



# Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission

## City of Bellingham

**July 17, 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), Sheryl Russell (City Center), Deb Valentine (Columbia), Jasmine Fast (Cordata), Nick Kelly (Cornwall), Barbara Zielstra (Edgemoor), Jan Dietzgen (Fairhaven), Jake Charlton (Happy Valley), Alex McLean (Happy Valley), Bri O'Hare (Lettered Streets), April Markiewicz (Samish), Jack Wellman (Sehome), Kevin Jenkins (Puget), April Markiewicz (Samish), Jack Wellman (Sehome), Kerri Burnside (Silver Beach), Michael Chrzastowski (South Hill), Annie Sorich (Sunnyland), and Elan Engel (York)

City Representatives: Mayor Kim Lund, Janice Keller, Deputy Administrator and Blake Lyon, Planning and Community Development Director

## MINUTES

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### Opening Comments

- Welcome and acknowledge that the City budget is the big focus and will continue to be.

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### Approval of May 2024 Meeting Minutes

- Kerri Burnside moved to approve the May meeting minutes, Jan Dietzgen 2<sup>nd</sup>, Motion Carried.

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### Blake Lyon, Planning and Community Development Director – Bellingham Plan Update

- There have been several Open House sessions. Conversations continue regarding Missing Middle, which is a reference to a middle housing scale (typically duplex, triplex and 6-plex units).
- The City is working on the different housings scales under the State law (which has 9 different versions and the City has to allow for at least 6 versions).
- Engage Bellingham is the tool for additional public feedback on housing, businesses allowed to operate out of the house, and parking.
- Next steps will be preparing drafts of the policies.
- The neighborhood plans that used to be heavily incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan will still be available as reference, but they will not be a regulatory component as they have been. The City continues to look for the character defining pieces of the neighborhoods to retain and enhance them.
- The City is trying to reach those in our community that are underrepresented and focus on equity and access to a wider range of housing services, walkability and commercial access.
- The City Council needs to adopt the final plan by the end of 2025, it then gets sent to the County and they consolidate it with the other cities, and ultimately it gets submitted to the State.
- The Mayor's Climate team is exploring resources for resiliency hubs (cooling and warming centers - places that would be welcoming to all) within neighborhoods for heat/smoke and extreme cold.

### Discussion Items:

- Would like consideration of how to merge residential and business activities, like music particularly downtown with reference to the noise ordinance.

- Comments that neighborhood plans can help keep the essence and spirit of the neighborhood. There is value in adding an educational component for understanding the neighborhood plans and making sure they are in alignment with the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Happy Valley has a very detailed green infrastructure plan and if something were eliminated, it impacts the details of the equity plan.
- When there are regulatory measures specific to a neighborhoods (example – Silver Beach for Lake Whatcom) that are in the Bellingham Municipal Code, those are redundant and do not need to be addressed, but if there are pieces that are not represented elsewhere, the City will pay particular attention to those and try incorporate the neighborhood plans for reference.
- Balance of urban forests and housing
- Parking Reform

### **Mayor Comments**

- Budget is a big focus for the City and will be for a while specifically the General Fund. The City is committed to a one-City approach.
- Future MNAC meeting suggestion is a downtown update.
- This week there will be 2 more portable restrooms in downtown.

### **Neighborhood Round Table**

- **Birchwood**  
They had their first International Market on Sunday, and the next one is August 11<sup>th</sup>. It's lots of fun with food and activities. There continues to be problems with sidewalks being blocked with some intimidating behavior.
- **City Center**  
There are lots of fun things happening downtown. Downtown Sounds is happening tonight and for the next 3 Wednesdays. The storefront improvement grant recipients were awarded funds. They are working on their Small and Simple Grant that will be the Commercial Street Plaza signage. Would like the City to continue to work on the safety in downtown.
- **Columbia**  
They had a great neighborhood event on July 4<sup>th</sup> in Elizabeth Park with food, games, and a modified parade. They are going to work on signs as their Small and Simple Grant. The Eldridge Historical Society operates concerts in Elizabeth Park every Thursday 6-8 through August 20<sup>th</sup>. The Share Shack is having pop-up events on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of the month.
- **Cordata**  
This Saturday they are having their ice cream social at Cordata Park at 11-3 and it will include music, ice cream and face painting. They are hoping to have some home safety presentations in September.
- **Cornwall**  
They continue to encourage neighbors to call the Police Drug Taskforce with license plates for suspicious activity including drugs near Broadway Park.
- **Edgemoor**  
They will be having their August 4<sup>th</sup> meeting celebrating 20 years including deserts and games from 2:30-4:30 in Fairhaven Park.
- **Fairhaven**  
They will be working on their Small and Simple Grant for trees. They will be having their picnic on July 18<sup>th</sup> 4-7 with games. They are also engaging neighbors in emergency planning.

- **Happy Valley**  
They had a neighborhood meeting and discussed their Small and Simple Grant focusing on trees and communications. They are going to explore a historical housing overlay in the neighborhood.
- **Lettered Streets**  
Thank you for the tour of the wastewater treatment plant. They have a scavenger hunt/picnic on July 20<sup>th</sup> and an ice cream social in August.
- **Puget**  
Nothing new to report.
- **Samish**  
At their last meeting, they had a presentation by Clare Fogelsong (City) and Alexis Bryson (Whatcom Conservation District) about risk reduction education. August 18<sup>th</sup> will be their member meeting picnic and elected officials have been invited.
- **Sehome**  
Suggestions for future meeting topics would be City rights-of-way and a discussion of individual neighborhood plans and how the neighborhoods work collectively with the City.
- **Silver Beach**  
They do not have a facility for meetings in the summer. They will be meeting in August at Bloedel Donovan with a presentation from the Parks Department. The neighbors are still very concerned about the rezone.
- **South Hill**  
They are continuing to educate the neighborhood on heavy impact industrial zoning in the urban growth area. There's been some enjoyment working with other neighborhoods on important issues.
- **Sunnyland**  
The Sunnyland Stomp is Saturday at 3-8 and Noon-5 at the corner of Dean & Texas is painting of a street mural. The neighborhood picnic is on August 27<sup>th</sup> 5-7 in Memorial Park and the representatives from the Police and Fire Departments will be in attendance.
- **York**  
Nothing new to report.

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**Closing Comments:**

This week Janice Keller was named one of the City's Deputy Administrators with her focus on Good Government (communications, community engagement, boards and commissions, government to government, tribal liaison, and lobbying) and Forrest Longman as the other Deputy Administrator with focus on Great City (comprehensive plan, strategic documents, one-City model, how we all work together, climate work, economic development, and revenue strategies).

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

**The next meeting is September 17, 2024.**