to be active. Also there is a luxury condominium project planned for the property on Sixth Avenue behind the Top Pot Donuts. GGLO, the developer claims that they are proceeding with design on this development.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at around 8:00 PM. Note that due to Ron Turner’s absence, the regularly scheduled meeting for June 8 will be cancelled. The next scheduled meeting will be Monday, July 8, 6:30 – 8:30 PM at the Centennial Tower meeting room.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Schuler
206-268-4013

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ATTENDANCE: Ron Turner, Elizabeth Campbell, Glenn MacGilvra, Valerie Heide
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Respectfully submitted,

Greg Schuler
206-268-4013

The July Meeting will be held on July 13th at the Centennial, 2515 Fourth Avenue, at 6:30 PM in the 2nd Floor Lounge. If you wish to add other matters to our agenda please contact Ron Turner, 206-441-3395, rjctur@msn.com

Annotated Agenda

General Statement: (last agenda item) This year is a good year, given the pause in the market pressures, to concentrate on two main areas of concern: the first is open space planning and community connectors building on the conceptual groundwork that has been developed over the past years and now adopted by the City and the opportunities that generate from the potential removal of the Viaduct. The second area is the potential revision to the community plan that could allow us to reassess the original plan principles and to generate a new vision based on the history of change and how we want to shape the characteristics of the neighborhood including community facilities.. These two areas are in addition to our “normal” functions that are reflected in tonight’s agenda.

Bell Street Park (Ron)

- Update
- Friends of Bell Street (volunteers): coordinated with BCC
- Participation in design process (volunteers)

Third Avenue (6:40) (Brian Henry)

- Presentation by SDOT

P Patch (7:00) (Glenn)

- Update
- Sketch Review

Viaduct Lands Planning (Ron)

- Technical Advisory Group Meeting

Plan Updates (RT,CS)

- City Meeting
- BHLUS Review (need Committee)

Waterfront (Ron)

- Working Committee
- Task Force

Bell Street and Western Grant Proposal

South Lake Union Charette

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Denny Way Plan: Arrange for September presentation to BHLUS

City (Sara Wysocki)

BCC Update

- Web site update

2009 Agenda

Other

BELLTOWN HOUSING AND LANDUSE SUBCOMMITTEE (BHLUS)
MEETING NOTES
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

DATE/TIME: Monday, September 14, 2009, 6:30 – 8:30 PM
PLACE: Centennial Tower Meeting Room, 2515 Fourth Avenue
ATTENDANCE: Ron Turner, Glenn MacGilvra, Lydia Heard, Sara Wysocki (City of Seattle), Tim Gaydos, Bob Dunn, Tom Graff, Gary Johnson (City of Seattle), Whitney Kelly, Jud Marquardt, Janis Ford, Greg Schuler

1. Ron Turner called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.
2. Belltown School Discussion: Ron introduced Gary Johnson, Department of Planning and Development, who has been coordinating the initial discussions about establishing a K-8 school in Belltown. This would be an important part of resolving the dilemma of young families, initially established in Belltown, who move out when their children reach school age. It also would address an overall concern that Seattle has the second lowest percentage of families in the nation within the City. Gary organized the initial discussions that were held a couple of years ago on challenges and opportunities for a new downtown school. He said that much of the discussion had been focused on North Downtown because of the possible opportunities for collaboration with Cornish and the Pacific Science Center, the proximity of high tech and life science companies, and the possible involvement with Antioch University in its future development planning (much of which has been placed on hold).

Gary said resources are needed to “take the discussion to the next level.” Effectively, this would likely require the attention of a full-time project manager. He said that the funding for this effort probably would not come from the Seattle School District because of their budget issues and other priorities. It appears that funding would need to come from grants or other interests that would have a potentially direct connection with the school, e.g., the Pacific Science Center. Gary said that he was willing to continue to play a role as a meeting convenor to keep these discussions going.

Although this may a “larger community issue” than BHLUS, Ron said that perhaps BHLUS could adopt a resolution to demonstrate continued concern. Tim Gaydos offered to be a focal point for the BHLUS effort.

