



Planning:

1. With widespread housing development going on and house values going up, I have some quality of life questions and some quality of environment issues. Number one noticeable thing happening is the removal of large trees. This effects the overall tree canopy and water retention/rain runoff. It also effects neighborhood aesthetics when neighbors groom their yards/cut down older trees in anticipation of selling their property.

Also property considered in the past as less desirable because it was associated with a seasonal stream or potential slippage area are now being developed because the experts say it is OK- despite historical evidence, strictly motivated by land values. These areas used to also serve as unofficial buffer zones for buffer vegetation and water runoff that didn't make it to the storm sewers -where is that water going to go now? I believe the study of the Juanita Drive area was fairly real estate driven and ignored the potential for a bad slippage as more impermeable surfaces are added.

Response: *It is true that tree and vegetation removal in urban areas has often resulted in the loss of beneficial function provided by trees. To address this, the City has adopted regulations governing the retention or removal of trees during development (Chapter 95 of the Kirkland Zoning Code). The City has measured its tree canopy and has a goal of maintaining its current 40% canopy goal based on recommendations in an American Forests report for the Puget Sound region.*

For single-family residential areas, the Kirkland Zoning Code requires development to have a minimum of tree density "credits" per acre. Larger trees get more credits. Information on trees and the urban forest is on the City's webpage under "Popular Planning Topics" at www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/planning.htm. Streams, buffers and potential landslide hazard areas are mapped and regulated in the Zoning Code (Chapters 85 and 90). The City will be updating these chapters in 2015-2016. Please contact the Planning Department at (425) 587-3225 for more information on the tree standards, streams or landslide hazard areas.

There is the potential to generate more stormwater runoff when trees are removed and impervious surfaces are created. City Surface Water Design regulations require mitigation of the impacts of the additional volume and altered runoff patterns by requiring development projects to take steps to discharge water at the "natural location" which is usually the nearest stream or lake, to investigate whether infiltration or other low impact development techniques are feasible and use those techniques where appropriate/feasible, and by controlling the flow and quality of water leaving the site. In short, yes, more impervious surface leads to greater issues with stormwater runoff, and City code has been developed to allow those impacts with appropriate mitigation. These mitigation measures are not perfect, but the City attempts to strike a balance between allowing development and protecting natural resources. For more information contact the Public Works Department at stormwater@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3800.

2. We fully understand that Climate Change is a national and international issue but also that local measures add up. What local action in Kirkland do you advocate to combat climate change?

Response: *For the past fifteen years, the City has taken an active role in addressing climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In 2000 the City formed an interdepartmental team to coordinate all of the City's actions on managing Kirkland's natural and built environment. In 2005, Kirkland endorsed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement committing to help reduce greenhouse emissions. In 2006 the City Council authorized Kirkland's membership in the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) by Resolution R-4591 to participate in the "Cities for Climate Protection 5" campaign that included conducting a greenhouse gas inventory and establishing reduction targets. These targets were adopted in 2007 and the Council adopted a Climate Protection Action Plan by Resolution R-4760 in 2009.*

In October 2014, the Council authorized the Mayor to sign Resolution (R-5077), Joint Letter of Commitments: Climate Change Actions in King County, which supports the Joint County – City Climate Commitments of the K4C Cities. This letter of commitment aligns Kirkland's greenhouse gas emission reductions with that of King County and signatory cities. The new reduction targets use 2007 as the baseline year, retains the 2050 reduction target of 80% over the year 2007 baseline and adds a midpoint goal in 2030 to bridge the gap between 2020 and 2050.

The City is in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan. One of the chapters is the Environment Element that contains proposed goals and policies on Climate Change. It will be considered at a public hearing before the Planning Commission on June 25, 2015. For more information on this or on the City's climate change efforts contact David Barnes with the Planning Department at dbarnes@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3250.

3. According to Penny Skovold, Kirkland Code Enforcement Officer, there are no Kirkland codes addressing nuisance trees... (residential property).

CITY COUNCIL: PLEASE CREATE A CODE FOR NEGLECTED NUISANCE RESIDENTIAL TREES PERTAINING TO ADJOINING PROPERTY. THIS TO INCLUDE TREE LIMB ENCROACHMENT, AND UNWANTED FRUIT DROPPED FROM THOSE TREES ONTO ANOTHER'S PROPERTY.

Where I live, over the back fence, the neighbor has continued to neglect their apple trees for a number of years. Hundreds of apples drop on our side each season due to unpruned overhanging branches. Even a professional crew with a huge cherry picker we hired, could not prune clear to the top of the branches on our side. And all the branches just keep growing. Plus, the tree trunks are very close to our fence.

