

Public Comment on

Newport Neighborhood Area Plan Update

Permit # 24-123870 AC

Comments submitted to city staff or the Planning Commission
outside of an Engagement event or activity.

October 1, 2024 to January 8, 2025

Note: Notice of Application published January 9, 2025

Nesse, Katherine

From: Nesse, Katherine
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2024 9:21 AM
To: Stephanie Chlebowski
Subject: RE: Great neighborhoods

Stephanie,

Thanks for your email. Just as the city can't force you to remodel your home, the city can't force commercial property owners to redevelop their properties. The city works to create a fair framework for development that benefits the health, safety and welfare of people in the city. I don't know what the Newport Hills Shopping Center's plans for redevelopment are right now. The City Council has indicated through the land use map (Map LU-1 in the Comprehensive Plan) that the future of this property should be a lowrise mixed use style development. If the property owner wants to change that, they would have to apply for a comprehensive plan amendment. However, it is the property owner that would make that application, not neighbors.

There are many examples of successful redevelopment of sites like the Newport Hills Shopping Center, both within the existing footprint and through a new building. While the neighborhood area plan cannot dictate how the site should redevelop, it can create policies focused on the public realm so that the neighborhood can develop (at whatever pace that happens at) in a way that supports the current and future residents.

Thanks for your comments about different housing styles. I heard quite a bit about the frustration with the redevelopment of small homes into very large ones last night. There are a couple recent initiatives that are addressing this. The update to the tree code was recently passed and that encourages the retention of large trees. As people apply for permits now and into the future, they will be subject to those requirements. In addition, the city is working on updating the code to comply with the state law allowing middle-scale housing like duplexes. That is required to be adopted by June 2025. Kirsten Mandt (KMandt@bellevuewa.gov) is the project manager for that effort. She presented to the Planning Commission on Wednesday this week and the materials are available [on legistar](#).

Thanks for attending last night and I look forward to working with you in the future.
Kate

Katherine (Kate) Nesse, PhD

Senior Planner, Community Development Department

City of Bellevue

Phone: 425-452-2042

450 I 10th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98004

Email: knesse@bellevuewa.gov

The data you seek is now online!

<https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/data>

From: Stephanie Chlebowski <pschlebowski@msn.com>

Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2024 8:20 PM

To: Nesse, Katherine <KNesse@bellevuewa.gov>

Subject: Great neighborhoods

You don't often get email from pschlebowski@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Kate,

Thank you for your time tonight. Newport has a history of very outspoken, somewhat domineering members (you may have been warned?). My original question about what we could accomplish if the shopping center is privately owned and the owner doesn't want to develop was related to previous skirmishes in the neighborhood about "what WE should do with that eyesore". It's like if individuals are aggressive enough, they can force the change they want to see, even though the property is legally owned by someone else. I'm back living in the house I grew up in (I'm 66 now) and miss the old shopping center that was used by people living on the hill. Kids could ride their bikes to the grocery store, drive-in, drug store, etc. and those small businesses didn't have Factoria or Newcastle to compete with. Our neighborhood currently feels hollow, with no central core. Most neighbors work and shop elsewhere, off the hill. It is hard to envision a future neighborhood without including a vibrant, multi-use core that is welcoming to all, easily accessible and diverse. I think of neighborhoods like Greenwood, Downtown Kirkland, etc, where there are a variety of small businesses, cafes, services and a very enjoyable walking experience. I don't know how we can create something like that. I'm seeing less economic diversity as older homes are replaced with MUCH more expensive mansions that only wealthy can afford. Property values continue to rise as developers can out-buy individuals and build their investment portfolios. I want to live in a neighborhood that includes people with various economic means, not just extreme wealth. You will hear a lot about maintaining or maximizing personal home value and tremendous resistance to other options that are higher density (as has been mandated by the state?). I see wealthy Asian and white residents, but not the greater cultural diversity like one sees in some other areas of Bellevue.