3. Third Avenue Bus Bulbs: There have been a couple of meetings with SDOT, and they seem to be receptive to the ideas brought forth from the community. They were supposed to attend the meeting tonight to discuss further, but did not come. Ron will follow up with them. There is a specific issue with the coordination of the Belltown Parkway with the Bus Bulb effort at the corner of Third and Bell. There is vagueness about the degree of coordination between Parks and SDOT. Gary Johnson and Sara Wysocki agreed to look into this.
4. Denny Way Planning: Ron said that he expects there will be a report at next month’s meeting.
5. Broad Street Greenways: Tom Graff said that for some time there has been an effort to enhance the connection between South Lake Union, the Seattle Center, and Elliott Bay. With the developments in South Lake Union and the Olympic Sculpture Park, there have

been good steps in this direction. However, there is a segment of the proposed Greenway, between Western and Denny on Broad Street, that needs attention to the tune of about \$150,000. There is a need for either SDOT or Parks to partner with local organizations to raise the money. Tom would like to see BHLUS endorse this project; and, there being no objection, Ron agreed that BHLUS could put together a letter.

6. Small and Simple Grant: Ron reported that a “Small and Simple Grant” application has been submitted to the Department of Neighborhoods that will provide funds for study of the land in Belltown that will be opened up once the Viaduct is removed.
7. Post Disaster Planning: There is a need for an emergency plan in Belltown in the event of a major disaster such as a “major seismic event.” BHLUS will coordinate with the Belltown Community Council to “get the City to talk about the issue.” Sara Wysocki advised that two other City neighborhoods took an effective organized approach and were able to obtain funds from the City for emergency preparedness.
8. Briefs:
 - a. Bell and Western: \$24,000 has been provided for improvements at this intersection.
 - b. 2700 Elliott: the proposed development is still in the Design Review Board; a third meeting has been scheduled.
 - c. Bell Street Parkway: Jud Marquardt, Tom Graff, and Bea Kumasaka are involved with this on behalf of BHLUS. Tom sat through the interviews of the top 5 candidates. All were excellent. David Hewitt’s firm was selected. Tom said there will be public processes as part of the design.
 - d. Glenn MacGivra reported that there have been some meetings on the P-Patch expansion, but not much other activity recently.
 - e. South Lake Union is almost finished with its planning process. It is questionable what will result.
 - f. Alexandra Dunn and Elizabeth Campbell have volunteered to work on the Belltown neighborhood plan. It is in the initial organizing stage.

Next meeting will be Monday, October 12.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Schuler
206-268-4013

BELLTOWN HOUSING AND LANDUSE SUBCOMMITTEE (BHLUS)
MEETING NOTES
MEETING OF OCTOBER 12, 2009

DATE/TIME: Monday, October 12, 2009, 6:30 – 8:30 PM
PLACE: Centennial Tower Meeting Room, 2515 Fourth Avenue
ATTENDANCE: Ron Turner, Bill Mills (Seattle DPD), Bea Kumasaka, Sara Wysocki (Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods), Valerie Heidi Mudre, Geoff Wentlandt (Seattle DPD), Sylvia Skratek, Senia Hussong, Lydia Heard, Brian Henry (Seattle SDOT), George Frost (Seattle SDOT), Jane Savard, Tom Eades, Greg Schuler

1. Ron Turner called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.
2. Announcement: Ron announced that there will be a meeting on Thursday, October 15, at Antioch University with an academic team from Seattle University who are planning a crime and public safety study of Belltown.
3. Denny Way Study: Geoff Wentlandt, Seattle DPD, reported on the study that they have been conducting on Denny Way from the I-5 Freeway to Elliott Way. The major concepts that they have been addressing include (1) making it easier for pedestrians to cross Denny, (2) addressing angled street intersections along the South End and the “capturing:” of street area for public purposes; and (3) dove-tailing with South Lake Union planning, particularly street grid improvements. The difficulty for pedestrians walking along the south side, particularly at the angled intersections, was highlighted. There is a feeling that too much emphasis is put on “thru-put” and not on street improvements for pedestrians. The need to coordinate with storm water planning was also mentioned. Ron will write a comment letter to the City on continued concerns. He also suggested the need for a larger scale meeting so that the major street projects in the area could be discussed with all of the community groups involved.
4. Third Avenue Bus Bulbs: Brian Henry of SDOT updated BHLUS on the bus bulbs project including a report on how community concerns are being addressed and also a frank response on a few community requests that could not be implemented, primarily for budgetary reasons.
 - a. Features include widening of the sidewalks by 6 feet at the 6 bus bulb locations; bike racks, benches, trash receptacles, and similar amenities; pedestrian scale lighting; improved trees and tree pits; some sidewalk replacement; improved sidewalk design; installation of brass inlaid compasses.
 - b. Bicycle racks will be standard SDOT design; to upgrade these would be outside of the budget.
 - c. The curb height will be the standard 6-inch height for “low-floor buses” for quicker ADA loading.
 - d. Work will be coordinated with the Bell Street Park Boulevard project particularly at the NE corner of Third and Bell; because scheduling of the two projects is not simultaneous, the Bus Bulb construction will probably “leave open” some area at Third and Bell for the park project to complete.
 - e. The budget did not allow for some of the artistic elements that had been suggested, but the feeling is that the wider sidewalk space will encourage others to provide art.
 - f. The Bus Bulb project “does not preclude” the addition of a crossing signal at Third and Cedar.

