



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair
Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
JULY 14, 2016
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Austin, Eileen Canola, Molly Esteve, Sandra Fried, Grace Kim, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Tim Parham, Marj Press, David Shelton, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble, Patti Wilma, Spencer Williams

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Lauren Craig, Julio Sanchez

COMMISSION STAFF

Katy Haima, Policy Analyst; John Hoey, Policy Analyst; Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director; Robin Magonegil, Administrative Staff

GUESTS

Dave LaClergue, OPCD

IN ATTENDANCE

Cindi Barker, Lish Whitson, Bonnie Williams

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

Vice-Chair Kara Martin called the meeting to order at 3:06 pm.

Minutes Approval

Commissioner Marj Press moved to adopt the June 9, 2106 minutes. Commissioner Michael Austin seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed. Commissioner Sandra Fried abstained.

Commissioner Marj Press moved to adopt the June 23, 2106 minutes. Commissioner Michael Austin seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Chair's Report

Chair Grace Kim reminded the Planning Commissioners of upcoming meetings.

Public Comment on Seattle 2035-Mayor's Recommended Plan Letter

Cindi Barker commented on the Planning Commission's review of Seattle 2035 – the Mayor's Recommended Comprehensive Plan. She stated that neighborhood groups would like to see a separate element in the Plan dedicated to community engagement. She encouraged the Commission to emphasize community engagement in their letter on Seattle 2035. She commented that the language in the draft letter about growth along arterials is currently unclear and encouraged the recommendation to be revised. She supported the Commission's recommendation to use hyperlinks throughout the Plan, and encouraged the Commission to follow up to make sure that recommendation is implemented. Lastly, she supported the Commission's recommendation to include a definition of frequent transit in the document.

Action on Seattle 2035 – Mayor's Recommended Plan Letter

- John Hoey, SPC Staff

Chair Kim called for any Disclosures or Recusals. There were none.

John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst for the Planning Commission provided an overview of the Planning Commission's process for reviewing the Mayor's Recommended Plan. He then presented several changes that were made to the draft letter since the last time the Commission reviewed it at their June 23rd meeting.

In the Urban Village Designations and Boundaries section of the letter, the Commission's Urban Village/Future Land Use Map (FLUM) comments were moved up to prioritize the letter's strongest recommendation. The first paragraph was reorganized to feature highlighted text demonstrating the benefits of the proposed FLUM change. A reference to the Planning Commission's Seattle Transit Communities report was added and the second paragraph was revised to strengthen the recommendation.

In the A More Explicit Vision for an Equitable Seattle section of the letter, a reference to Council Resolution 31577 was added as follows: "We look forward to working with OPCD in establishing a process through which the City will measure and report on the City's progress toward achieving racial and social equity in Seattle, as set out in Council Resolution 31577."

In the Growth Strategy section of the letter, a new recommended policy was revised to address growth along arterials and outside of urban centers and villages. The revised language is as follows: "Allow for some residential and employment growth along transit corridors to support broader access via frequent, reliable transit to the essential components of livability provided in urban villages and centers."

In the Land Use section of the letter, language was revised to clarify the intent of the recommendation as follows: "Clarify language to maintain the character of single-family zoned areas and limit increased development in these zones to be consistent with goal LU G7. Remove language protecting single family uses in areas that are not zoned for single family residential uses." Additional language in the land use section was revised to include references to past review documents and the Mayor's industrial lands task force as follows: "Restore language from policies GS 2.20 in the July 2015 draft and the 4th internal draft (reviewed by the Planning Commission in April 2015) that protects industrial areas from other non-industrial uses except for

when certain criteria are met. In our 2007 report “The Future of Seattle’s Industrial Lands”, we advocated strongly for protecting industrial lands. While the Planning Commission supports the convening of a task force to start this process, we do not see this as a reason to eliminate policies in the interim. This would leave industrial lands at risk pending a process that could prove to be lengthy.” The following language was added to a new policy related to protection of industrial lands: “Retain land in manufacturing/industrial centers for industrial uses, recognizing the important economic resource the land in these centers represents.”

In the Community Well-Being section of the letter, language about race and social equity was added to clarify the following recommendation: “Move the Multi-Cultural City section to the beginning of the Community Well Being element. This is an important section consistent with the race and social equity theme of the Plan.” In the Neighborhood Planning section of the letter, language was added to clarify this recommendation: “Delete the third paragraph on page 159 referencing the Planning Commission’s review of the neighborhood plans. Given the life span of this document, the description “a few years ago” is vague. The Planning Commission’s Reality Check review was in 2009-2010.”