As for what I like about where I live, it's the trees and mature landscaping. New development mostly sacrifices both. If we're going to do away with yards and build to the property lines, at least have housing that benefits more people. Again, thinking of mature older neighborhoods in Seattle, for example. Smaller lots, but still have yards, plants, mature street trees. It's scary to see neighborhood character changing rapidly. Sorry this is so long. I was just intending to say thanks. Your position is not an easy one.

Stephanie

From: [Fay Hou](#)
To: [Neighborhood Outreach](#); [Brod. Brooke](#)
Subject: Fwd: Written Comments on the Great Neighborhoods Program and Recent Development Concerns
Date: Friday, October 11, 2024 10:49:29 AM

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Dear Great Neighborhoods Program Team,

I appreciate your upcoming participation as the featured speaker at the Newport Hills Community Club (NHCC) membership meeting on October 23rd. As you prepare for this important community engagement, I urge you to address the critical issues I've previously raised, which our community is eagerly waiting to hear about. The case I presented at the kick-off meeting and the Planning Commission meeting isn't an isolated incident. It's a symptom of systemic issues that are eroding the very character of Newport Hills. Our neighborhood isn't just seeking a general overview; we need concrete answers and action plans regarding:

- . Tree Protection Violations: The recent case where all trees were removed from a property despite explicit protection requirements isn't isolated. How will the Great Neighborhoods Program strengthen enforcement of tree protection ordinances?
- . Oversized Home Development: We've witnessed a 27.4% increase over the permitted maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 50%. This isn't just about numbers; it's about preserving the character of Newport Hills. What specific measures will be implemented to prevent such violations in the future?
- . CC&R Compliance: Our long-standing Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions are being challenged by oversized developments. How will the program incorporate these established community norms into future planning?
- . Accountability and Transparency: When I raised these issues at the kick-off meeting, the response was a lack of knowledge about specific cases. Our community needs assurance that these concerns are being thoroughly investigated and addressed.

I've informed our community members that these questions have been submitted to your team. They are expecting detailed updates, not general reassurances. This is an opportunity to demonstrate that the Great Neighborhoods Program is truly responsive to community concerns and committed to preserving what makes Newport Hills special. We're looking forward to a substantive discussion on October 23rd that goes beyond surface-level presentations. Our community is counting on you to provide concrete plans and timelines for addressing these pressing issues.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. We're eager to work collaboratively with you to ensure that the Great Neighborhoods Program lives up to its name in Newport Hills.

The case [See details](#) and [more details](#). We encourage you to sign our petitions <https://www.thepetitionsite.com/969/895/784/petition-to-protect-bellevues-heritage-trees-and-enforce-tree-ordinances/>

Thank you,
Fay

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Fay Hou** <fayhou@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 9, 2024 at 4:49 PM

Subject: Written Comments on the Great Neighborhoods Program and Recent Development Concerns

To: <planningcommission@bellevuewa.gov>

Dear Bellevue Planning Commission,

As we approach the initial briefing on the Great Neighborhoods Program for Newport, I write to express serious concerns about recent development in our Newport. [See details](#)

.This case highlights critical issues that the Great Neighborhoods Program must address to preserve Newport's character and environmental integrity.

Key Concerns:

. Tree Protection Violations:

The site plan's tree survey was grossly inaccurate, omitting at least five trees and misrepresenting a landmark tree's species and size. Most alarmingly, all trees on the property were removed, despite explicit protection requirements. This wholesale destruction of the property's tree canopy represents a severe violation of regulations and undermines the integrity of the development approval process.

. Excessive Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The approved site plan shows a Total Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 5,693 sq.ft., which is 63.7% of the lot area. The lot area is 8,936 sq.ft., and the allowed FAR is only 50% (4,468 sq.ft.). This represents a 27.4% increase over the permitted FAR. Additionally, the King County Assessor's website lists the size of the house as 4,800 sq.ft. This raises serious questions: Did we know the actual size of the house when it was approved?

. Justification: The circumstances under which such a substantial increase was approved require clarification.

. Precedent: This approval may influence future interpretations of zoning standards in our community.

. CC&R Compliance: The Newport Hills community has long-standing Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) designed to maintain neighborhood character. A house significantly larger than others may challenge these established norms.

