



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Linda Amato, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION FEBRUARY 26, 2009 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair-Linda Amato, Vice-Chair Chris Fiori, Colie Hough Beck, Mark Johnson, Martin Kaplan, Kay Knapton, Amalia Leighton, M. Michelle Mattox, Kevin McDonald, Michelle Zeidman

COMMISSION STAFF

Barbara Wilson-Director, Katie Sheehy-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative Specialist, Diana Canzoneri-Demographer

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Josh Brower, Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Leslie Miller, Tony To

GUESTS

Grace Crunican, Dawn Schellenberg, SDOT; Nathan Torgelson, Department of Finance

IN ATTENDANCE

Catherine Benotto, David Cutler, Chris Persons, Matt Roewe, New Commission Appointees

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 Linda Amato called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

▪ **Chair's Report**

Chair Linda Amato noted the upcoming meetings: Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, March 3; Portland tour on Friday, March 6; Housing, Neighborhoods and Urban Centers Committee meeting on Tuesday, March 10; the next Full Commission meeting on Thursday, February 12; Executive Committee again on Tuesday, March 17; and the next Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting on Thursday, March 19. Ms. Wilson noted that while each commissioner is assigned to one committee, they are welcome to attend all meetings.

Ms. Wilson also noted that City Council's Planning Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee approved the revised Comprehensive Plan amendment process, which would be voted on by the Full Council the following Monday. She stated that the new process changes the deadlines for submitting and approving the proposed amendments so they do not conflict with the holidays and the budget review process. She noted that the new deadline for proposing amendments is in May.

- **Minutes approval**

ACTION: Commissioner Kay Knapton moved to approve the February 12, 2009 minutes. Commissioner Mark Johnson seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Chair Amato welcomed the three new Commissioner appointees, Catherine Benotto, Chris Persons and Matt Roewe. She noted that they are scheduled to be confirmed by City Council on March 11.

Catherine Benotto stated that she is a principal at Weber Thompson and directs the firm's master planning team and developed the sustainability program. She noted that she is currently working on three LEED for Neighborhood Development projects; including South Lake Union and that she looks forward to combining this experience while working with the Planning Commission.

Matt Roewe stated that he works with Via Architecture as the design director of mixed use and major projects. He noted that his firm employs 30 people in Vancouver, BC, and 15 in Seattle. He is also Chair of the South Lake Union/Queen Anne design review board and serves on the Queen Anne Land Use Committee, the Seattle Great City Initiative and the Streetcar Alliance.

Chris Persons stated that he lives in Rainier Beach and has not lived in Seattle that long. He is the Executive Director of the Capitol Hill Housing, which owns 42 buildings, mostly in Capitol Hill. He noted that he is also on the board of the Housing Development Consortium.

UPDATES & DISCUSSION

- **Presentation: SDOT's 2009 Priorities**
 - Grace Crunican and Dawn Schellenberg, SDOT

Recusal & Disclosure:

- Commissioner Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, Hough Beck & Baird, is working on the Mercer Corridor Project and the Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project.
- Commissioner Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design Company, is working on the Pedestrian Master Plan and she is the manager for that project.
- Vice Chair Fiori disclosed that his firm, Heartland, is working on the Mercer Corridor Project.
- Chair Amato disclosed that her firm, Jones & Stokes, is working on the Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project.

Grace Crunican presented a PowerPoint. The presentation is attached.

Commissioner Hough Beck noted that the bus tunnel is currently closed on the weekends and asked if that was going to change. Ms. Crunican replied that the bus tunnel will probably remain closed on the weekends until light rail service begins on July 3, at which time it will be open on the weekends. Commissioner Hough Beck asked if buses will continue to use the tunnel when light rail service begins. Ms. Crunican confirmed that buses and light rail will operate in the tunnel simultaneously.

Vice Chair Fiori asked if it would be likely for a Broad Street stop to be added to the Sounder Commuter Rail service. Ms. Crunican replied that it is not currently being planned.