In the Parks and Open Space section of the letter, the recommendation to remove wording that refers to parks “level of service” was deleted. Seattle Parks and Recreation plans to set a new level of service in their upcoming Parks Development Plan.

During the Commission’s discussion of the draft letter, they suggested the following revision to the recommendation to adopt expanded urban center boundaries: “We strongly encourage the City to further adjust the boundaries based on walkshed calculations and other relevant data, such as those found in the Seattle Transit Communities report and the Seattle 2035 Equity Analysis.” The Commissioners also had comments about the suggested revisions to the Plan’s single-family residential and multifamily residential goals and policies. They suggested that language in Land Use Goals 7 and 8 about “housing options for a wide range of households and income levels, including opportunities for both homeownership and renting,” be revised to delete references to homeownership and renting, suggesting that this language is better suited to the Housing element than the Land Use element. The Commissioners also suggested modifying language in the letter’s recommended new policy about protecting industrial lands from “Retain land...” to “Prioritize land in manufacturing/industrial centers for industrial uses, recognizing the important economic resource the land in these centers represents.”

ACTION:

Commissioner Jake McKinstry moved to approve the Mayor’s Recommended Plan Letter with the proposed amendments and edits. Commissioner Spencer Williams seconded the motion. The motion passed with Commissioner Marj Press opposed.

Briefing on University District Zoning Recommendations

- Dave LaClergue, Office of Planning and Community Development

Dave LaClergue from the Office of Planning and Community Development presented an overview of the urban design, zoning, and development standard recommendations for the University District. This work has been ongoing for several years in anticipation of light rail arriving in the U District in 2021 and to accommodate the significant growth anticipated by 2035. There has been a high level of public interest and engagement in this process by community groups. Mr. LaClergue summarized the process and the schedule for the project, which will culminate in a draft proposal to be considered by the City Council in the Fall of 2016. This draft proposal would increase height and density in the District’s core blocks, apply new design

standards for more varied development that fits the neighborhood context, and require affordable housing, open space, historic preservation, and other amenities associated with new development.

The proposed zoning changes would allow highrise development in the District's core blocks (up to 160 feet for offices and 240-320 feet for residential projects). University Avenue (commonly known as "The Ave") would remain zoned for midrise development. The proposal would allow mixed use development on both sides of NE 50th St., and midrise residential development along I-5 and NE 50th St. There would be a few changes in single-family zones (only 3 specific parcels). Proposed design standards would include bulk controls to encourage a variety of buildings, landscaping and street trees, maximum width limits, tower separation, limits to tower sizes above 45 feet, and setbacks in specific locations. The proposal includes the following open space requirements: a 15% set aside requirement for large sites (>30,000 sq. ft.); residential amenity space (5% of total residential floor area); mid-block corridors for certain large developments; and development bonuses for parks and plazas.

The Commissioners asked about the relationship between the U District planning and the University of Washington's campus master planning process. Mr. LaClergue described community stakeholders' desire for additional open space as part of the U District planning process. The Commissioners asked whether the proposal affects any landmark buildings. Mr. LaClergue answered by saying that only six buildings in the planning area are officially landmarked with historic designations, but there are 20-30 more that could potentially be designated. The planning process has considered a Transfer of Development Rights program that would could protect historic buildings and assist in protecting unreinforced masonry buildings.

All new development in the U District rezone areas would be subject to both the existing Incentive Zoning requirements and the new Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) requirements. The proposed MHA rules would require developers to set aside 5-7% of the new units or pay-\$7-12 per square foot for affordable housing. With the projected growth in the District, this would result in 439 to 745 new affordable units. The MHA requirements would be implemented in phases: Area 1 (to be implemented in 2016) would include all proposed upzones as part of the current U District process; Area 2 (to be implemented in 2017) would include all other commercial and multifamily residential zones (as MHA is implemented citywide). The Commissioners expressed concern with the inclusion of both MHA and Incentive Zoning requirements for all new projects, suggesting that overly complex requirements could discourage developers from building in the neighborhood. The Commissioners also asked if the 5-7% MHA requirement for new units is enough, considering the scope of the upzone. Mr. LaClergue commented that the proposed requirement was set because there was concern that the market would not currently support development if the rates were higher. The Commissioners suggested that now is the time to be aggressive and forward-looking.

Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 pm.