. Community Impact: The increased building size may affect neighboring properties' views, sunlight access, and overall neighborhood character.

. Environmental Impact:

The extensive tree removal, topographical changes, and increased impervious surface raise serious concerns about natural drainage patterns, soil stability, and sunlight distribution to neighboring properties.

. Need for Comprehensive Inspection:

Given these issues, we urge the Planning Commission to mandate a thorough, independent inspection of this property. This should include structural integrity assessments and environmental impact evaluations, with results made publicly available.

. Transparency and Accountability:

We seek clear, detailed explanations of how these violations occurred and how the city plans to address them. The community needs assurance that such breaches will not be repeated and that our concerns are taken seriously.

As the Great Neighborhoods Program moves forward, it's crucial that it addresses these systemic issues to truly preserve and enhance Newport's unique character. We need stronger enforcement mechanisms, better interdepartmental coordination, and more transparent processes for community input throughout the development process.

Thank you for your attention to these critical matters. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the Great Neighborhoods Program fulfills its promise of strengthening our community while preserving what makes Newport special.

Sincerely,

Fay Hou

Nesse, Katherine

From: Nesse, Katherine
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2024 9:32 AM
To: ritts@comcast.net
Cc: Brod, Brooke
Subject: RE: Neighborhood Planning in Newport

Anne,
I'm sorry there were so many technical issues! Yes, please send your questions to me. I hope you enjoy the rest of your vacation!
Kate

Katherine (Kate) Nesse, PhD

Senior Planner, Community Development Department

City of Bellevue

Phone: 425-452-2042

450 I 10th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98004

Email: knesse@bellevuewa.gov

The data you seek is now online!

<https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/data>

From: ritts@comcast.net <ritt@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2024 7:39 PM
To: Nesse, Katherine <KNesse@bellevuewa.gov>
Cc: Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov>
Subject: RE: Neighborhood Planning in Newport

You don't often get email from ritt@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi, Kate.

I had several errors that popped up that prevented me from attending today's meeting via ZOOM. Eventbrite was requiring me to download their app. I am very security conscience, and have been advised not to download apps, when they share my info. So, I am blocked there. And, am kinda surprised the CoB would choose Eventbrite to administer their events, and yet require me to download their app?

Then, I tried to logon using my browser, and it says the CoB requires me to have a newer browsers than I do, on my tablet, so I was prevented from joining there.

My only option was to join via my phone, and that only allows me to listen in, not to see slides, or participate via chat, etc.

Now it took 5 minutes to get to Newport chat room.

Would be great if this system worked a little better and was more user-friendly.

I am on vacation, and trying to participate! Because, while calling in, I could NOT add anything to the chat, so none of my questions could be added to the discussion. :(

After I return from my vacation, may I send my questions to you?

Thank you.
Anne Rittenhouse
Anne

Thanks,

Anne

Sincerely,
Anne Rittenhouse
Ritts@comcast.net
206-714-0826

On 10/07/2024 9:14 AM PDT Nesse, Katherine <knesse@bellevuewa.gov> wrote:

Anne,

Thanks for bringing this up! The Newport neighborhood, as defined by the city, is much larger than just the Newport Hills neighborhood. It includes Newport Shores, Greenwich Crest, Hazelwood and Lake Heights, among other neighborhoods. The name of the planning area was changed in 2015 with the last update to the Comprehensive Plan. The boundaries of the planning areas are being updated when the plans are updated. You can find a map showing the different boundaries in the [draft Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan](#) (it's on page 6).

I understand that many people identify with the subdivision they live in. In the Newport neighborhood, many of these subdivisions also have active homeowner associations as well. The city is not replacing the work that these associations are doing. The scope of the neighborhood area plan includes a broad urban design framework and neighborhood connectivity, among other things. I look forward to talking with you more about it at the kick-off.

We appreciate you reaching out to your neighbors to increase awareness of the kick off meeting. The city will also be holding an in-person meeting in November in the Newport neighborhood.

Kate

PS. You are correct, there was a typo in the email. We are updating the plans for both Crossroads and Newport in 2025 and used the same template for emails to people in both neighborhoods. It looks like we missed changing one of the references. Thanks for catching it!

