**Seattle Planning Commission**

**February 27, 2014**

**Approved Meeting Minutes**

Commissioners in Attendance

Co-Chair David Cutler, Co-Chair Amalia Leighton, Catherine Benotto, Luis Borrero, Colie Hough-Beck, Bradley Khouri, Tim Parham, Marj Press, Matt Roewe, Maggie Wykowski

Commissioners Absent

Josh Brower, Keely Brown, Grace Kim, Jeanne Krikawa, Kevin McDonald, Morgan Shook

Commission Staff

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

**GUESTS**

Aly Pennucci, Mike Podowski, DPD;

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Lish Whitson, Jeff Anderson

***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

Co-Chair David Cutler called the meeting to attention at 7:35 am.

* **Chair’s Report & Approval of Minutes**
* Co-Chair David Cutler

ACTION: Commissioner David Cutler moved to approve the February 13, 2014 meeting minutes. Commissioner Colie Hough Beck seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Catherine Benotto and Maggie Wykowski abstained.

Co-Chair Leighton updated the Commission on the Comprehensive Task Force meeting. She noted that DPD has outlined four alternatives and are moving away from using the Transit Communities wording because the focus is on rail only and not on all frequent and reliable transit. Co-Chair Leighton stated that the timeline for the rollout is concerning to the Task Force committee as there are too many documents and drafts being released in a short time frame which will be onerous for staff and potentially confusing for the public. She added that comment periods would be overlapping and confusing. She remarked that the annual amendment cycle would continue as in parallel with the Major Update which could also be confusing . Co-Chair Leighton stated that the Commission would look into offering formal comments on the items that were of concern.

Commissioner Roewe asked if the growth targets were part of the plan moving forward and if they discussed how DPD would address the targets. Co-Chair Leighton replied that the growth targets were estimates. She added that DPD is still discussing how the growth estimates will be discussed. Commissioner Roewe noted that the allocation of growth estimates was often very confusing to citizens and it would be good to clarify what they are and how they should be used.

* **Update: Pedestrian Zone**
* Aly Pennucci & Mike Podowski, DPD

Disclosures & Recusals: Commissioner Hough Beck disclosed that SDOT is a client of the firm Colie Hough-Beck works for, HBB Landscape Architects.

Ms. Pennucci gave a powerpoint presentation that can be accessed by the link below:

[Pedestrian Zone Presentation](file:///K%3A%5CPlanning%5CSPO%5CPcom%5CProjects%5CPedestrian%5CPedZones_PC022714.pdf)

Commissioner Roewe asked if P1 and P2 zones still exist downtown. Mr. Podowski responded that those designations do not exist downtown however there are downtown pedestrian street designations.

Co-Chair Leighton asked how DPD’s work related to the Right-of-Way Improvements (ROWI) manual. Ms. Pennucci replied that they are working with SDOT to make the standards more specific and whether specific standards should be in the ROWI manual or in the Land Use Code.

Co-Chair Cutler asked what mechanisms were in place that would prioritize right of way improvements in neighborhoods adjacent to pedestrian zones. He added that many of our side streets have very few requirements to facilitate access to these zones. Mr. Podowski stated that there is more work to be done and that DPD is working with SDOT to coordinate their respective efforts. He added that DPD could reach out to side streets that are further into the neighborhoods with different types of zoning that addresses potential conflict between cars and pedestrians.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked if they had done any market analysis to inform the recommended pedestrian zones. Mr. Podowski replied that DPD is focusing on 40% of the land instead of 100% as there has been some analysis that some areas zoned for mixed use had experienced high vacancy rates.

Commissioner Hough Beck wondered how non-conforming uses would be addressed in recommended pedestrian zones. Ms. Pennucci acknowledged the issues of non-conformity and the potential result of piecemeal improvements.

Commissioner Hough Beck stated that, in regards to the canopy issue, clear glazing is great as it allows for eyes on the street. She added that the presence of street cafes, while beneficial to street activation, often push pedestrians into the drip line of the canopy.

Commissioner Roewe noted that some neighborhoods such as South Lake Union had undergone a separate pedestrian planning effort and that those are not shown on the map. He suggested that adding the outlines of these areas and identifying them as pedestrian friendly areas would tell a more comprehensive story on pedestrian zones. He wondered about the minimum FAR and if there were any updates to the emergency legislation regarding requiring building to minimum densities in some zones in Urban Villages and Centers. Ms. Pennucci stated that DPD found the legislation reasonable and will likely maintain those standards.

Commissioner Benotto asked how potential pedestrian zones were identified for analysis. Mr. Podowski answered that DPD started out with the list that came out of the Jobs Initiative and added to the analysis the Urban Center areas that would make sense in a pedestrian zone.

Co-Chair Leighton suggested leaving the sidewalk standards in the ROWI manual because walkable zones can be achieved through Right of Way standards without the land use code zoning changes. She added that the continuity of the street could be lost if design guidelines are absent outside a designated Pedestrian Zone. Co-Chair Leighton continued that Right of Way Improvement manual standards could also be helpful with the side streets and allow for changes in these typologies.

Co-Chair Cutler suggested a conversation with SDOT about their street maintenance and their improvement budget and how improvements could be prioritized on the side streets as well as the pedestrian zone. He further suggested that DPD think big and look to models around the country. Co-Chair Cutler wondered if DPD could look at historical data in some of these business districts to evaluate neighborhood business stability and how some of the zoning has affected businesses ability to be successful.

Commissioner Khouri asked if there was any consideration of the connections between pedestrian zones and the open space to which those zones could connect.

* **Update: Commission Work Plan**

**SPC Staff Jesseca Brand** outlined the workplan for the next few months.

LINK TO POWERPOINT

**Update: Commissioner Openings**

Executive Director Vanessa Murdock provided an update on filing the soon to be vacant three positions. She encouraged Commissioners to continue to move forward on making initial inquiries to potential candidates.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Co-Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 8:58 am.