The apples are not edible, and not wanted by us. The neighbor states that the apples on our side are a "'windfall' and belong to us." A real estate attorney's office told me that, 1. "windfall" indicates a "benefit and personal gain;" 2. there is no Washington statute that deals with "windfall;" 3. and since the apples are of NO benefit to us, we do have a case to stop the trespass. The dropping of the apples onto our property constitutes a trespass, according to the attorney.

The apples rot and are a smelly sanitation problem, plus they attract ample/heavy rodent, vermin, insect activity, as documented for evidence in photos I've taken. The invasive situation forced on us by the tree owner.

We do not want to go to court against the neighbor at this time. Note: there's even been cases presented to King County Superior Court that went on to the Wash. State Supreme Court re: adjoining landowners - negligence as to premises affecting adjoining land.

Please create a code for nuisance trees.

THIS IS A CONTINUATION OF THE QUESTION I JUST PREVIOUSLY SENT; PLEASE REFER TO THAT. I TIMED-OUT ON THAT SESSION. Thank you for your patience!

RE: Request that the City Council create a code for nuisance adjoining property trees (residential) - overhanging branches, and can include dropped fruit, which is offensive to the senses, obstruction to free use of property, so as to essentially interfere with comfortable enjoyment of life and property, is a nuisance.....require encroachment to be stopped.

Environmental Problem: sanitation and health issues because of hundreds of apples dropped on our side of the fence that rot, and a very active evidence of rodent, vermin, insect activity.

Penny Skovold, Kirkland's Code Enforcement Officer, gave me the info. for Bellevue Mediation Program.

It would be of great benefit to the residents, if Kirkland City Council would create a code that residential property owners are to abide by. Rather than the owners having to retain an attorney because there is no city code.

There must be other Kirkland residents that currently deal with a similar nuisance situation as I have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Response: *While it is understandable that a neighbor's trees may be perceived as a nuisance to an abutting property owner, such a concern is essentially between two parties and doesn't rise to the level of a public nuisance with which the City would normally get involved. The Bellevue Neighborhood Mediation Program (BNMP) is a voluntary program that is available at no charge to Kirkland residents and is an ideal way to seek a remedy for an issue such as this. Many times the mediation staff can resolve issues between neighbors over the phone. To contact the BNMP you can call them at (425) 452-4091 or visit their web page at <http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/mediation.htm>.*

4. The zoning designations on Finn Hill are a patchwork of R4, R6, and R8 that make no sense. The neighborhood itself doesn't have the facilities (schools, roads, services) to support even the predominant R6 designation, let alone the pockets of R8. On top of that, the increasingly dense development juxtaposed against the existing older low density is jarring and just wrong, and, contrary to conventional wisdom, there is NO evidence that this dense development results in more affordable housing. When is the Council going to make a rational reassessment of the zoning and land-use designations on Finn Hill? Most people don't understand the impact of zoning and land-use designations on the long-term livability of their community. It's a complex set of rules whose impacts are years, or decades, in the future. What is the Council doing to ensure that zoning, and land-use decisions are made in the long-term interests of the current and future citizens of Kirkland?

Response: *The zoning for the neighborhood, which admittedly is a patchwork, was "inherited" from King County. At the request of the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance, the City is hiring a consultant to help the neighborhood prepare a new neighborhood plan. One function of the plan will be to guide decisions on zoning. Consequently, the pattern of zoning districts in the neighborhood will be one thing that will be examined as part of the plan preparation. The hiring for the consultant (Green Futures Lab – associated with the University of Washington) is nearly complete so we hope the work on the plan will be able to start very soon. The City, neighborhood association or consultant will provide notification to all neighbors of ways to participate in the neighborhood planning process.*

5. A lot of my neighbors are concerned about development in our neighborhood, since they're happening in the last wooded areas, with many tall trees and ravines. And citizens seem to be the last to know when land sales happen so they're shut out of participation until it's too late.

There seem to be two ways for cities to review new developments. The old way was that developers bought up lots, came up with plans and usually involved neighbors in public meetings to inform them, gauge concerns and hopefully assure agreement among all parties.