Katherine (Kate) Nesse, PhD

Senior Planner, Community Development Department

City of Bellevue

Phone: 425-452-2042

450 110th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98004

Email: knesse@bellevuewa.gov

The data you seek is now online!

<https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/data>

From: ritts@comcast.net <ritts@comcast.net>

Sent: Saturday, October 5, 2024 8:30 AM

To: Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov>; Nesse, Katherine <KNesse@bellevuewa.gov>

Subject: Re: Neighborhood Planning in Newport

Importance: High

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Hi, Booke.

As a Newport Hills resident, I was a little confused by your email.

You talk about Newport, not Newport Hills, which is how our neighborhood and community are known. By you dropping the Hills portion of our neighborhood, I feel you are alienating many of the residents, and are getting off on the wrong foot here.

Also, in your email, you say the effort will focus on CROSSROADS, it does not say Newport Hills AND Crossroads?

If you would like to have good attendance that includes folks from the Newport Hills area, you might want to consider updating your email to show that the meeting will include Newport Hills?

Sincerely,

Anne Rittenhouse

Ritts@comcast.net

206-714-0826

On 10/02/2024 12:52 PM PDT Brod, Brooke <bbrod@bellevuewa.gov> wrote:

Hello,

My name is Brooke Brod and I work as the Community Engagement Lead for the City of Bellevue's Planning Division. A few weeks ago our team launched **Great Neighborhoods – Newport**. This effort will be focused on updating the neighborhood plan for Crossroads. As part of this planning effort we'll be looking at how to enhance neighborhood gathering spots, improving public spaces, and supporting neighborhood connectivity so people can walk, bike, and access transit more easily.

As someone who participated in the Neighborhood Enhancement Program for Newport we wanted to invite you to be a part of this planning effort. We are having a **Virtual Kickoff** next week, **Thursday, October 10 | 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.** During this event the planning team will provide an overview of the Great Neighborhood program, review the timeline, answer questions, and

invite people to share their thoughts about the neighborhood. If you would like to attend, please register at <https://great-neighborhoods-kickoff.eventbrite.com> and we'll send you the link.

If you would like to learn more about this project, please visit www.engagingbellevue.com/great-neighborhoods-newport. There you can sign-up for future updates, share your story, and more.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out directly.

We hope to see you next week.



Brooke Brod *(she|her)*

Community Engagement Lead

Community Development Dept.

bbrod@bellevuewa.gov | (425) 452-6930 |
www.engagingbellevue.com

Nesse, Katherine

From: Neighborhood Outreach
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2024 11:56 AM
To: Deuling, Teun; Nesse, Katherine; Johnson, Thara
Subject: Fw: Written Comments on the Great Neighborhoods Program and Recent Development Concerns

FYI

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Fay Hou <fayhou@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2024 10:48:42 AM
To: Neighborhood Outreach <NeighborhoodOutreach@bellevuewa.gov>; Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Written Comments on the Great Neighborhoods Program and Recent Development Concerns

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1. **Tree Protection Violations:** The recent case where all trees were removed from a property despite explicit protection requirements isn't isolated. How will the Great Neighborhoods Program strengthen enforcement of tree protection ordinances?
2. **Oversized Home Development:** We've witnessed a 27.4% increase over the permitted maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 50%. This isn't just about numbers; it's about preserving the character of Newport Hills. What specific measures will be implemented to prevent such violations in the future?
3. **CC&R Compliance:** Our long-standing Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions are being challenged by oversized developments. How will the program incorporate these established community norms into future planning?
4. **Accountability and Transparency:** When I raised these issues at the kick-off meeting, the response was a lack of knowledge about specific cases. Our community needs assurance that these concerns are being thoroughly investigated and addressed.

I've informed our community members that these questions have been submitted to your team. They are expecting detailed updates, not general reassurances. This is an opportunity to demonstrate that the Great Neighborhoods Program is truly responsive to community concerns and committed to preserving what makes Newport Hills special. We're looking forward to a substantive discussion on October 23rd that goes beyond surface-level presentations. Our community is counting on you to provide concrete plans and timelines for addressing these pressing issues. Thank you for your attention to these matters. We're eager to work collaboratively with you to ensure that the Great Neighborhoods Program lives up to its name in Newport Hills.

