



Neighborhood Meeting with City Council

Moss Bay Neighborhood

Submitted Questions/Comments (16)

Meeting Date: March 23, 2009



Annexation:

1. What is the status of annexation in Kirkland?

Response: The City Council held a study session on March 3rd to receive an update on the annexation financial model based on the adopted 2009-2010 Budget. The actions taken to balance this year's budget affected the annexation financial picture positively; however, a number of contingencies (both positive and negative) could still impact both the existing City and the annexation area budget. Council provided direction to staff regarding how to factor in the contingencies and asked staff to report back with another financial scenario at a special study session which has not yet been scheduled. To view the most recent annexation report, go to www.ci.kirkland.wa.us and search Council Packet 030309 and link to item 3a. Or go to http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/Assets/City+Council/Council+Packets/030309/3a_StudySession.pdf

Burlington Northern Rail Road:

2. Turn the railroad line into a walking/biking trail. NO LIGHT RAIL!

Response: The BNSF railroad, the Port of Seattle and King County have a deal pending to transfer the right-of-way to the Port of Seattle, with a trail easement for the County. The Port and Railroad have until March 31 to complete the deal, but that will likely be extended. The Port's position is that after the rail line comes into public ownership, a process to discuss how the line will be used will take place. All the parties support a walking and cycling trail. Whether or not a private rail system of some kind would be allowed is still a question. There are no plans by public agencies to fund rail on the right-of-way. More information is on the City's website at http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/depart/Public_Works/Transportation_Streets/Regional_Transportation_Planning/Eastside_Rail_Corridor.htm.

Downtown Interim Ordinance:

3. Explain the status of the downtown interim ordinance and how it will impact the future development of downtown.

Response: On March 3, 2009, the City Council adopted new zoning regulations for the downtown and rescinded an interim ordinance that had been in effect for several months. The interim ordinance affected only the CBD 1 and CBD 2 zones located in the area south of Central Way and west of 3rd Ave. The interim ordinance was put into place after two controversial development proposals were appealed to the City Council. After deciding on those developments, the Council concluded that the zoning regulations should be updated to provide clearer guidance for future development. An interim regulation was put in place to limit development while the new regulations were developed.

The new regulations are intended to more clearly reflect policies in the City's Comprehensive Plan that has been in effect for several years. The regulations clarify permitted building heights, setbacks, step-backs, ground floor uses, sidewalk widths and design guidelines.

Downtown vandalism and noise:

4. Downtown noise and vandalism at 2 a.m. when bars close.

Noise Response:

The police department responds to noise complaints on a very frequent basis and when we can prove that a crime has occurred and it is reasonable to do so, we issue citations. If we can't issue a citation, we try to influence a change in behavior through education and warnings. The majority of our noise citations are for excessive noise coming from vehicle audio systems and motorcycle muffler noise (from aftermarket mufflers).

Vandalism Response:

The number of taverns in the downtown area generates significant movement from the establishments at 2 am. Often this leads to disturbances, DUI's, and other priority calls for service which may limit the officers' ability to observe acts of vandalism in progress. However the police department does not tolerate such acts and those persons observed committing vandalism are arrested. The types of vandalism we experience from the tavern crowd range from broken flower arrangements to broken windows.

Economic Development and Totem Lake:

5. Initiatives that will attract good retail downtown (and save the existing shops).

Response: Probably the best compendium of tools for downtown revitalization and retail attraction and retention is in the back of the E.D. Hovee & Company Downtown Kirkland Retail Strategy that was recently completed in conjunction with the Downtown Action Committee. Copies of this will be provided at the Moss Bay neighborhood at the March 23rd meeting. Or go to: http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/depart/Planning/Code_Updates/DSP.htm .What is more interesting are initiatives that we are actually working on and should have some bearing on retail retention and recruitment once the economy picks up:

Events:

- Events such as Kirkland Uncorked, Jazz Nites, Fourth of July and other seasonal festivals bring more people to downtown. The KDA is reinventing itself to be able to provide more of these kinds of activities and enliven the downtown

Communications:

- Customer and visitor information including maps, the monthly Kirkland Event Guide (KEG), packages for people interested in vacationing here etc. are disseminated near and far through a variety of media by the Tourism Program and the Kirkland Downtown Association
- Frequent meetings with commercial brokers that work the Kirkland market are used to both disseminate current demographic and development information and also hear from them what they face in retail leasing
- New This is Kirkland packet with video released in 2008 has been provided to brokers and business interests engaged in retail recruitment.
- We are in the process of rebranding the Tourism program including logo, other images, tag line etc. for updating of electronic and paper materials used to market Kirkland as a tourist destination
- Currently Kirkland is doing a piece on local art and culture including our institutions and also individual artists to promote Kirkland as a creative place and also to promote the Mother's Day studio tour. We are looking at other programming to promote downtown and environs.

