



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Michael Austin, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, April 23, 2020
Online Meeting
Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Michael Austin, Sandra Fried, David Goldberg, Grace Kim, Rick Mohler, Amy Shumann, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble, Rian Watt, Patti Wilma

Commissioners Absent: Kelly Rider, Julio Sanchez

Commission Staff: Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Connie Combs, Planning Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Commission Coordinator

Guests: Katherine Idziorek

Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/when-we-meet/minutes-and-agendas>

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Chair Michael Austin called the meeting to order at 7:45 am and recognized that we are on indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people. Land acknowledgement is a traditional custom dating back centuries for many Native communities and nations. For non-Indigenous communities, land acknowledgement is a powerful way of showing respect and honoring the Indigenous Peoples of the land on which we work and live. Acknowledgement is a simple way of resisting the erasure of Indigenous histories and working towards honoring and inviting the truth. Chair Austin provided a preview of the agenda. He announced that the next meeting will be held on May 14. This meeting will also be held online.

ACTION: Commissioner Rian Watt moved to approve the April 9, 2020 meeting minutes. Commissioner Rick Mohler seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Announcements

Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director Vanessa Murdock stated that this is the Planning Commission's second online meeting. She reviewed the format of the meeting and thanked the Commissioners for their patience as we all learn this new format together. She noted that we are not

able to provide for in-person public comment as we usually do, rather public comment may be submitted in advance of the meeting and will be read aloud during the public comment portion of the agenda. This meeting format is in accordance with rules laid out by the Attorney General in terms of Open Public Meetings Act compliance in this time of the COVID-19 crisis.

Discussion: 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Recommendations

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission (SPC) staff, provided an overview of the staff draft letter on the Commission's 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendment recommendations. The Commission received a briefing on the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) recommendations on the 2019-2020 amendments at the SPC April 9 meeting. The staff draft letter will be revised based on Commissioner comments during today's discussion. The Commission will take action on the final draft letter at its May 14 meeting. The Planning Commission's recommendations will be submitted to the City Council's Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee. That Committee is tentatively scheduled to discuss these amendments on May 27.

The following two docketed amendment proposals are recommended for adoption:

Proposed Amendment: 4831 35th Ave SW

A Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendment at 4831 35th Avenue SW has been proposed to include the Providence Mt. St. Vincent property as part of the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village. This nine-acre parcel is one full block in size, immediately adjacent to the Hub Urban Village on its north and west boundaries. The property is currently designated on the FLUM as Multi-Family Residential and zoned LR3(M). Properties to the south and east are designated Single Family Residential. Expanding the boundaries of the Hub Urban Village would add capacity for Providence to expand current uses on the property, including additional senior housing and a range of services to meet community needs. The Commission recommends adoption of this proposed amendment because Providence's current mix of residential/social services and planned expansion of uses, in addition to the property's location within a 10-minute walk of future light rail, are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's goal of establishing compact mixed-use neighborhoods to accommodate future growth.

Proposed Amendment: To amend the Delridge Neighborhood Plan goals and policies as recommended in the North Delridge Action Plan

Several amendments to the Delridge Neighborhood Plan goals and policies have been proposed as recommended in the North Delridge Action Plan. The proposed Neighborhood Plan amendments incorporate the following community priorities:

- Supporting diverse and engaged communities
- Developing dynamic neighborhood destinations
- Improving access to affordable, healthy food
- Providing active transportation choices
- A healthy Longfellow Creek basin, and
- Parks and cultural facilities that support a healthy community

The Planning Commission was briefed on the North Delridge Action Plan and Neighborhood Plan amendments by OPCD in 2019. The Commission recommends adoption of the proposed amendments

with the understanding that they were crafted incorporating data and input from a robust community engagement process over the past several years to respond to conditions that have changed since completion of the original Delridge Neighborhood Plan in 1999.

The following docketed amendment proposal is not recommended for adoption:

Proposed Amendment: 11316 and 11318 5th Ave NE

This proposed FLUM amendment would extend the boundaries of the Northgate Urban Center to include two parcels immediately outside of the Urban Center boundary. The applicant has requested a FLUM change to facilitate a change from Single Family Residential to Multi-Family Residential use, and the applicant is proposing a rezone of the properties from SF7200 to LR1. The Planning Commission agrees with OPCD's recommendation that this proposal not be adopted at this time, due to its inconsistency with the Comprehensive Plan's Urban Center definition and criteria, as well as the small size of the area affected. However, the Commission believes that the Northgate Urban Center is positioned as a tremendous opportunity for future growth with the scheduled opening of the Northgate Link Light Rail Station in 2021. The City may consider expanding the criteria for an Urban Center from 0.5 miles to one mile of high capacity transit. The Planning Commission encourages a comprehensive review of the Urban Center definition and boundaries during the next Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan.

The following docketed amendments were not analyzed by OPCD:

Impact Fees

The Planning Commission was briefed on a proposed transportation impact fees amendment in October 2018. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) analysis of that proposed amendment was appealed to the Hearing Examiner. The amendment is now subject to ongoing City Council consideration. The Commission will look forward to the opportunity to review this amendment if/when it moves forward.