The case [See details](#) and [more details](#). We encourage you to sign our petitions <https://www.thepetitionsite.com/969/895/784/petition-to-protect-bellevues-heritage-trees-and-enforce-tree-ordinances/>

Thank you,
Fay

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Fay Hou** <fayhou@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 9, 2024 at 4:49 PM

Subject: Written Comments on the Great Neighborhoods Program and Recent Development Concerns

To: <planningcommission@bellevuewa.gov>

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The site plan's tree survey was grossly inaccurate, omitting at least five trees and misrepresenting a landmark tree's species and size. Most alarmingly, all trees on the property were removed, despite explicit protection requirements. This wholesale destruction of the property's tree canopy represents a severe violation of regulations and undermines the integrity of the development approval process.

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3.

- Justification: The circumstances under which such a substantial increase was approved require clarification.

- Precedent: This approval may influence future interpretations of zoning standards in our community.
- CC&R Compliance: The Newport Hills community has long-standing Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) designed to maintain neighborhood character. A house significantly larger than others may challenge these established norms.
- Community Impact: The increased building size may affect neighboring properties' views, sunlight access, and overall neighborhood character.

4. Environmental Impact:

The extensive tree removal, topographical changes, and increased impervious surface raise serious concerns about natural drainage patterns, soil stability, and sunlight distribution to neighboring properties.

5. Need for Comprehensive Inspection:

Given these issues, we urge the Planning Commission to mandate a thorough, independent inspection of this property. This should include structural integrity assessments and environmental impact evaluations, with results made publicly available.

6. Transparency and Accountability:

We seek clear, detailed explanations of how these violations occurred and how the city plans to address them. The community needs assurance that such breaches will not be repeated and that our concerns are taken seriously.

As the Great Neighborhoods Program moves forward, it's crucial that it addresses these systemic issues to truly preserve and enhance Newport's unique character. We need stronger enforcement mechanisms, better interdepartmental coordination, and more transparent processes for community input throughout the development process. Thank you for your attention to these critical matters. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the Great Neighborhoods Program fulfills its promise of strengthening our community while preserving what makes Newport special. Sincerely,
Fay Hou

From: bzimm@bubbieskids.com
To: [Brod, Brooke](#)
Subject: Newport Hills Shopping Center
Date: Wednesday, November 6, 2024 2:51:24 PM
Importance: High

You don't often get email from bzimm@bubbieskids.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Mr. or Ms. Brod,

I wonder how much time any of the planning committee has spent in our “village on the hill.” If anyone had, they would know that putting up a multi-use building on the shopping center property would be a disaster.

Number one is traffic. Our roads are narrow with no room to widen them in our various neighborhoods. We are a walkable “village” with access to a park/sports field, a dog park, and a trailhead. Has anyone driven on 119th when it’s time for drop off or pick up at Newport Heights Elementary? 119th is a parking lot!! Add to that numerous kids who must walk by the shopping center to get to their homes in the south end of the Bellevue School District off of 60th Street. It would be dangerous to add more traffic going in and out of the shopping center because the view would possibly be blocked by a building. Kids don’t always pay attention.

We have limited bus service on the hill, mainly the hourly 240. It’s approximately a one-mile hike to get to the Newport Hills Park and Ride on 405. In bad weather it’s nasty.

Has anyone been up here when there’s a big game on to see that Mustard Seed Grill and Bar along with Resonate Pizza and Brewery pack the parking lot? Nothing like good food and a big screen! None of the side streets are conducive to street parking because they are too narrow. Overflow parking often ends up in the Asian market parking lot across the street as well as our small Park and Ride lot.

Has anyone been up here when there’s a major swim meet at the Newport Hills Swim and Tennis Club? Again, the parking lot is packed. People patronize the eating establishments.

