

ENA General Membership Meeting 1-31-13

1. Welcome
2. Introduce Board

Current Board Members:

- President: Wendy Jones
- Vice President: Brooks Beaupain
- Treasurer: Suzanne Dove
- Secretary: Amy Sirr
- Sabrina Barton
- Bill Cadwallader
- Alfred Cecil
- Stephanie Ferguson
- Aaron Laing
- Ellen Stone

Departing Board Members:

- Katherine Christopherson
- Brian Hartman
- Jack Castro

Thanks to Stephanie Ferguson, Sabrina Barton, Jack Castro and others for starting ENA in 2006. Thanks to Serena Ho for donating time to update the website!

3. What is the Association?
 - ENA started in 2006 to deal with issues pertaining to the neighborhood.
 - Individuals with specific interests are encouraged to work with the Board to form committees and share information with neighborhood
 - ENA is used as neighborhood resource for gathering information and communicating with neighbors and city.
 - About 950 households in the Enatai neighborhood. Approximately 200 households are current members of ENA, but we would like to see the membership grow. Please share website (www.enataineighborhood.com) with friends/neighbors to help us grow.
 - We want to know members' interests. Members can share comments and ideas with board via website (www.enataineighborhood.com) or directly via email.
 - Board is currently considering a summer social event to be held at a neighborhood park.
4. Topics of interest
 - Current interests: Crime/safety, street lighting, sidewalks, cell towers, light rail
 - Suggestions from audience?
 - i. Sustainable Enatai: gather and share info on solar panels, rain gardens, etc.

- ii. Disaster preparedness: work with city and share information with neighborhood.
 - iii. Tolling on I-90 and 520 and the effects on neighborhood.
 - iv. Increases in crime (e.g. car break-ins).
 - Response from Wendy: Great ideas. If there are other suggestions you can go to the website comment box. We will need people to volunteer to form committees to pursue these ideas. Please contact us if interested in forming a committee!
5. Guest Speaker Introduction
- City of Bellevue Councilmember Kevin Wallace.
 - Here to discuss current information on East Link, and to answer questions regarding the impacts of light rail on our neighborhood and the proposed Cost Savings measures to widen Bellevue Way.
6. Councilmember Wallace
- History of his involvement with light rail project: Life-long Bellevue resident and local businessman. When light rail was approved by the city, he felt that Sound Transit (ST) was proposing an impactful route, and he wanted to improve the route and decrease impacts. Worked with Enatai and Surrey Downs and others and decided to run for council 3 years ago.
 - ST determines light rail line location, not the city. The city cannot force ST to choose a particular route.
 - After a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the city and ST was signed in late 2011, he has spent past 14 months trying to work with ST and mitigate impacts.
 - Per the MOU, the city must contribute \$160 million to the project in order to ensure downtown tunnel. \$100 million covered by land use agreements etc. but still need to reduce direct cost by \$60 million.
 - Currently there is a plan to build the tunnel under NE 4th Street, which could have negative impacts on usability of this major arterial, and he is unsure of impacts on traffic and economy.
 - Councilmember Wallace would like to move the downtown tunnel location to 6th street next to private property, adjacent to City Hall. Shorter duration of construction and no tunneling, which would get us most of the way to the city's \$60 million savings obligation, so we can have more exceptional mitigation along the route.
 - Feels city needs to push ST for more mitigation
 - Cost savings measure to widen Bellevue Way:
 - i. Original design had trench in front of Winters House. ST has come up with the cost savings idea to bring it out of trench and up to surface.
 - ii. Will cut into hillside on Enatai side of Bellevue Way 47 feet. He believes ST's interest is to move it out of trench due to design issues such as water table.
 - iii. Councilmember Wallace's view: sees no way to mitigate impacts if taken out of trench. Would result in a \$5 million savings out of a \$4 billion project: not persuaded this is enough of savings to offset impacts.
 - ST has final say as long as they can demonstrate some level of mitigation
 - ***Neighborhood needs to continue advocating for keeping it in trench. Contact state and local representatives as well as local.***

