



**City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission**

Leslie Miller, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
AUGUST 23, 2012
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair David Cutler, Vice-Chair Amalia Leighton, Kadie Bell Sata, Catherine Benotto, Luis F. Borrero, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Bradley Khouri, Kevin McDonald, Chris Persons, Matt Roewe, Morgan Shook, Sarah Snider

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Josh Brower, Jeanne Krikawa, Leslie Miller

COMMISSION STAFF

Barbara Wilson-Executive Director, Diana Canzoneri-Senior Analyst, Katie Sheehy-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative

IN ATTENDANCE

Patrice Carroll, DPD; Tony Mazzella, SDOT

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 David Cutler called the meeting to attention at 7:32 am.

- **Approve: July 26, 2012 Meeting Minutes**

ACTION: Commissioner Sarah Snider moved to approve the July 26, 2012 minutes. Commissioner Catherine Benotto seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

- **Chair's Report**
 - Commission Chair David Cutler

Chair Cutler reviewed the upcoming meetings and events.

Chair Cutler noted a question that Councilmember Conlin had regarding whether or not the Commission would weigh in on the tree regulations again. Ms. Wilson reminded the Commissioners that DPD has been working on this in a broader context in the Urban Forestry Plan. She added that the component of the plan that relates to tree regulations on private property had a lot of push back from City Council to go back and look at those regulations. Ms. Wilson pointed out that the Commission's biggest message was that the City should really focus on putting the right tree in the right place in the public realm. She asked the Commission if they wanted to look at this issue again and if so, how deep to get this into their work plan. Ms. Wilson added that when they met with Councilmember Conlin he mentioned this as one of his priorities. She noted that South Lake Union was going to take a lot of work and that the Commission has a lot on their docket.

Commissioner Johnson noted that single family takes up so much of the city and that one thing it is good for is maintaining the tree canopy. He added that it would be good to keep these regulations from infringing on multi-family.

Commissioner McDonald wondered if the Urban Forestry Commission's position was similar to the Planning Commission's. Ms. Wilson stated that she was not sure and that there was some difference of opinion among members of the Urban Forestry Commission.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he thought that that they did recognize the importance of the public realm but that it is mostly spoken for with transportation, parks, and other competing uses and that you cannot get the kind of canopy that they are talking about completely in the public realm.

Commissioner Roewe stated that he thought the Commission should take this topic up. He added that the Green Factor highly rewards tree preservation.

▪ **Transit Communities Fall Education & Engagement Plan**

– Commission Director Barbara Wilson

Ms. Wilson walked the Commission through the education and engagement plan. She noted that they intended on having the Commission work on this over the summer but the SoDo arena issue derailed it. Ms. Wilson noted that they have been doing a lot of work on this in the Comp Plan Task Force meetings and it poses a challenge as they try to move big pieces of it forward. Ms. Wilson stated that the first component is to work to update the comp plan and get the framework policies in place. She mentioned that she and Katie would preview for the Commission their very basic rough draft of the presentation that they would be taking out to stakeholders in September.

Ms. Wilson asked the Commissioners to refer to the two-page document they had. She walked the Commission through the outreach plan noting that they will begin education and stakeholder engagement and she sees this as an opportunity to go back and let them see where we are going and how to get from concept to implementation. Ms. Wilson added that they will be introducing the concepts more broadly and that they will have small focus group type meetings and table discussions. She noted that they settled on three basic perspectives in how they divide the groups; urban environmentalists & transportations advocates, housing & equity folks, and civic, labor & business organizations. Ms. Wilson stated that these meetings would be 2-3 hours and that they are trying to keep the number of attendees low. She added that after these meetings happen a report would be prepared and could be given to City Council.

Commissioner Roewe asked if she thought anyone would be against this. Ms. Wilson replied that it would

probably be the same groups who are against the work in South Lake Union and Roosevelt. She added that they would not be going out to neighborhood community councils but would be approaching local chambers and would approach neighborhood advocacy from that angle.

