



Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission

City of Bellingham

March 20, 2024

Hybrid Meeting

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Lund.

Attendance

Representatives for Neighborhoods: Louise Bjornson (Birchwood), Lindsey Payne Johnstone (City Center), Sheryl Russell (City Center), Kit Topaz (Columbia), John LaSpina (Cordata), William Beer (Edgemoor), William Liddicoet (Fairhaven), Jan Dietzgen (Fairhaven), Jake Charlton (Happy Valley), Alex McLean (Happy Valley), Tara Stavik (King Mountain), Bri O'Hare (Lettered Streets), April Markiewicz (Samish), Barbara June (Samish), Kerri Burnside (Silver Beach), Michael Chrzastowski (South Hill), Annie Sorich (Sunnyland), Gabrielle Laipenicks (WWU), Chris Roselli (WWU) and Colin Beazley (York).

City Representatives: Mayor Kim Lund, Janice Keller, Interim Deputy Administrator/Communications Director, and Blake Lyon, Planning Director

MINUTES

Opening Comments

- There is a slight deviation from the agenda with the addition of Blake Lyon to speak on the City's position to take a co-lead on the environmental review of ABC Recycling.
- Janice gave an update on Small and Simple Grants. The City will be having a round of 2024 grants focused on neighborhood signs, neighborhood communications related projects (website, surveys, survey monkey subscription, newsletters, mailings, etc.) and various tree planting projects. The expected timeframe for the grant window to open will be approximately mid-April.
 - o We will host open house Zoom meetings for questions, applications, etc.
- Janice introduced the Expectations of Advisory Group Members document. The intention is to create a successful volunteer experience.
 - o Please review and return any comments you may have to Tracy Lewis at tlewis@cob.org.

Blake Lyon, Planning Director – Update on the Co-Lead Position in the Environmental Review of ABC Recycling

- Director Lyon explained that the Co-Lead position is a partnership and collaboration with the County in the preparation and evaluation of documentation to determine whether there is a threshold determination and any anticipated significant impacts that would result based on the project. If there are anticipated impacts, then the project would go through a scoping session that includes the public and an environmental review process to look at the scope and determine if there are alternatives and other mitigation measures.
- The timing is unknown, but not uncommon for the size and scope of the project to take well over a year. Ultimately the decision whether the project gets approved or not will reside with the County.
- Director Lyon reviewed the zoning for the waterfront and clarified that the waterfront is an urban village and there was a full environmental analysis done.
- The City has more information found here cob.org/abc-metal-processor.

Approval of February 2024 Meeting Minutes

- William Beer moved to approve the minutes, Jan Dietzgen 2nd motion, Motion Carried.

Neighborhood Round Table

- **Birchwood**

The Birchwood Neighborhood International Market is moving to the 2nd Sunday in July and August with lots of entertainment and food. They are appreciative of the tree response from the City.
- **City Center**

Downtown stakeholders are feeling a difference and there is a sense of optimism since Mayor Lund's Executive Order. The Downtown Bellingham Partnership is doing some fundraising right now and looking forward to the 20th anniversary of Downtown Sounds. Residents are still witnessing fentanyl being heavily used at night.
- **Columbia**

They are planning for some small and simple grants with tree planting ideas and working on their celebration planning for the summer.
- **Cordata**

They had their community meeting last week and Mayor Lund and Council members attended. The Cordata Park is going to be the premier gathering place for the neighborhood.
- **Edgemoor**

They are close to finishing their Small and Simple Grant from 2023 and will have a May 6th meeting at Lairmont Manor and do work on the Map Your Neighborhood. Brought attention to the necessity for watching out for neighbors and loneliness and the need for social connection.
- **Fairhaven**

They are having their March 30th plant and tree sale at the Hillcrest Church parking lot. Bill has been promoted to President and will be recommending Jan as Primary.
- **Happy Valley**

They had WWU attend their last meeting and talk about their facility plan update. They celebrated the Samish Mobile Home Park being able to purchase their property. They had a meeting with the school district about a potential development of townhomes that will be critically located next to an elementary school with no sidewalks, and it intrudes on the wetlands. They bought 100 trees from the Conservation District tree sale and their Trees and Trails Committee met with the Parks Department about park stewardship programs. They are looking into a potential Neighborly grant for pollinator gardens.
- **King Mountain**

They had 90 people attend their neighborhood meeting and Public Works was in attendance. There was a discussion about James Street and the neighborhood lobbied for funding and construction. They will be launching a community garden. They made a big presentation to the Greenways Advisory Committee and Parks and Rec Advisory Board for lobbying their needs in the neighborhood.
- **Lettered Streets**

A few people in the neighborhood met with Tara Sundin in the Planning Department about some of the concerns with the operations of the Lighthouse Mission trying to find the balance of helping those in need but listening to the concerns of the neighbors and they appreciated the open communication. The Lighthouse Mission is going to be holding a Neighborhood Advisory Group that will be starting in the spring and there will be a couple of people from the neighborhood participating in that group. The Lettered Streets Neighborhood Treasurer is new and is looking to reach out to other neighborhood

treasurers, so if anyone can help, please reach out to Bri. The neighborhood has also asked for an update on the Immigration Advisory Board Task Force.

- **Samish**

They had their general meeting for the first time since COVID and it was at the Elks Lodge with Mayor Lund doing a presentation. Their website is up and going and the memberships can be paid online.

- **Sehome**

They are working with the York Neighborhood and planning a joint event on May 16th and the Planning Department will present on the Comprehensive Plan. The Samish mobile home park is moving forward with purchasing their property.

- **Silver Beach**

They had their neighborhood meeting and both Planning and Public Works staff attended a Q&A session regarding the public hearing in front of the Hearing Examiner for a moratorium for development and changing the density in the Lake Whatcom Watershed.

- **South Hill**

They are continuing education in the neighborhood in relations to the ABC operations. Would like to see periodic ABC updates at the MNAC Meetings.

- **Sunnyland**

Having their 3rd Annual Earth Day celebration at Sunnyland Park on April 20th. They are piloting a program on neighborhood emergency preparedness with Greg Hope.

- **WWU**

Spring Break is next week. The Pacific Northwest International Collegiate Programming took 1st, 2nd & 3rd. WWU has started a new financial literacy program funded by a generous. Four faculty members received Fulbright scholars to do international research. Over President's Day weekend over 50 students went to Olympia to lobby and met with legislatures and reps from 40th & 42nd District. WWU hosted the Washington-Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference with over 400 people in attendance.

- **York**

They will be having an event in May with the Sehome Neighborhood, and they are making it a social event as well as informative from Planning and Emergency Preparedness (Greg Hope). The Rock Hill Park renovation has begun. They are working with Katie Hicks and Jeff Jewell to create an interactive walking tour to highlight some of the historical landmarks in the neighborhood.

Closing Comments:

A future topic of conversation will be trying to get other neighborhoods (Alabama Hill, Barkley, Irongate, Meridian, and Whatcom Falls) active and represented. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

The next meeting is April 17, 2024