Retention:

- Key to attracting business is the ability to retain the businesses you have. Kirkland First, a website listing local businesses, will be launched in May/June with an emphasis on shopping locally to keep money circulating in this community, to maintain a stable tax base, and to decrease your carbon footprint. It will provide exposure for small businesses that do not have websites and opportunities for business to business connections such as co-op marketing.
- Weathering the Storm, a program sponsored by the City, Community Capital Development and hosted by the Heathman on the morning of March 31 will provide information on loans available, Small Business Administration economic stimulus funds for small business, and other tools presented by local merchants for surviving the economic downturn. Repeat 'survival kit' workshops will go forward depending on the level of interest.

6. Status of Totem Lake redevelopment.

Response: The Totem Lake Mall redevelopment project is on hold due to the poor economy. It may be several years before the project proceeds.

7. Upgrade and modernize downtown Kirkland. It's looking pretty worn out.

Response: *Several public capital improvement projects will be constructed in the downtown in coming years which will upgrade the look of downtown. There will be improved library services, transit operations, sewer capacity, and pedestrian and vehicle mobility:*

Kirkland Library Expansion:

What: *\$3.9 million, 4,000 square foot expansion to include more materials, computers, wireless access, space for children and teens, and three meeting rooms.*

When: *Construction started in February 2009 and is expected to last one year.*

Kirkland Avenue/3rd Street Traffic Signal:

What: *Traffic signal at intersection of 3rd Street and Kirkland Avenue to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety. Funded by Sound Transit.*

When: *Construction is scheduled to start March and to be completed by end of April 2009.*

Transit Center Redevelopment:

What: *Sound Transit is building a \$13.3 million transit center including widened sidewalks, transit shelters, landscaping, enhanced pedestrian crossings, and an entirely new roadway.*

When: *Construction is scheduled to start in the fall 2009 and to be completed by December 2010.*

Kirkland Pump Station & Sewer Upgrade:

What: *The King County Wastewater Treatment Division is upgrading its 40-year old pump station to increase capacity, ensure safe and reliable operations, and to meet current seismic, noise, and odor control standards. The upgrade also includes the construction of a new pipeline along Kirkland Avenue to the railroad right-of-way near 8th Street.*

When: *Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2010 and to be completed in late 2012.*

Kirkland Wednesday Market new location:

What: *The Market has moved to Marina Park, 25 Lakeshore Plaza.*

When: *the Market will open for the season at its new location May 6. Market hours will be 2-7pm. Market closes October 14.*

Park Lane Design Concept:

What: *The City of Kirkland has been working with a consultant and stakeholders to create a community vision of the future of Park Lane...*

When: *The preferred design concept is being refined and will be completed and presented to City Council this spring. To view and comment on the design concept go to: www.ci.kirkland.wa.us and search Park Lane.*

*We encourage you to sign up for the **Downtown Is On the Move** list Serve and receive periodic updates. Go to <http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/onthemove>.*

8. I would like to ask the City and the Moss Bay Neighborhood Association to explore and discuss community support of energy efficient home insulation and programs that will encourage and support solar power within the City. The attached article from the NY Times features information about what other communities are doing.

Response: *The article brings up the point that maybe municipal support of energy efficiency might be good way to help citizens and businesses reduce their energy demand and lower their carbon footprint. Supporting solar water heating may be more efficient and cost effective to implement in our region -versus solar panels. Thank you for forwarding the article, it has now been circulated around to Kirkland's Green Team (staff committee) who will be convening a meeting to discuss further. For more information or follow up please contact David Barnes of the Kirkland Planning Department at (425) 587-3250 or DBarnes@ci.kirkland.wa.us*

Leaf Blowers:

9. I was wondering if there was a noise ordinance in place for leaf blowers in the Moss Bay Neighborhood. I live and work (at home) in downtown Kirkland and am surrounded by apartments and condos. It seems every day in the summer one of the surrounding buildings is having yard maintenance done that requires a leaf blower. The noise level is intolerable. I have to shut all my windows (double pane) and can still hear the leaf blowers loud and clear. They usually are blowing leaves around for over an hour at a time. The reason I am sending this today (Feb 26, 2009) is they are at an apartment down below my apartment with their noisy leaf blowers trying to blow wet snow. We have received about 2 inches of snow today. Are they just plain stupid or what? I feel there should be some kind of a muffler on these leaf blowers. Is anyone else experiencing this annoying problem?