Alternative Name for Single Family Zones

The City Council proposed an amendment that would recommend an alternative name for single family zones, such as Neighborhood Residential, and amend the Land Use Element to implement this change. OPCD has stated this amendment is more appropriately addressed through the next Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan, with the rationale that it is a bigger change outside of the scope of the annual amendments. The Planning Commission has concerns about waiting until the 2024 Major Update to address an alternative name for single family zoning. The name 'single family' zoning is not representative of the households that currently live in those zones. Changing the name of the zoning earlier than the Major Update could inform the policy process considering alternatives to single family zoning. The Commission recommends moving the renaming effort forward sooner than the beginning of the Major Update.

Fossil Fuels and Public Health

The City Council has requested draft amendments to the Environment, Land Use, or Utilities Elements that would clarify the City's intent to protect public health and meet its climate goals by limiting fossil fuel production and storage. OPCD has stated that the level of analysis to effectively identify and evaluate potential amendments is more appropriate for the Major Update. The Planning Commission is supportive of goals and policies to reduce the impacts of climate change and will look forward to the opportunity to review such amendments in the future.

130th Street Station Urban Village

This proposed amendment would establish an Urban Village around the planned 130th Street Link Light Rail Station. OPCD is currently engaged in a 130th/145th Street community planning process. Any amendments that come out of that process could be considered in future annual amendment cycles or during the Major Update. The Planning Commission will look forward to the opportunity to provide input and feedback on any proposed Urban Village alternatives for the 130th Street Station area at the appropriate time.

South Park Urban Village Designation

The City Council proposed an amendment to assess how the South Park neighborhood meets the criteria for an Urban Village designation. OPCD has stated that an analysis of this Urban Village designation is more appropriately addressed as part of the Major Update. The Planning Commission is supportive of a comprehensive review of the City's Urban Centers and Urban Villages, including analysis and consideration of any areas for such designation.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners recommended adding language to the draft letter to consider an Urban Village around the Graham Street station in addition to the 130th Street Station. The Graham Street station was originally proposed to be built during the construction of the first Link light rail line but was not. The community has been working to plan and advocate for this station. Commissioners noted that it is likely development would occur more quickly around the Graham Street station than the 130th Street station, warranting an Urban Village designation.
- Commissioners expressed concern that many of the proposed Urban Village amendments are proposed to be delayed until the Major Update of the Comprehensive Plan. Due to potential uncertainty about the schedule for the update, Commissioners recommended advocating for these Urban Village amendments to be considered earlier than the Major Update.
- Commissioners suggested some edits to the section of the letter on alternative names for single family zones to encourage the City Council to continue moving this topic forward. This is a topic that the Commission has been working on for years and has articulated the issue in the *Neighborhoods for All* report and the *Evolving Seattle's Growth Strategy* white paper. If OPCD chooses to wait to study this during the Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan, the name 'single family zoning' would still be used for several years. Executive Director Murdock suggested that it would be appropriate for the Commission to note its concern that this amendment was not studied and bring it to the City Council's attention that this issue may merit action sooner than the Major Update.

- Commissioners suggested adding language to the "Docketed Amendments Not Analyzed by OPCD" section of the letter noting that the Planning Commission has concerns about waiting until the Major Update in 2024 for consideration of these proposed amendments.
- Commissioners requested more information on the proposed amendment related to the South Park Urban Village designation. Commissioners asked if there has been significant community involvement in that community similar to that seen in the community around the future Graham Street station. Mr. Hoey stated that there is some interest in studying whether South Park meets the characteristics for an Urban Village, and there may be some interest in removing the Urban Village designation. The City Council requested a report to evaluate if South Park does meet the Urban Village criteria. Commissioners expressed concern that changes to the Urban Village designation could change the amount of resources this neighborhood receives. Commissioners also noted that this area is likely to experience sea level rise and perhaps should not receive any additional development. The City should work to engage with this community, which primarily consists of residents who are people of color. Commissioners suggested that the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition and other community groups should be involved. Executive Director Murdock stated that staff will follow up with OPCD and the Office of Sustainability and Environment to inquire about community engagement efforts in development of the Duwamish Valley Action Plan and other efforts.
- Commissioners requested additional information about the best way to encourage the City Council to take action on those amendments that were not studied by OPCD. Executive Director Murdock suggested that the Commission submit this letter with its recommendations, then follow up with additional recommendations later. Commissioners noted that they would be willing to provide testimony at the next appropriate City Council meeting.

Public Comment

My name is Ryan DiRaimo and I'm a citizen who believes in urban decisions that create a responsible, climate focused environment. It goes without question that the city's desire to preserve single family zoning is a continued urban mistake. The idea of imaginary boundaries determining where density may go is an outdated principle that has maximized it's potential. When creating urban villages 30 years ago, we targeted density to design 10-minute walk-sheds to frequent transit use. With our growth in transit design, this 10-minute walk shed now captures beyond the urban village boundaries and services 80% of the entire city. For this reason, we need to stop pretending our housing growth terminates at imaginary boundaries. Urban villages only take up 18% of our city's developable land. We need to remove urban village boundaries and grow housing in the 30 square miles we have dedicated to single detached homes on 5,000 square foot lots. 30 square miles is a lot. It's roughly three-quarters the land mass of Paris, a city that houses 2.2 million people. It's time single family zoned neighborhoods share their amenities, share their communities, and open up the opportunity for more people to become their neighbors. I urge you to push for the un-bounding of urban villages and up-zoning of all single family zoning city-wide.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 am.