



# City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Amalia Leighton, Chair  
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

## SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION APRIL 23, 2015 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

### COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Austin, Catherine Benotto, David Cutler, Grace Kim, Jeanne Krikawa, Kara Martin, Tim Parham, Marj Press, David Shelton, Lauren Squires, Patti Wilma

### COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Luis Borrero, Brad Khouri, Amalia Leighton, Matt Roewe

### COMMISSION STAFF

Jeseca Brand - Policy Analyst, Diana Canzoneri - Demographer, Robin Magonegil - Administrative Assistant, Vanessa Murdock – Executive Director

### GUESTS

City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen

### IN ATTENDANCE

Cindi Barker, Erica Barnett, Lish Whitson

*Please Note: Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript but instead represent key points and the basis of the discussion.*

### CALL TO ORDER

#### **Chair's Report & Minutes Approval**

Vice-Chair Marj Press

Vice-Chair Press called the meeting to order at 7:33 am.

Commissioner Patti Wilma moved to approve the April 9, 2015 minutes. Commissioner David Shelton seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with Commissioner Kara Martin abstaining.

Vice-Chair Press noted upcoming meetings and events. She reported on the breakfast that the Commission hosted during the APA conference in Seattle as well as other APA sessions and events.

#### **Public Comment on Comprehensive Plan Major Update**

There was no public comment.

## **Discussion and Possible Action: SPC Letter on Comprehensive Plan Update, Draft #4**

### **Commission Comments and Questions:**

Commissioners contributed minor technical edits to the letter.

Action: Commissioner Grace Kim moved to approve the letter with the edits. Commissioner Patti Wilma seconded the motion. The letter was approved.

### **Public Comment on Neighborhood Conservation Districts**

Cindi Barker commented on the need to better understand the details of the Neighborhood Conservation District plan. She noted that neighbors are hoping that the program will be more than design focused and that neighbors are concerned about character and what changes are happening in their neighborhoods. She requested that the Planning Commission take an active role in the development of the policies and programs.

### **Discussion and possible action: SPC letter on Neighborhood Conservation Districts**

Welcome Councilmember Tom Rasmussen

- Program was designed based on Conservation Districts throughout the country, more information in report by Lund Consulting.
- Goal of the program is to address the concerns expressed by some community members in rapidly changing neighborhoods in the design and character of their community.
- More dialogue with the community and the Planning Commission is necessary before legislation is drafted.
- CM Rasmussen agreed to return to the Commission before legislation on the program is introduced.

### **Commissioner Comments and Questions:**

Commissioners asked for clarification on what problem the program was attempting to remedy.

Councilmember Rasmussen commented that the goal of the program is to address the concerns expressed by rapidly changing neighborhoods about the design character of their community.

Commissioners discussed the costs of the program as well as the staff time necessary to create and maintain a volunteer board.

Commissioners expressed their concern with how this program may inhibit future growth noting in particular the current work of the Mayor's Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda. Commissioners also expressed concern that this program may inhibit future growth in single family zones and may further limit much needed flexibility in single family zones.

Commissioners commented on the expansion of the national historic guidelines, the current review of the Design Review Program, as well as less regulatory bodies like Homeowners Associations as a potential opportunity to address growth concerns.

Commissioners briefly discussed the need to take action on their draft letter on Neighborhood Conservation Districts. They confirmed their concerns with the proposed program as articulated in their draft letter. The decision was made to postpone approval and continue the conversation with Councilmember Rasmussen as the legislation is developed.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Cindi Barker commented that the Commission discussion brought up a good point regarding community engagement in the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that the decision by the City to not open up the Neighborhood Plans during the current major update to the Comprehensive Plan precluded neighborhoods from using their plans as a way to address concerns regarding neighborhood growth and change. She continued that while the Comprehensive Plan update is important, it may not be the best place for this particular discussion.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chair Press adjourned the meeting at 9:02 am.