We also have a yearly vintage car show. Again, the parking lot is full. Where will patrons be able to park safely if you build in the parking lot? Side streets are not well lit.

We have five places to eat on our hill. I worry that such a building would negatively impact our restaurants. It would limit parking for the restaurants.

We have an Asian grocery store. This appears to be enough for us on the hill.

If Bellevue is intent on building something up here, I suggest that you contact the Bellevue School District about the unused Ringdal Middle School property. It's been vacant for several years. Buy it, tear down the school, and build something small. With declining enrollment, the building is just sitting there.

I really do not want our "village" changed.

Rebecca Zimmerman
6242 – 122nd Ave. SE
Bellevue, WA 98006

Resident since 1976.

From: [Bob Moon](#)
To: [Nesse, Katherine](#); [Brod, Brooke](#)
Cc: [Bob Moon](#)
Subject: Engagingbellevue.com / survey / an idea to consider.
Date: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:56:59 PM

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Newport Hills 10-years from now. What do we want it to be?

It's a great question now as it takes a long time for redevelopment. The old shopping center has declined for a very long time; it will continue to decline for the next 10+ years if the NIMBYs win with their rants of - DO NOTHING!

Over the last several years the soccer-baseball park has been renovated and is often in use. Also, the new dog park is completed and also is used a lot. BOTH ARE GREAT.

HOWEVER, the shopping center has declined and is now simply a large parking lot with very few retail shops. It does not serve the owner nor the community.

Maybe it could become a community center for the locals; one that all of Newport Hills could walk to.

The closest alternative is the South Bellevue Community Center beyond the Newport Way Library. It's hidden up the hill on the south side, almost invisible. Plus, you have to drive there due to difficult access for walkers. The next closest is the Renton Community Center by I-405 & highway 169. Again, gotta drive there.

We have lived in this area since 1975. The once very local shopping center began its decline decades ago when the Red Apple and the Albertsons closed up. One gas station has also gone & the bank [now a decrepit skeleton] too. The S-Mart gets some traffic, but not much. Almost all the retail has gone to Coal Creek which is where we shop and eat. Even the schools come and go; is the old Ringdal in use? And the Newport Heights facility; Is it in use? One or both are held as transfer locations for reconstruction of other schools. BLIGHT IS IN-ROUTE TO NEWPORT HILLS if renovation is ignored.

Bob Moon

Nesse, Katherine

From: Brod, Brooke
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 2:40 PM
To: Bob Moon; Nesse, Katherine
Subject: RE: Engagingbellevue.com / survey / an idea to consider.

Hello Bob,

Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts. We really appreciate the perspective you bring.

We hope that we will see you in-person at our Ideas Fair next week.

Date: **Wednesday, November 20**

Time: **5:30 – 8 p.m.**

Location: **Newport Swim & Tennis Club - 5464 119th Ave SE**

The event is a drop-in event where people can show up at any time and stay for as long as they'd like. It will also be family friendly and kids and adults are encouraged to come.

If you have any further questions, please let us know.



Brooke Brod (*she/her*)

bbrod@bellevuewa.gov | (425) 452-6930 | www.engagingbellevue.com

"It's better to know some of the questions, than all of the answers"

- James Thurber

From: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:57 PM
To: Nesse, Katherine <KNesse@bellevuewa.gov>; Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov>
Cc: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>
Subject: Engagingbellevue.com / survey / an idea to consider.

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Bob Moon

Nesse, Katherine

From: Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 1, 2024 9:04 PM
To: Brod, Brooke; Nesse, Katherine
Cc: Johnson, Thara; King, Emil A.
Subject: Newport Ideas Fair: staff and... developers??? + Complete Streets Bellevue

[EXTERNAL EMAIL Notice!] Outside communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Hello Brooke, Kate, Thara, and Emil:

I was preparing an email blast for the Newport Hills Community Club and wanted to include information re: Wednesday's Newport NAP Ideas Fair. I clicked on the [calendar item](#) on the CoB site's home page so I could confirm the details. As I read the event description I saw something concerning.