Response: *Under the Kirkland Zoning Code, Noise Regulations Noise – Public Nuisance: The operation of power equipment, including but not limited to leaf blowers, shall be deemed a public nuisance if such operation occurs during the following hours: before 8:00 a.m. or after 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, or before 9:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, or the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Additionally, if the behavior doesn't constitute a violation of law, but is clearly unreasonably annoying as described above, the police will still send an available officer to try to impact the behavior.*

Pace Chemical Site:

10. Poor condition of the Pace Property at the eastern end of 7th Ave S. (It is ringed by a decrepit metal fence and there is an assortment of rusting equipment, abandoned vehicles, pipe, tarps etc on the property.) Google's new campus faces the Pace site and will not reflect well on Kirkland.

Response: *The City has been working with federal and state agencies on the groundwater cleanup at this site. For additional clean up related to vehicles and debris a complaint needs to be filed before the City investigates code compliance issues. Please call the City's Planning Department to file a formal complaint about possible violations at this location 425-587-3225.*

Parking, Pedestrian Safety, and Third Street improvements:

11. Transportation and pedestrian safety.

Response: *See answer to question #7 above.*

12. Lack of parking downtown.

Response: *There are two obstacles to constructing more parking downtown. One is finding a site and the other is funding. The Parking Advisory Board is working on both of these issues. Rather than trying to site a parking garage, it seems more feasible to partner with a developer and pay them to build extra parking that the public can use. Funding for these stalls will come from some mix of three sources: 1) revenue from more pay parking, 2) assessments to nearby property owners, and 3) City tax dollars.*

13. Is it possible to put sidewalks all the way down the streets on all of the side streets near downtown to make walking safer?

Response: *New sidewalks are built through the Capital Improvement Program. When a new CIP plan is put together, projects are ranked and funded. The new active transportation plan has a ranking system that combines several factors to evaluate projects. Locations that are on major streets, near bus routes, parks, commercial areas and schools get the highest ranking. School walk routes are also a high priority. The next new CIP process will take place in 2012.*

14. If the buses are being moved up to Sixth St for a year, and Park Place redevelopment begins, what is going to be done to facilitate traffic at the intersection of 4th Ave. and Sixth Street? Post Office?? Residents from east of 6th? Also concerned about the location of staging area for the PP project . . . lines of dump trucks, etc.

Response: *It's still too early for us to have many specifics about construction at the Parkplace site, so we don't know all the details. Staff will be reviewing how the project is constructed to minimize disruptions and traffic impacts. Because the site is being completely rebuilt (in two stages) there are good opportunities to keep most of the impacts on site. How trucks access the site and other construction impacts can be planned for and controlled. Staff will continue to work with the developer to make construction as painless as possible for those using the streets surrounding the project.*

15. Safe Neighborhoods. On 105th Ave NE, for example, there is a street light that has been out for over a year. Does no one ever check these things?

Response: *All lights are checked twice a year. All we need is an actual address – it's that simple! We have sent one in (last month) for repair from the 6300 block of 105th Avenue NE. Please call the Neighborhood Traffic Control Program Coordinator at 425-587-3868. To report lights out (be sure to specify the exact address).*

Parks

16. Would the city consider purchasing the empty lot (that has been zoned for commercial use) at the corner of State Street between 2nd and 3rd Ave S and turning it into a park, pea patch, or green space?

Response: *Given the parcel's close proximity to an existing park (Peter Kirk Park) and its high valuation, it is not a property the City is likely to acquire. The City guidelines for park acquisition include: expand an existing park to meet recreation needs, protect a unique natural resource or critical urban wildlife habitat, and/or provide park for a section of our community that does not have a park within a ¼ mile radius.*