- g. Comments by the BHLUS attendees were generally favorable. The need to coordinate with the Boulevard project was emphasized. The need for quality control in work inspection during construction was indicated.
 - h. Brian showed several alternatives for the inlaid compass design which members discussed with great interest. (Postscript: the City has decided to use the Belltown metal sculpture design).
 - i. Schedule for the work to start is January-February 2010 with completion in May 2010.
5. Interim Use (Parking) Agreements: William Mills of Seattle DPD passed out a draft proposal on interim property uses. Some Belltown developers have either applied or are considering applying for Interim Usage Permits so that properties intended for high rise development can be temporarily used for parking lots or other revenue generating uses. The draft proposal to the City Council would permit this with a December 2012 sunset provision. There is a concern in the neighborhoods over how this system could be controlled and how it could be written to prevent “gaming” by the developers (e.g., a temporary surface level parking lot turns into a permanent surface level parking lot. There are other concerns over storage units or even parking garages. Some view “sunset provisions” as ineffective. Also, the City does not want to “incentivize” tearing down old buildings. Comments regarding this proposal can be made on the City’s website.
6. Selig Building on Elliott: Senia Hussong of Friends of Olympic Sculpture Park and Sylvia Skratek of the Alexandra Home Owners Association addressed the group regarding a 14-story building proposed by Martin Selig on property that he owns immediately to the north of the Sculpture Park. The building has been approved by the Seattle Design Commission, but the Declaration of Non-Significance has been challenged by the 2 citizens’ groups. Senia and Sylvia want BHLUS to endorse their appeal and push for an Environmental Impact Statement. They contend that they had not been given proper opportunity to participate in meetings and hearings regarding this development. Ron Turner explained that BHLUS can approach the issue from the standpoint of the public process issues but probably could not on the basis of zoning. The process question would be whether the citizens’ groups had been given adequate “voice” in speaking against the development. Ron said that BHLUS would write a letter to the City on this basis.
7. The agenda had several update items that were not covered in the meeting because of time constraints. Ron said that he would publish a separate memo providing these updates to the members.

Next meeting will be Monday, November 9, 2009, 6:30-8:30 PM at the Centennial Tower Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Schuler

December 1, 2009

BHLUS members, participants and interested friends

There will be no meeting in December. Have a wonderful holiday and I look forward to seeing you again in January.

The next meeting will be on Monday, January 11th. The January meeting will have a long agenda, focused on our program for the year of 2010. I have included a summary list of current activities and would like to hear from each of you on elements that we might add or delete.

Current agenda items:

- Bell Street Park: participate in design process and public meetings
- Design Review: continue to monitor and comment on new projects in review process.
- Viaduct Lands Study: we will resubmit in January for a Small and Simple Grant
- Bridging the Gap: obtain funds for continued street improvements
- Interim Use Permits for parking lots: meet with DPD to find ways of mitigating negative impacts of surface parking lots.
- Post Disaster Plan (with BCC): meet with City to create a plan for local response to a disaster that isolates our Neighborhood.
- Plan Assessment: in the absence of City support prepare an overview on the "State of Belltown" from a land use planning and housing perspective.
- Schools: continue to support ways of creating a more balanced community including provisions for families with children.

Let me know if I've left anything out. Please make suggestions on new directions or changes in emphasis. We also should talk about leadership succession.

Warm regards and good wishes for the New Year

Ron Turner