Commissioner McDonald asked about how priorities are established for sidewalk maintenance and repair projects. Ms. Crunican replied that the Pedestrian Master Plan and the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative both help establish priorities based on objective analysis and equitable distribution of resources.

Matt Roewe commented that the major downtown projects provide tremendous opportunities for the waterfront and the Uptown and South Lake Union neighborhoods and asked about the status of federal stimulus funding for the projects. Ms. Crunican responded that a lot of work is being done to secure funding and that the City has a number of back-up plans. She also noted that Spokane Street, which is the western end of I-90, and Mercer Corridor, which connects major biotech and global health organizations, are part of the overall state economy.

Vice Chair Fiori asked about the First Hill-Capitol Hill Streetcar. Ms. Crunican responded that the project is in the very early stages of development and that Ethan Malone, who is the project manager, will have more information.

Commissioner Kaplan thanked Ms. Crunican and Ms. Schellenberg for their presentation and work on these projects. He asked about how businesses might be impacted on Capitol Hill during construction of the streetcar. Ms. Crunican replied that the City has learned a lot from Sound Transit's work on the light rail system in southeast Seattle and from construction of the South Lake Union Streetcar and will work with businesses throughout the design and construction process. She also noted that the construction time for the route will be much shorter than for light rail. She remarked that stakeholder input is an invaluable part of the process and encourages their involvement.

- **Presentation: Mayor's 2009 Priorities**
- Nathan Torgelson, Department of Finance

Mr. Torgelson thanked the Commission for their work, particularly on the incentive zoning legislation and industrial jobs initiative. He encouraged the commissioners to read the Mayor's State of the City address if they have not already: <http://seattle.gov/mayor/speeches/stateofcity2009.htm> Mr. Torgelson noted that while there is a lot of concern about the economic crisis, there is also hope about the new President's plans for federal stimulus. He noted that Mayor Nickels has met with President Obama twice and will become the Chair of the US Conference of Mayors and is currently the Chair of Sound Transit.

Mr. Torgelson briefly outlined the Mayor's priorities including: the recently announced Jobs Forward initiative; encouraging volunteerism; public safety, particularly related to youth violence;

transportation; community development; and the Industrial Jobs Initiative. He noted that the McKinstry Company, which has been heralded by President Obama as model for the nation, recently received a building permit that will allow them to expand and hire an additional 500 people. The City is also working with the Port of Seattle to develop a planned action ordinance at Interbay to encourage industrial development. He noted that the Livable South Downtown legislation will go to City Council later this spring and that work is moving forward in neighborhoods including Northgate, North Beacon Hill, MLK at Holly Street, and North Rainier Valley.

Mr. Torgelson stated that the Office of Housing and the Department of Planning and Development are working on the housing levy that will go before voters in November. He noted that these departments also have additional work on incentive zoning and the downtown commercial bonus program.

Commissioner Kaplan asked about the EIS for Interbay, which was completed a few years ago. Mr. Torgelson replied that while the planned action ordinance is based on existing zoning, he will inquire about how the Port of Seattle and the Department of Planning and Development have accounted for changes in existing conditions.

Chair Amato thanked Mr. Torgelson for his time. She then introduced David Cutler, one of the newly appointed commissioners.

Mr. Cutler stated that he is an architect and urban designer at GGLO and that he moved here from Los Angeles, though he grew up in Seattle. He noted that he lives on Capitol Hill and is very glad to join the commission.

Ms. Wilson stated that today would be the last day serving on the Planning Commission for Commissioners Eanes, Mattox and To. She noted that Commissioners Eanes and Mattox will continue to serve in an ex officio capacity – Commissioner Eanes will continue to assist with the Multifamily Code Update and Commissioner Mattox will continue to represent the Commission for Yesler Terrace.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Amato adjourned the meeting at 9:08 am.