Commissioner McDonald stated that they might support the Seattle Transit Communities for different reasons and there could be some interesting dynamics with the groups involved.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked if the press would be invited. Ms. Wilson answered that not at this point but maybe later down the road. She added that they want to start with smaller supportive groups and then later get to broader outreach.

Commissioner Persons reminded the Commission to be mindful of the regulatory reform debacle, which might have occurred due to the process not being open enough. Ms. Wilson agreed and stated that is why they wanted to bring in people who are in communities who want to hear about this in a positive way. She added that as they work on the invite list she would talk to the Commissioners about who should be at the table.

Commissioner Khouri suggested bringing in all vantage points, including more people and noted that he loved the walking walkshed idea. Ms. Wilson stated that we are not at a point where we could take people out to identify every sidewalk that needs repaired; it needs to stay broader.

Commissioner Leighton stated that maybe the wrap up event could be a public meeting and have the people from the stakeholder groups on a panel, this way they could talk about the process and it would be a way for the community to see the results. She added that she would like to know more about the blog posts. Ms. Wilson stated that they are talking about getting a SPC blog site.

Commissioner Bell suggested that the Commission consider a focus group with some of the agencies that would implement these policies such as Metro and Sound Transit.

Ms. Wilson noted that our resources are limited and that we cannot do intensive public engagement. She added that they are starting slowly and building advocacy and a groundswell of support as this rolls out. Ms. Wilson stated that it is an opportunity to talk to a broader audience and hopefully the comp plan will set us up to move forward.

- **Preview of Transit Communities Presentation for SPC Engagement**
 - Commission Director Barbara Wilson & Planning Analyst Katie Sheehy

Ms. Wilson walked the Commission through the power point presentation that can be accessed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/stcslideshow.pdf>

Commissioner Cutler stated that it seemed like there was a lot of time spent on reintroducing the issue to folks who already know it and suggested that they might want to make time to focus on the comp plan.

Commissioner Hough Beck stated that she would like to see more emphasis on the walkshed formula and on the local conditions that help shape the walkshed. She wondered why there is not high-density housing and encouraged them to reinforce the notion that it should be there.

Commissioner Johnson suggested that the recap be done in the invitation instead of the presentation. He also suggested that they have some kind of graphic flowchart about how we got to the nodes. Ms. Sheehy responded that they are still working on the maps and graphics.

▪ **Transit Communities - SPC Comp Plan Amendment**

- Special Task Force Chairs Commissioner Kevin McDonald

Commissioner McDonald stated that the land use element is where the transit communities would live. He mentioned three significant places where the comp plan policy could be amended noting that the land use element would be the main place. He added that it is a foot in the door, not the entire thing.

Commissioner McDonald walked the Commission through the working draft of the policy and stated that he is open to recommendations about policy gaps and word-smithing.

Chair Cutler noted that one of the biggest recommendations is to support this policy because of the potential to reduce green house gases. He suggested that the climate action plan be connected to this recommendation.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he really appreciated the effort and had some edits to tighten up the lingo. He added that there are a several places for clarification but he did appreciate the thought in getting the structure to the place that they could react to it.

Commissioner Khouri wondered how they manage equity and noted that the thing that is going to make it successful is economic diversity and not just the housing but places for businesses. He suggested that we might need something stronger than incentive zoning. Commissioner Roewe suggested subsidized retail. Ms. Wilson stated that she believed they said that in the Housing Seattle report.

Commissioner Benotto noted that there is nothing within the current regulations that would require more park and plaza space. She suggested that the next step be how you quantify what is enough. Ms. Wilson responded that both Ms. Sheehy and Geoff Wentlandt have been reviewing data that looks at ways to measure different components of what makes a successful community. She added that this would help with the prioritization of essential components.

Commissioner Johnson stated that you cannot provide all the things in every area.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 9:05 am.

