



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Leslie Miller, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION SEPTEMBER 22, 2011 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair – Leslie Miller, Vice-Chair David Cutler, Kadie Bell, Catherine Benotto, Josh Brower, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Martin Kaplan, Bradley Khouri, Jeanne Krikawa, Amalia Leighton, Kevin McDonald, Chris Persons, Matt Roewe, Sarah Snider*

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Kay Knapton

COMMISSION STAFF

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

GUESTS

Nora Liu, David Goldberg, DPD

*this commissioner is pending confirmation

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 Leslie Miller called the meeting to attention at 7:32 am.

▪ **Chair's Report**

- Chair Leslie Miller

Chair Miller introduced our new get engaged Commissioner, Sarah Snider. She added that Sarah has not been confirmed yet but should be soon and that she may engage in conversation but cannot vote on Commission's

actions until confirmation. Chair Miller asked Sarah to introduce herself. Sarah noted that she is an urban designer with LMN and has a background in architecture.

Chair Miller updated the Commission regarding the recent public hearing on the Roosevelt Rezone. She noted that all of the City Council members attended it and the auditorium was packed. Chair Miller reported that Geoff Wentlandt presented DPD's plan and the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association (RNA) presented their new plan. She added that the RNA plan shifts most of the density west towards the freeway. Chair Miller noted that former Commissioner, Michelle Zeidman, as well as herself and Commissioner Kadie Bell testified. She added that she was booed when she stated that multifamily housing should be located close to the high school and that anyone who testified that they worked with developers or were interested in multifamily housing closer to the high school also were booed. Commissioner Brower noted that he only stayed through the first 26 or so speakers and that he felt that it was a 50 - 50 split and that he was struck by the lack of civility. Commissioner Krikawa gave a bit of history regarding the issues and noted that there was the option of having the station near the freeway but that they wanted the station in the heart of the neighborhood. Commissioner Persons indicated that HUD will not fund projects that are too close to freeways. Diana Canzoneri noted that she was struck that people fear density, particularly for lower income households. She added that it would be good for the Commission to challenge these stereotypes in a fundamental way. Commissioner Kaplan reminded the Commission that the 80 people that spoke only represent themselves and that there are thousands of people who do not show up at these hearings. Ms. Wilson noted that, after letting things cool down a bit, Commissioners might want to go back and start talking with Council members. She added that Commissioners should let her know if they are interested in going with her. Ms. Wilson noted that staff is thinking about doing a FAQ to dispel some of the myths. Ms. Wilson suggested that the Commission have some very strong objective points that illustrate the Planning Commission's independence and objectivity.

Commissioner Johnson stated that this should serve as an important lesson for the Comprehensive Plan update. He noted that there is a lack of citywide vision for what role this community was supposed to play. He added that the community was not given clear expectations regarding what was supposed to happen around the stations.

Chair Miller noted the upcoming meetings for the month of October.

Commissioner Brower noted that he has been asked to participate in the PSRC Growing Transit Communities program.

▪ **Approve: Regulatory Reform Letter**

Ms. Wilson noted that this letter has been circulating for about two weeks and there have been very few comments. Ms. Wilson asked the Commissioners if they would please look at it and then send their comments in the next day.

▪ **Briefing: Neighborhood Planning in Rainier Beach & Broadview/Bitter Lake**

– Nora Liu & David Goldberg, DPD

Chair Miller called for any disclosures or recusals.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner Kadie Bell disclosed that she manages a grant for Communities Putting Prevention to Work that funds neighborhood planning and that she was also previously Public Health's representative on the Neighborhood Planning IDT.

Commissioner Sarah Snider disclosed that her firm, LMN, does urban design and various types of architectural projects in the Seattle metropolitan area.

- Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa disclosed that her firm, The Underhill Company, was the lead consultant on the Southeast Seattle Transportation Study. She added that while staff at Arai/Jackson Architects & Planners, Jeanne led the light rail station design concepts for Southeast Seattle. Currently, The Underhill Company is part of the consultant team for Sound Transit working on the North Corridor Transit Project.

- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that he lives in Beacon Hill and that his firm, Brower Law PS, represents developers and property buyers and sellers, some of whom work in single family and multi-family areas.

- Commissioner Leslie Miller disclosed that she is a voting member of the Southeast District Council for the Rainier Othello Safety Association, on the steering committees of Othello Station Community Advisory Team, Othello Park Now, and the Othello Park Alliance. She was also a proponent for the funded 2011 Bridging the Gap Project along the Othello corridor and with Othello Park Now applied for and received a large matching fund grant for improvements at Othello Park. She is a MLK @ New Holly Neighborhood Advisory Committee Member.