- **Helpful to have citizens come and communicate views at City Hall during weekly city council meetings.**
- South Bellevue Park and Ride (SBPR) expanding to 1500 cars. Significant impact to traffic. Looking at HOV lane to reduce impact.
- He believes we should at least make expansion of Bellevue Way possible in future, but that also necessitates leaving light rail in trench to minimize the extent Bellevue Way would need to be widened.
- There will be no decision on HOV lane until more info is provided
- HOV lane from SBPR to I-90 has already been decided. The issue is whether widening for an HOV lane will go further north from the SBPR toward the “Y” intersection of Bellevue Way and 112th Ave SE.
- HOV lane would be one lane in middle of Bellevue Way.
- **Question:** What’s the rationale for adding HOV lane when most people leaving park and ride are single passenger drivers? **Response:** Fair point. We are still studying this and need more information.
- **Question:** Last light rail route design seemed to place sidewalk between light rail and street. Seemed dangerous. Has that changed? **Response:** Expecting more information this month when ST will have design further advanced.
- **Question:** Have they completed testing to see if they can get it over a flexible bridge [I-90] or are they building in Bellevue before they are certain it will work? **Response:** Jury is still out. **Follow up question:** Is city holding ST to that? **Response:** We haven’t had that come up, but can put it on discussion list. There is a need to move forward since a lot of constituents have been waiting a long time for decisions on whether ST is going to take their property. ST needs to provide some decision for property owners in timely manner.
- **Question:** Concerns about noise levels and timing of construction? **Response:** We have had to push to keep Bellevue’s noise code in play. Believes that it will apply. Current status of land use codes is that Bellevue’s noise codes will apply. Expects this will hold, but suspects ST will come back in future asking for variance of noise ordinance as has been done in Seattle.
- **Question:** What rationale was used for not using the railroad for route? **Answer:** I was a big advocate for B7 and A2 station. Main reason ST has given is they wanted station at SBPR location and couldn’t turn train around to get back onto B7 route.
- **Question:** Currently 500 spots at SBPR and will be expanded to 1500. People will be parking there to use it to avoid highway tolls. Will it get bigger? **Response:** No plans on table right now. We do need to be studying impacts on arterials and impacts to neighborhoods.
- **Question:** ST says they’d be happy to stay with the old plan but city is pushing for the widening of Bellevue Way. I live above Bellevue Way, with a direct view of Bellevue Way and have noticed backups on Bellevue Way are entirely dependent on I-90 backups. I believe this widening for an HOV lane will just widen the parking lot [traffic congestion] but won’t fix problem. **Response:** I’m surprised about ST not wanting to move out of

trench. I would like to keep it in trench. Still need info on HOV lane, but do want to maintain ability to widen Bellevue Way in future.

- **Question:** There will be lots of commuters from east of Bellevue who will want to park at SBPR since it's the only place to access light rail. **Response:** Yes, need to look at impacts.
- **Comment** from audience member: Completion of carpool lanes in middle of I-90 on Mercer Island so there will be some additional capacity that may help. Concerned that HOV lane on Bellevue Way should be general purpose traffic lane to help lessen neighborhood cut through traffic.
- **Comment from Bernard van de Kamp (City of Bellevue Regional Project Manager)** City has been doing traffic modeling work of HOV lane, but we have limited the modeling to looking at extra lane only as an HOV lane. 10 years ago the City said "no" to expansion of Bellevue Way unless it was an HOV lane. Staff is trying to be consistent with this comprehensive plan.
- **Comment from audience member:** City Plan up for review. I was on committee for traffic calming measures for 104th and 108th and think best mitigation will be extra general purpose lane on Bellevue Way up past 108th.
- **Comment from other audience member:** Thinks general purpose lane won't help with cut through traffic since people will make decision to cut through neighborhood regardless, to avoid traffic ahead on Bellevue Way.
- **Councilmember Wallace response:** Believe light rail should be kept in trench. We should continue to study option for HOV lane and not preclude it in future by how the light rail is designed.
- **Question:** Is there a way to expand ST scope to other areas of Eastside so people can get on light rail early to avoid mess at SBPR. **Response (Councilmember Wallace and Bernard van de Kamp):** The transit corridor starts in Sammamish, Issaquah and Eastgate, and we will need to study how to change from a system that has been all buses. ST has proposed a noise wall on elevated portions. Needs further discussion. Need to take advantage of opportunities for blocking line of sight. In April a final decision on alignment will be made and design will be at 30% so will have better idea of noise impacts then. April 3rd the City will have an Open House on the environmental impacts of the two options. In spring we will get a look at SBPR station design and what it will look like. It will get more and more detailed as we move along.
- **Question:** Mercer Island has same problem (other regional area drivers using park and rides). One solution may be zone parking. Free parking for people within certain zone and paid parking for people from other zones. **Response:** Kevin hasn't heard this discussed.
- **Comment from audience:** May need zone parking in neighborhood as well.
- **Question:** Timing on mitigation decisions? **Response from Bernard van de Kamp:** Will be at 60% design at end of 2013, maybe sooner.
- **Question:** How is Exceptional mitigation defined? **Response from Bernard van de Kamp:** No concrete definition. **City would like to hear from folks on ideas for mitigation.** **Response from Councilmember Wallace:** Don't have all answers on mitigation yet. Discussing concept of trying to add citizen advisory committee in