A new model of development seems to have taken hold, now, however, where land developers meet with city planners, (as I've heard, actually purchasing meeting time with them), to know how to devise plans that meet city codes. Then they create shovel-ready plans to interest builders, perhaps even before they've even purchased the land itself. Only after the developers get assurance that their plans will pass do they make the purchase. This sounds very efficient for builders, developers, and for city officials, but by the time the public is brought in for comment they have little voice. This seems to be the case with the Toll Brothers' 20-unit development along Juanita Drive.

Which process does the city of Kirkland follow?

A concerned Finn Hill citizen living near Juanita Drive

Response: *The actual process is somewhere between the two you've described. The City doesn't formally require that developers hold a meeting with neighbors, but we strongly encourage it. More often than not, those meetings don't happen. The value of such meetings is probably the greatest for types of development that require more discretionary types of decisions. Building of a single family home requires only a building permit and doesn't involve an opportunity for public comment. Comments are invited on proposals to divide land into multiple lots, but the decision on those requests is administrative and little discretion is allowed. The City is legally required to judge those applications based on adopted rules and regulations. By contrast, certain applications, for example the construction of a new school facility, do require a more discretionary review, but the decisions for these applications still must be based on adopted zoning criteria. Regardless of the type of application, city staff seek to give all applicants a clear picture of the regulations with which they must comply, but we do not assure a developer that his or her application is going to be accepted – until an application is submitted and the plans are formally reviewed for compliance with all regulations.*

Public Works:

6. What is the status of the overall Juanita Drive Project? What projects have been approved and do we have a timetable for work to begin?

Response: *The City received notice in December 2014 of the award of grant funding for the Juanita Quick Wins Project, as identified within the Juanita Drive Corridor Study http://www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/Public_Works/Construction_Projects/Capital_Improvements/Juanita_Drive_Corridor_Study.htm. In addition to other pedestrian and bicycle improvements, there will be three rapid flashing beacons to improve crossing Juanita Drive (at Big Finn Hill Park, 93rd Avenue NE, and NE 143rd Street). Based on the timelines contained within the grant, funding will be available for use in August of this year with completed construction documents by April 2016 and a fully completed project in June of 2017.*

7. Is there anything going to be done about the traffic on 100th Ave? Getting out of our neighborhood and trying to turn left is nearly impossible any time after 3PM. I have waited up to 8 minutes to find a break in traffic to get out. A lot of times we have to turn north (right) and go around the block just to head south. It seems there should be something done with the heavy traffic.

We understand the volume has increased with all the new housing that has been added, but there needs to be a solution for the huge amounts of traffic that is going through this area.

Response: A 100th Street Corridor Study was completed in 2014 that specified a number of recommended improvements for the Corridor. The full study is available at http://www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/Public_Works/Construction_Projects/Capital_Improvements/100thavecorridorstudy.htm. The study describes a variety of traffic and pedestrian/bike safety issues and includes recommendations for improvements. In November 2014, the City received notice of grant funding for turning the vision of the Study into a formal design for future improvements. The funding for that grant is available on June 1 and City staff is currently in the consultant selection phase for the Project. A large component of the 100th Ave NE Corridor project will be the Public Outreach phase so your participation in that upcoming process will help shape the final design for the Corridor. To learn about opportunities to participate, stay in touch with your Neighborhood Association (http://www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/CMO/Neighborhood_Services/Associations/Juanita_Neighborhood_Association.htm) or subscribe to the Neighborhood Services E-Bulletin to receive email notices about upcoming events and meetings (https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAKIRK/subscriber/new?topic_id=WAKIRK_36). Although there is currently no funding for construction of any improvements; however, staff is continuously looking for grant funding opportunities.

8. Why isn't something being done about cars speeding on neighborhood streets? I live on the corner of 88th Place NE and 126th. Parts of my fence have been destroyed by speeding drivers four times. Others in the neighborhood have also had fences damaged. There are no speed limit or slow signs. I have complained to the police department several times with no results.

Response: The City has a Neighborhood Traffic Control Coordinator, Kathy Robertson, who can help you with the speeding issues, gather data to help characterize the extent of the speeding problem and look at applicable options. Kathy can be reached at (425) 587-3870 or krobertson@kirklandwa.gov. She works closely with the Kirkland Police to help resolve these types of concerns. In addition, the best way to contact the police for traffic violations is calling our NORCOM dispatch center at (425) 577-5656, which generates a call to the next available police officer. You may want to consider participating in a City program called Speed Watch, where residents are trained to use a hand-held radar speed gun, record speeds and license plate numbers and send these data to the police. The police then send a letter to the registered owners of the vehicles observed speeding. This has been a very successful program at helping reduce speeds in neighborhoods. If you are interested in Speed Watch, please contact Patrick Tefft, the City's Special Project Coordinator, at PTefft@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3012.