- Commissioner Catherine Benotto disclosed that her firm, Weber Thompson, may have, or had projects for clients in these neighborhoods.

- Commissioner David Cutler disclosed that his firm, GGLO, designs projects and advises clients who own properties that may be impacted by the Urban Design Frameworks and Neighborhood Plans for North Rainier, Othello, and Beacon Hill.

- Commissioner Bradley Khouri disclosed that his firm, b9 architects, designs projects for clients throughout the city of Seattle and may have clients in areas affected by these urban design frameworks and neighborhood plans.

- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB was the landscape architect for the Rainier Corridor and several light rail stations. They also work on public and private projects throughout the city.

- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design, is working on Pipers Creek Flow Control Study in Broadview. SvR Design may also work on other public or private projects in the Broadview/Bitter Lake or Rainier Beach Neighborhoods.

- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture, is involved in multifamily and municipal planning throughout the city.

- Commissioner Martin Kaplan disclosed that his firm, MHK Architects, works on projects throughout the city.

- Commissioner Chris Persons disclosed that his firm, Capitol Hill Housing, develops housing throughout the city.

- Commissioner Mark Johnson disclosed that his firm, ESA Adolfson, has an on call contract with Sound Transit for TOD projects and could be working in these areas.

Chair Miller welcomed Nora Liu and David Goldberg from DPD.

Ms. Liu handed out the Draft UDF for Mt. Baker. Ms. Liu noted that the North Rainier area is now designated as the Mount Baker town center. She added that they are close to publishing SEPA for the rezone legislation.

Ms. Liu and Mr. Goldberg gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed rezones that can be accessed here: <http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/planningcommissionsept222011.ppt>

Commissioner Brower asked why the section west of El Centro is NC2-40 instead of 65. Ms. Liu was not sure and stated that she would find out and get back to him. She noted that they have had discussions with El Centro and are aligning the proposal with the locational criteria. She added that El Centro is not planning on tearing down the building at that location. Commissioner Brower also asked about locations to the north and west were not zoned for 65 feet. Ms. Liu answered that she thought it is about transitions to single family but will need to check. Commissioner Brower asked if they were getting negative feedback from the community. Ms. Liu replied that that has not happened yet. She added that this has been extensively discussed with the community and hopes the conversation goes smoothly.

Ms. Wilson asked about the decision agenda. Ms. Liu stated that they hoped to complete the UDFs and zoning proposals complete within two weeks and then to publish SEPA. Ms. Wilson asked when they wanted our feedback - before or after it goes to Council. Ms. Liu stated that she was not sure.

Commissioner Khouri asked why the area south of the station is NC2-40 and not 65 feet. Ms. Liu answered that the boxes on the map appear bigger than the way the land actually is.

Commissioner Kaplan wondered, with the Lowes site on the west side of Rainier, why they are not recommending 85 feet as the base height limit. Ms. Liu noted that the base height limit has not been finalized. Commissioner Johnson noted that if the base is lower you get more out of the incentive. Ms. Liu responded that if it is zoned at 65 feet it might encourage them to go higher. Commissioner Roewe noted that having 125 feet as the carrot, with the additional construction costs and affordable housing, it might not be a big enough carrot and that 240 feet might be better.

Vice-Chair Cutler agreed with Commissioner Roewe regarding 125 feet not being a big enough incentive. He noted that there is a huge opportunity at this site and around the high school. Chair Miller echoed his concerns about how to incorporate schools into complete neighborhoods and wondered about the possibility of the QFC site being developed. Ms. Liu replied that given the economy, the owner of the QFC site is still interested but somewhat unsure about when they might redevelop. She added that the study they are doing will hopefully bring some comfort to people so that they can see that they will still be able to move goods and services.

Commissioner McDonald wondered about ways to integrate the schools and asked if, related to the bow-tie couplet and bus transit, there is going to be a contra flow lane northbound. Ms. Liu answered that there was. Commissioner McDonald asked about locations of intersection improvements that are within the UDF. Ms. Liu responded that there were good comments and that this intersection improvements are really conceptual.

Commissioner Krikawa commended Ms. Liu on the improvements that have been made in the UDFs since the last time the Commission saw them. She commented that it might be a good idea to discuss all of these rezones around station areas at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Commissioner Hough Beck noted that a similar couplet is in Redmond and asked if DPD staff has talked to them. Commissioner Leighton noted that she thought they were taking it out and changing the access to Redmond Town Center.

Ms. Liu thanked the Commission for their time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 9:00 am.