



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Rick Mohler and Jamie Stroble, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, September 23, 2021

Approved Meeting Minutes

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- Commissioners Present:** McCaela Daffern, Roque Deherrera, David Goldberg, Matt Hutchins, Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson, Patience Malaba, Rick Mohler, Radhika Nair, Dhyana Quintanar, Julio Sanchez, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble, Kelabe Tewolde
- Commissioners Absent:** Mark Braseth, Alanna Peterson
- Commission Staff:** Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Olivia Baker, Planning Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Commission Coordinator
- Guests:** Rico Quirindongo, Director, Michael Hubner, and Aja Hazelhoff, Office of Planning and Community Development

Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/when-we-meet/minutes-and-agendas>

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Co-Chair Jamie Stroble called the meeting to order at 7:32 am. She made the following land acknowledgement:

'On behalf of the Seattle Planning Commission, we would like to actively recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people who have lived on and stewarded these lands since the beginning of time and continue to do so today. We acknowledge the role that traditional western-centric planning practices have played in harming, displacing, and attempting to erase Native communities. We commit to identifying racist practices and strive to center restorative land stewardship rather than unsustainable and extractive use of the land.'

Co-Chair Stroble asked fellow Commissioners to review the Color Brave Space norms and asked for any additions or amendments to those norms before stating the expectation that everyone practice those norms.

**ACTION: Co-Chair Rick Mohler moved to approve the September 9 meeting minutes.
Commissioner Patience Malaba seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.**

Announcements

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, provided a brief review of the format for the online meeting and noted that due to the online format, public comment must be submitted in writing at least eight hours before the start of the Commission meeting.

Briefing: New Requirements for the Comprehensive Plan Major Update

Michael Hubner, Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)

Mr. Hubner provided an overview of new state and regional requirements for the Comprehensive Plan Major Update. The City's Comprehensive Plan is required by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). A cascading set of policy frameworks including the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Vision 2050 and King County's Countywide Planning Policies further guide development of the Comprehensive Plan. The GMA has both substantive requirements and procedural requirements that the City must meet in preparing its Comprehensive Plan. Substantive requirements include which elements need to be included in the Plan and what those elements include. Procedural requirements include a schedule for updates and specific requirements around public participation. The City's next Plan is due to be completed in 2024.

Mr. Hubner stated that the state legislature considers GMA amendments every year. Two new pieces of legislation are relevant to the City's Comprehensive Plan Major Update.

- HB 1220, adopted in 2021, expands the scope of the Plan's housing needs analysis to include household incomes up to 120% of area median income (AMI), shelters, and missing middle housing. The Housing element must address an increased variety of housing types, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and housing supply in proximity to jobs. The Plan is required to identify areas at high risk of displacement and reduce racial disparities, displacement, and exclusion in housing. The Plan is required to link local and countywide housing need (with new guidance and projections forthcoming from the Department of Commerce). The City will work closely with King County to meet this requirement.
- HB 1099 was considered in the 2021 legislative session but was not passed. Mr. Hubner stated that this legislation has high potential for passing in some form during the 2022 legislative session. This legislation would require the addition of a new Climate Change element to the Comprehensive Plan. A greenhouse gas emissions reduction sub-element would include policies and actions to reduce greenhouse gases consistent with state goals, reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), address transportation and land use systems, and incentivize missing middle housing as a climate mitigation strategy. A climate resiliency sub-element would address a range of impacts, including sea level, heat, smoke, etc. A new Climate Change element would prioritize disproportionately impacted communities. HB 1099 also includes new requirements for the Land Use element to

address environmental justice and health disparities and support reduction in VMT. New requirements for the Transportation element would include a multimodal approach to transportation planning including a focus on arterials, transit, and active transportation, such as walking and bicycling.