9. I so want my children to be able to walk to school and ride their bikes to visit friends on the east side of Juanita Drive, but it is just too unsafe. Can a pedestrian bridge be built? Thank you very much.

Response: *The City recently conducted a study of Juanita Drive evaluating existing conditions, collecting input from stakeholders and users, and analyzing potential safety improvements for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. The study identified key improvements now included in the City's Capital Improvement Program. The project team (and public stakeholder group) discussed at length the pros and cons of installing a pedestrian bridge over Juanita Drive. However, because of the costs of construction and maintenance, and the estimated low volume use, the costs outweighed the benefits. Experts from around the region advised that pedestrians and bicyclists prefer to cross at grade even when a bridge exists.*

Thanks to a grant from the Federal Highway Safety' Improvement Program (HSIP), there will be over a million dollars of improvements ("quick wins") made along the Corridor in 2016. In addition to other pedestrian and bicycle improvements, there will be three rapid flashing beacons to improve crossing Juanita Drive (at Big Finn Hill Park, 93rd Avenue NE, and NE 143rd Street). For more information regarding the Juanita Drive Corridor Study, contact Rod Steitzer at RSteitzer@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3825.

Parks:

10. The Finn Hill Middle School has been recently reconstructed, with nice, new baseball fields. Given the fact that baseball fields are in high demand, it would be of real value for the City to partner with LWSD to take over maintenance of the fields, since very little maintenance is occurring today. I say this with first-hand knowledge using the fields occasionally for both baseball and softball practice through Kirkland National Little League. I am aware the park levy included funds for such an agreement or partnership, but I am not clear on the process for implementation. What can be done to develop the agreement to maintain the fields and then rent them to area baseball clubs, such as Kirkland National Little League for games and practices? Please be very specific on how and when this could become reality.

Response: *The new baseball fields at the Finn Hill Middle School as you may know were made available for use for the first time this spring. The City of Kirkland Parks and Community Services Department is responsible for scheduling the use of this field. To inquire on field availability contact Nicci Osborn, Parks Coordinator, at nosborn@kirklandwa.gov or (425)587-3342.*

In regards to maintenance of the field, currently this is not a field the City maintains. However, the 2012 Kirkland Park Levy provides funding to partner with the Lake Washington School District (LWSD) on playfield improvements at Kirkland schools. Funding for improvements to the fields is identified in the amount of \$500,000, available beginning in 2017, with an equal amount available in 2018. The project scope would include the maintenance of a field. Finn Hill Middle School is a good candidate site for playfield improvements for baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse and other recreational sports activities. The City will be working with the LWSD in 2016 to finalize partnership project sites and to develop an implementation plan. For more information, please contact Michael Cogle, Deputy Director of Parks & Community Services, at mcogle@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3310.

11. What support is available for neighborhoods wanting to remove ivy, etc.?

Response: *If you are interested in scheduling a volunteer work party to remove English Ivy and other invasive plants in a City park or other City property, or you would like information about how to remove invasive plants on private property please contact Jason Filan, Park Operations Manager, at jfilan@kirklandwa.gov or (425)587-3341.*

12. There is a significant piece of land for sale between Juanita Heights Park and Goat Hill (at the cul-de-sac on 89th Place NE). These are the Wu properties: 9194100760, 9194100790, 9194100890, 9194100840, 9194100940. While expanding the park, acquisition of these properties could also provide a needed connection (by walking trail) between Finn Hill and Goat Hill, taking vehicle traffic off of Goat Hill and Juanita Drive between homes and the schools on Finn Hill that serve them and allowing Finn Hill residents to walk to Juanita Beach Park and elsewhere. Please consider acquiring these properties for their transportation benefits (consistent with the Transportation Master Plan goals) in addition to their parks benefits. The Wu properties are listed together (\$1.75 million) and individually – making a connection more affordable. 5 lots. The link is below. The listings are #s 764457, 771474, 771487, 771492, and 771500. They range between \$349K and \$395K.

http://wpirealestate.com/buying/featured_properties Thanks for your consideration.

Response: *Creating a trail and greenway connections from Juanita Heights Park to Juanita Beach Park is being considered in partnership with the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance (FHNA). The City and FHNA are aware of these properties and have submitted a joint application to the King County Conservation Futures program for a grant to help fund acquisition in this area. For more information please contact Jennifer Schroder, Parks and Community Services Director, at jschroder@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3301.*