*"The City of Bellevue is updating the Newport neighborhood plan. Neighborhood area plans inform future growth and change by providing guidance to city staff **and developers** about the kinds of improvements people want to see."*

Does the inclusion of "and developers" mean that representatives of Rainier Northwest will be in attendance at the Ideas Fair and mingling with Newport residents? Perhaps their real estate advisors from Heartland LLC? Or their new attorney Abigail DeWeese? Or their new PR consultant Sarah Langton? Or any other member of the team they've assembled to potentially push through a zoning change during the NAP process?

If yes, I find that extremely inappropriate, as staff has stated repeatedly the NAP process is supposed to be resident-driven. This is an opportunity for residents to speak with Community Development staff, as well as each other, re: what we envision for OUR neighborhood. Reps from Rainier Northwest should not be there trying to drive the conversation.

As you know, I have a copy of the email Kate sent to CD staff on August 13 discussing the conversation she had with Abigail DeWeese on August 12. We know Rainier is considering several different options for the property, including filing a CPA or rezone by December 15, utilizing FAR Phase 2, or utilizing the new LUCA for repurposing MFH and commercial buildings- that was all explicitly stated in Kate's email. Each time I've asked staff (online kick-off, NHCC meeting October 23) whether they're aware of potential plans to upzone the shopping center or change it in some way the answer has been "no"... even though you know I have the email showing that, YES, you are aware! There's no reason why Community Development staff has to hide that information for Rainier Northwest as it's a matter of public record open to anyone who cares to look for it as I did. "No"= a lie. That's unethical behavior.

I hope you will protect the NAP process and tell Rainier Northwest's reps this is not an event for them to convince people that an upzone is the only way to make the shopping center look better. They need to stay away and let the people who live in this neighborhood have an evening to talk amongst themselves without pressure from commercial property owners' reps.

Speaking of non-residents attempting to drive the conversation about Newport...

Christopher Randels of Complete Streets Bellevue (who lives in Tacoma) is promoting the Newport Ideas Fair and Newport NAP survey via both his personal and CSB X accounts. He also promoted them in the [November 19 e-newsletter](#) CSB sent to subscribers. CSB was one of the special interest groups that actively encouraged people residing outside of Bellevue to give input on Bellevue's 2044 Comprehensive Plan. When I pointed that out to Brooke and Thara (as well as to Elizabeth DeRegt in 2022) I was told "Anyone who loves Bellevue can provide comment". Special interest groups (and developers) are who ultimately drove the outcome of the newly-adopted Comp Plan; residents had very little to do with the final product.

Neighborhood Area Plans are supposed to represent the people living in that neighborhood, not the desires of urbanist activists in Redmond, Seattle, Tacoma, etc. So, the question I have is: what are you going to do about it? How are you going to identify non-Newport input? It's easy for people to lie on the surveys re: residency. Are you going to separate the input from non-Newport activists and prioritize the input from Newport residents? Michelle Hilhorst specifically asked these same questions of Brooke and Teun Deuling on August 6 and we were told there were no guarantees. That is NOT reassuring. Is this really a Neighborhood Area Plan update? Or just going through the motions of a NAP while non-Newport Hills activists and Rainier Northwest do what they want to the Newport neighborhood?

I hope one of you will address the issues I brought forward. I really don't feel comfortable encouraging people to attend the Ideas Fair until I know it's going to be a "fair" opportunity for Newport residents to give input without outside influence.

Thank you,

Heidi Dean

CC: copy sent separately to NHCC board

Nesse, Katherine

From: Brod, Brooke
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 12:50 PM
To: Bob Moon
Cc: Nesse, Katherine
Subject: RE: Engagingbellevue.com / survey / an idea to consider.

Hi Bob,

I would say that there is a lot of interest in seeing something happen at the shopping center, but there is a wide variety of opinions about what people want to see in terms of mix of housing, retail, and density. There is no clear consensus.



Brooke Brod (she/her)

bbrod@bellevuewa.gov | (425) 452-6930 | www.engagingbellevue.com

"It's better to know some of the questions, than all of the answers"

- James Thurber

From: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 12:42 PM
To: Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov>
Cc: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>; Nesse, Katherine <KNesse@bellevuewa.gov>
Subject: Re: Engagingbellevue.com / survey / an idea to consider.

