



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 24, 2016
MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Austin, Lauren Craig, Molly Esteve, Yolanda Ho, Grace Kim, Amalia Leighton, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Tim Parham, Marj Press, David Shelton, Spencer Williams, Patti Wilma

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Sandra Fried

COMMISSION STAFF

John Hoey, Policy Analyst; Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

GUESTS

Maureen Kostyack and Steve Walker, Office of Housing

IN ATTENDANCE

Cindi Barker, Max Nicolai, 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

Chair's Report

- Chair Grace Kim

Chair Grace Kim called the meeting to order at 7:30am.

Commissioner Yolanda Ho moved to approve the February 11, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Jake McKinstry seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Michael Austin and Spencer Williams abstained. Commissioner Kara Martin moved to approve the February 25, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Austin and Leighton abstained. Commissioner Austin moved to approve the March 10, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Leighton seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Ho, McKinstry, Shelton, and Williams abstained.

Chair Kim provided an overview of upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

Public Comment on Backyard Cottage Letter

Max Nicolai expressed disappointment in the Planning Commission's letter on backyard cottages, stating that the letter does not acknowledge public comment received on this issue. He also stated that the letter fails to adequately analyze issues such as the maximum occupancy requirement. He disagreed with the Planning Commission's recommendation to eliminate the owner-occupancy requirement for ADUs and DADUs, stating that he believes that eliminating this requirement will lead to developer speculation and increased prices for rental units.

Cindi Barker commented that the letter does not reflect the critical analysis and depth of the multiple discussions held by the Planning Commission on this subject.

Action on Backyard Cottage Letter

Chair Kim called for any disclosures and/or recusals. There were none.

Executive Director, Vanessa Murdock provided an overview of the recent edits to the letter to reflect the discussion at the March 10th meeting. Commissioners suggested a few additional edits and new language encouraging the City Council to explore options to reduce the financial barriers to building DADUs.

Commissioner Press moved to approve the letter. Commissioner Leighton seconded the motion. The letter was approved unanimously.

Discussion of the Housing Levy letter

- Maureen Kostyack and Steve Walker, Office of Housing

Maureen Kostyack and Steve Walker of the Office of Housing provided additional information to the Planning Commission about the proposed 2016 Housing Levy, including a detailed overview of the four programs within the Mayor's proposal. Mr. Walker explained that the scope of the proposed Levy is expanding to provide housing units as the proposed funding levels will allow. The cost of land and construction costs have increased since the last Levy in 2009. He stated that there is flexibility within the Levy to take advantage of new funding opportunities as they become available, as well as shifting resources between programs as needed.

Commissioners asked why \$3 million for one-time mortgage loans in the Mayor's original proposal was removed from the Homeownership Program in the latest proposal. Ms. Kostyack explained that this component was not getting a lot of reaction or interest during initial outreach on the Mayor's proposal. Commissioners asked for additional information about the role of the Housing Levy and the Office of Housing in addressing homelessness. Ms. Kostyack answered that the Office of Housing is responsible for providing capital funding for low-income housing, as well as short-term financial assistance and stability services. Other agencies have other responsibilities and funding mechanisms to address homelessness.

Ms. Kostyack provided an overview of the timeline for the 2016 Housing Levy. A City Council Select Committee has been reviewing the proposal and will hold a public hearing on April 4. The goal is to add the Levy to the August 2nd ballot. The campaign for the Levy will be called "Yes for Homes."

Public Comment on Housing Levy Letter

Cindi Barker commented that the draft letter did not include enough planning analysis and encouraged the Commission to be clearer on the reasons that they support the Housing Levy.

Action on Backyard Cottage Letter

Chair Kim called for any disclosures and/or recusals.

DISCLOSURES & RECUSALS:

- Commissioner McKinstry disclosed that his employer, Spectrum Development Solutions, develops low-income housing and could be involved in projects funded by the Levy.
- Commissioner Williams disclosed that his employer, the Seattle Housing Authority, develops low-income housing projects in partnership with funding from the Housing Levy.
- Chair Kim disclosed that her firm, Schemata Workshop, works on low-income housing projects and could be involved in projects funded by the Levy.
- Commissioner Lauren Craig disclosed that her employer, labor union SEIU 775, is advocating for passage of the Housing Levy.
- Commissioner Tim Parham disclosed that his employer, Plymouth Housing Group, develops low-income housing and could be involved in projects funded by the Levy.

John Hoey provided an overview of the edits made to the draft letter since the March 10th meeting. The Commissioners encouraged providing additional language in the letter on the current affordable housing crisis and the homelessness state of emergency, as well as strengthening the case for the City Council to pass the Housing Levy as proposed by the Mayor. Planning Commission staff agreed to revise the letter for consideration at the April 14 Commission meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kim adjourned the meeting at 9:00am.