Mr. Hubner provided a brief overview of Vision 2050, PSRC's regional plan that was adopted in 2020. PSRC will be reviewing the City's Comprehensive Plan against a specific checklist that the Plan must adhere to. He reviewed new components of the regional framework, including the Regional Growth Strategy, new provisions on housing supply, and updated subarea plans for Regional Growth Centers. The largest share of the region's growth through 2050 is projected to go to Metropolitan Cities, including Seattle. The regional goal is to locate 75% of population growth and 65% of job growth in centers and transit station areas. Vision 2050's Regional Housing Strategy includes an emphasis on affordability and diversity of housing supply. This strategy includes a new policy specific to Metropolitan Cities intended to provide additional housing capacity in response to rapid employment growth, particularly through increased zoning for middle density housing. The updated subarea plans will include Downtown, Uptown, South Lake Union, Capitol Hill/First Hill, University District, and Northgate. These plans are due in 2025. Mr. Hubner stated that the multi-year effort to update sub-area plans may look and feel like mini-Comprehensive Plans. This is a new framework and process that will be rooted in the direction that the Comprehensive Plan is taking. Individual areas will be nested within the overall Plan direction.

The latest Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) were adopted by the Growth Management Planning Council this summer. Mr. Hubner stated that the intent is to carry forward the regional policies and adapt to King County's unique context with more detail. These are anticipated to be complete by the end of the year. The CPPs contain new growth targets for Seattle as well as new policies for affordable housing and Countywide Centers. The latest growth targets for Seattle are 112,000 housing units and 169,500 jobs by 2044. These are considerably higher than in the Seattle 2035 Plan. Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD will conduct independent analysis to estimate demand for jobs and housing.

New affordable housing policies include a rewrite of housing policies developed by an Affordable Housing Committee, a local requirement to plan for Seattle's share of the countywide need (263,000 units affordable to households at or below 80% AMI by 2044), and ongoing work by the Affordable Housing Committee to define a framework for local housing needs and accountability. New policies on Countywide Centers include designation criteria and a process to identify candidate centers. This new term is intended to designate smaller walkable places served by transit with a mix of uses. Seattle has proposed recognition of all existing urban villages as Countywide Centers. Preliminary candidates will be recognized this year with final designation through the Comprehensive Plan Major Update process. These centers will be eligible for increased transportation funding.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners expressed concern that if HB 1099 passes in 2022, many jurisdictions will have already started working on their Comprehensive Plan updates and will have to incorporate the new

requirements. Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD is proceeding with the assumption that these new requirements will be included in the Major Update. Climate will be a major focus of this update.

- Commissioners asked how OPCD can ensure that the citywide housing need is not underestimated as it was in the last Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD completed a market rate housing analysis this past spring. This analysis addressed 112,000 housing units as one scenario, with a higher number of 150,000 in another. Commissioners expressed concern that the higher number is still too low. Seattle has been averaging 8,000-9,000 new units per year, while the target is 5,600. Residential units are getting more expensive because supply is limited. There is a disconnect between saying we want more missing middle housing while placing sixty-five percent of new units into urban villages. Mr. Hubner stated that the ongoing tension is in regional policies. These two approaches are not mutually exclusive, but it is a challenging mix.
- Commissioners noted that the City is proposing to recognize existing urban villages as Countywide Centers. The Commission is interested in expanding the number of urban villages. Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD will have latitude to promote new urban villages (for example, the area in the vicinity of the 130th Street Station).

Update: Comprehensive Plan Major Update Engagement Strategy

Rico Quirindongo, Interim Director, and Michael Hubner, OPCD

Mr. Hubner provided an overview of the community engagement plan for the Comprehensive Plan Major Update. He introduced Aja Hazelhoff, a new OPCD staff member who will be the outreach and engagement coordinator for this project. Ms. Hazelhoff stated that she is excited to be working with the OPCD team to dive into an equitable scope for working with the community.

Mr. Hubner shared the following goals for community engagement:

- Citywide and neighborhood level
- Centering race and equity
 - Prioritize marginalized communities
 - Capacity building
- Effective communication
 - Meaningful, relevant
 - Plain talk and graphics
 - Multiple channels
 - Accessible and multi-lingual
- Meaningful engagement
 - Interaction and co-creation
 - Transparency, responsiveness, and accountability

He shared the following overview of who OPCD will engage in the planning process. He stated that resources will be prioritized to engage with marginalized groups that have not had influence in the past.

- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities
- Limited-English populations

- LGBTQ community
- People with disabilities

OPCD will also engage with:

- General public
- Youth (under 18)
- Seniors (over 65)
- Parents of young children
- Renters
- City boards and commissions
- Cultural organizations
- Community-based organizations
- Business associations
- Small business owners
- Property owners
- Builders and developers
- Public agencies
- Policy advocates

Mr. Hubner described how OPCD will prioritize limited resources with a \$150,000 total community engagement budget for the three-year project. OPCD will utilize staff with expertise in long-range planning and communications. The \$150,000 budget will be prioritized for equitable engagement, including:

- Assistance from Community-Based Organizations
- Community Liaisons
- Translation/interpretation
- Additional supports for community involvement

Community engagement needs supported by OPCD staff include:

- Materials, graphics, online
- Citywide outreach
- Meetings and events
- Media
- Analysis, processing comments, reporting out

Mr. Hubner described partnerships and coordination efforts, including working with external organizations, other City departments, and connecting with other OPCD initiatives. Staff will be working closely with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) as they develop the Seattle Transportation Plan. This Plan will take a comprehensive approach and is a good match for OPCD's work on the Comprehensive Plan. There is a lot of value in parallel efforts coming together. This work

may involve joint agreements with community organizations and community liaisons and will likely include joint events and branding.

Mr. Hubner provided an overview of planned outreach phases, which will include working with community liaisons as well as City boards and commissions, as this becomes a more openly public process. OPCD staff will develop a public participation plan as required by the GMA. He stated that Comprehensive Plan engagement efforts will continue beyond the Major Update as OPCD works to implement the Plan. He shared a graphic demonstrating elements of the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) and emphasized that OPCD plans on using the Equitable Development Advisory Board to assist with clearly identifying racial equity outcomes. He stated that it is important to have a framework that OPCD is accountable to the RET process. Staff will work with the community to ensure accountability.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners recognized the challenge of developing a fair and broad and diverse community engagement plan on a limited budget. \$150,000 over three years is woefully inadequate.
- Commissioners expressed support for OPCD coordinating with different departments, including leveraging resources that SDOT has for outreach and connecting those efforts to the Comprehensive Plan Major Update.
- Commissioners noted that translation and interpretation is very important for immigrant and refugee communities and those at risk of displacement.
- Commissioners asked how to advocate for OPCD to get the resources needed for the most racially equitable Comprehensive Plan update. Resources should be prioritized for those most in need of racially equitable engagement. Mr. Quirindongo stated that a letter from the Commission expressing its expectations around community engagement would be helpful. The timing of such a letter will be important as the next administration gets up to speed on the work ahead.
- Commissioners expressed concern about community engagement distributed across many organizations and asked if there is staff capacity to track engagement efforts. Mr. Hubner stated that having a robust RET process provides OPCD with some benchmarks to consider. This work is divided into several phases. Staff intends to seek input and feedback from communities throughout the process to determine the effectiveness of outreach efforts. OPCD is seeking to reach more people and more communities and have a greater depth of engagement than the last Comprehensive Plan update. The intention is to reach a span of communities that have been left out in the past. Mr. Quirindongo stated that success will be measured by more people engaged in the process understanding that the Comprehensive Plan matters to their families.
- Commissioners asked how the RET approach will be memorialized. The Commission would like to review it when available. Mr. Hubner stated that a memo will be provided to the City Council.
- Commissioners requested more information on how technical planning work will be translated to a general audience. Mr. Hubner stated it is a goal to put the Major Update in terms that relate to people and their lives. He offered to provide preview materials to the Commission for feedback.
- Commissioners thanked Mr. Hubner for his presentation and expressed interest in supporting the community engagement process moving forward.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 am.