addition to city planner and they could speak to whether mitigation is sufficient. Trying to put process in place to address future concerns.

- **Question:** If we have ideas for mitigation where should we submit them? **Response:** Mitigation involves either sound walls or trees as buffers (swaths of trees). Other ideas can be communicated to city, but these are the primary types.
- **Question:** Will there be Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in Enatai as a result of SBPR location, as shown in ST and Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) plans? **Response:** There is no TOD planned for Enatai. **Question:** Residents have voiced concerns about ST and PSRC's stated goals for high-density development around all light rails stations, including SBPR/Enatai. **Response:** Councilmember Wallace is against that. Will not up-zone and knows of no council members or city staff who support this. Doesn't believe SBPR is really on TOD supporters' radar. **Comment:** Appreciation of City's willingness to protect us, but it is also a state issue. There are people trying to pass legislation at the state level to require city to increase density around all park and rides. **Response:** This has not been able to pass in the state legislature. We need to keep an eye on it, but hasn't heard of it gaining any traction. If it did, city would need to make sure SBPR was exempt.
- **Question:** Do we know how many homes will need to be taken? **Response (Councilmember Wallace and Bernard van de Kamp):** ST would take 3 homes in Enatai (the 3 on Bellevue Way south of the "Y" intersection at 112th and Bellevue Way) and 2 dozen partial acquisitions if HOV lane is added. With trench there is 1 (caretaker's house by fruit stand). Surrey Downs will be more heavily impacted. ST will take an entire strip of townhomes/condos. Believes ST needs to move forward with acquisitions so people aren't kept waiting for long time.
- **Question:** ST wants to pull up a core 40-60 ft. deep on my property. Am I required to let them? **Response:** His understanding is that ST has no legal right to come on property without permissions or first condemning (acquiring) property or paying for damages. **Follow up question:** Will you have to accept their offer for condemnation? **Response:** May want to contact personal lawyer for answers, but believes you can challenge their price if you think it unfair.
- **Question:** Can they guarantee no cut through traffic in Enatai? **Response:** This is another reason to look at traffic studies.
- **Question:** What standard will ST be held to in terms of noise during construction and then operation? **Response:** We are trying to hold them to city's current standard. More info needed. Operation of the line, once complete, will be between hours of 5 am to 1 am. The noise level that is permissible after 10 pm is much lower than in daytime. Hopeful we will benefit from experiences from current phases (Central Link) and learn how to minimize noise impacts.
- **Question:** Can we get ST to look at tunnel option for Bellevue Way section? **Response:** MOU option had light rail in trench and MOU was basic agreement between city and ST so unless ST decides current option is not workable then not a whole lot can be done.
- **Question:** Is there any consensus on trench within council? **Response:** No. This is area that is most in flux and is in need of advocacy.

7. Concluding Remarks

- Thanks to Councilmember Wallace.
- Thanks to all who participated in recent online survey. We've posted results on the website (www.enataineighborhood.com) and nearly 90% of respondents prefer to keep the light rail in the trench as opposed to widening Bellevue Way.