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What was to reception from the neighbors; encouraging to change or something else?
Bob

On Dec 6, 2024, at 12:21 PM, Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov> wrote:

Hello Bob,

We did reschedule the meeting and gathered this past Wednesday, December 4th. I'm so sorry you missed the notifications.

That was definitely not the last meeting we will have during this process. We expect to plan additional opportunities for feedback in 2025. We have heard quite a bit of feedback on opportunities to repurpose the vacant school sites and opinions on the future of the shopping center.

We did mail out a survey to every single household and hopefully you got that and will return it. If for some reason it got misplaced you can take the survey online

at <https://www.engagingbellevue.com/great-neighborhoods-newport/surveys/newport-future-vision-questionnaire>.

Kate and I have also been working with various residents to host smaller house meetings. So if you and some of your neighbors would like to schedule a get together in someone's living room or at a space in the community, let me know. We'd be happy to work with you to schedule something.

Regards,

<image001.png> **Brooke Brod** (*she/her*)
bbrod@bellevuewa.gov | (425) 452-6930
www.engagingbellevue.com

"It's better to know some of the questions, than all of the answers"
- James Thurber

From: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2024 11:46 AM
To: Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov>
Cc: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>; Nesse, Katherine <KNesse@bellevuewa.gov>
Subject: Re: [Engagingbellevue.com](http://www.engagingbellevue.com) / survey / an idea to consider.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from poppmoon@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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After the power interruption, are there any plans to reschedule this neighborhood meet and greet?

Bob Moon

On Nov 12, 2024, at 2:40 PM, Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov> wrote:

Hello Bob,

Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts. We really appreciate the perspective you bring.

We hope that we will see you in-person at our Ideas Fair next week.

Date: **Wednesday, November 20**

Time: **5:30 – 8 p.m.**

Location: **Newport Swim & Tennis Club - 5464 119th Ave SE**

The event is a drop-in event where people can show up at any time and stay for as long as they'd like. It will also be family friendly and kids and adults are encouraged to come.

If you have any further questions, please let us know.

<image001.png> | **Brooke Brod** (*she/her*)
bbrod@bellevuewa.gov | (425) 452-6930
www.engagingbellevue.com

"It's better to know some of the questions, than all of the answers"

- James Thurber

From: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:57 PM
To: Nesse, Katherine <KNesse@bellevuewa.gov>; Brod, Brooke <BBrod@bellevuewa.gov>
Cc: Bob Moon <poppmoon@gmail.com>
Subject: Engagingbellevue.com / survey / an idea to consider.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from poppmoon@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Newport Hills 10-years from now. What do we want it to be?

It's a great question now as it takes a long time for redevelopment. The old shopping center has declined for a very long time; it will continue to decline for the next 10+ years if the NIMBYs win with their rants of - DO NOTHING!

Over the last several years the soccer-baseball park has been renovated and is often in use. Also, the new dog park is completed and also is used a lot. BOTH ARE GREAT.

HOWEVER, the shopping center has declined and is now simply a large parking lot with very few retail shops. It does not serve the owner nor the community.

Maybe it could become a community center for the locals; one that all of Newport Hills could walk to.

The closest alternative is the South Bellevue Community Center beyond the Newport Way Library. It's hidden up the hill on the south side, almost invisible. Plus, you have to drive there due to difficult access for walkers. The next closest is the Renton Community Center by I-405 & highway 169. Again, gotta drive there.

We have lived in this area since 1975. The once very local shopping center began its decline decades ago when the Red Apple and the Albertsons closed up. One gas station has also gone & the bank [now a decrepit skeleton] too. The S-Mart gets some traffic, but not much. Almost all the retail has gone to Coal Creek which is where we shop and eat. Even the schools come and go; is the old Ringdal in use? And the Newport Heights facility; Is it in use? One or both are held as transfer locations for reconstruction of other schools. BLIGHT IS IN-ROUTE TO NEWPORT HILLS if renovation is ignored.

Bob Moon