



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair
Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, January 26, 2017
Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Michael Austin, Keiko Budech, Eileen Canola, Lauren Craig, Sandra Fried, David Goldberg, Grace Kim, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Tim Parham, Marj Press, Julio Sanchez, David Shelton, Jamie Stroble

Commissioners Absent: Lauren Squires, Patti Wilma

Commission Staff: Katy Haima, Planning Analyst, Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director, Robin Magonegil, Administrative Assistant

Guests: Nathan Torgelson, SDCI

In Attendance: Meredith Sampson, Kaylie Duffy, Emma Argiroff, Jonathan Joseph, Rose Haas

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

Chair Grace Kim called the meeting to order at 7:33 am. She reminded the Commissioners of several upcoming meeting dates.

Minutes Approval

Commissioner Canola moved to adopt the January 12, 2017 minutes. Commissioner Austin seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.
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Announcements

Valerie Kinast, Seattle Planning Commission Interim Executive Director, made several announcements:

- Several Commissioners attended the PLUZ Committee Special Meeting on January 19, 2017 to provide public comment on the U District upzone and MHA implementation. The Commission will be following up with a written statement.
- Staff will start planning annual visits to Councilmember and department heads.
- The Executive Committee will be developing a preliminary workplan for 2017, which will be discussed at the Planning Commission retreat on February 9, 2017.

Planning Commission Officer Elections

- Director Kinast provided a recap of the process to date, and acknowledged that the communication and process was unclear at times. Director Kinast recommended that next year's workplan include the creation of a formal procedure.

- Vice-Chair Martin explained the complications that arose during the election process. Vice-Chair Martin noted that Commissioner Press was previously advised to withhold from seeking a position in a year her term was expiring, based on the uncertainty of the reappointment process. The information regarding Chair Kim's term had recently been corrected to show that her term expired in 2017. Vice-Chair Martin then explained that the Executive Committee, sans Chair Kim, had decided that they did not concur with the conclusion that a Commissioner should be disqualified for reelection based on the upcoming expiration of their term (if a reappointment is available).
- Vice-Chair Martin stated the nominating committee's nominations for each office. Chair: Grace Kim, Marj Press; Vice Chair: Tim Parham; Co-Chairs of Land Use and Transportation Committee: David Shelton and Patti Wilma; Co-Chairs of Housing and Neighborhoods Committee: Michael Austin and Lauren Squires.
- Election ballots were passed out. Commissioners began filling out the ballots.
- Commissioner Press withdrew her name as a candidate for SPC chair, stating that she could not support a decision by the Executive Committee that "deliberately puts the Commission at risk and ignores precedence. The nominations process was acrimonious and not impartial and reappointment is not a 'slam-dunk'."
- The ballots were collected.
- Vice-Chair Martin called for a motion on the nominations slate.

Commissioner McKinstry moved to accept the slate of nominees. Commissioner Sanchez seconded the motion. The slate of nominees passed. Commissioner Press abstained.

Discussion: 2016 Annual Report

Commission staff Katy Haima

- Presented a draft of the annual report.

Commission Discussion

- Add narrative that describes how the Planning Commission's input on certain issues has affected policy outcomes, and recommended using the matrices from the Comp Plan recommendations to see what was included in adopted version.
- Describe how previous Planning Commission work (prior to 2016) has influenced citywide planning issues that were in continued discussion this year, such as the Family Sized Housing report and advocating for and equity lens to be integrated into the comprehensive plan update.
- Provided specific revisions regarding layout.

Discussion: Climate Change Preparedness Letter

Disclosures and Recusals

- Commissioner Jamie Stroble, disclosed that she works for King County's Climate Action Team and that her team collaborates with the City of Seattle on climate issues. She added that she does not represent King County on the Commission.

- Commissioner Julio Sanchez disclosed that his employer, Puget Sound Clean Air, has been mandated by our Community Advisory Board to prioritize Climate Change issues as part of their work in their 4-county jurisdiction.

Commission staff Katy Haima

- Described changes made to the draft letter based on Commissioner comments from the January 12, 2017 meeting, including reorganization of the comments, changes in wording, and including support for the inclusion of equity in the plan.

Commissioner Discussion

- Commissioners questioned the language of item 4.e, and requested that the statement be strengthened and further clarified.
- Commissioners discussed the location of comments related to the Transportation element, and recommended that the comment provide the context of Seattle as part of a regional transportation network.
- Commissioners added a sentence at the end of the introductory paragraph that states the importance of cities taking a leadership role in addressing climate change in the current national context.

Commissioner Shelton moved to approve the letter with the discussed edits. Commissioner Sanchez seconded the motion. The letter was approved.

Briefing: Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

Nathan Torgelson, Director, SDCI

- SDCI permit activity on track to meet HALA goals for market-rate units.
- Policy group working on recommendations regarding unreinforced masonry buildings (URMs) to provide to the Mayor's office. The group is looking at how to balance life/safety with affordability issues, and to not create an incentive to demolish URMs, as they contribute to the historic fabric of Seattle. In addition, SDCI is working with other jurisdictions across the state that also have URMs, and lobbying with the state legislature to find options for funding.
- Working on parking regulations in the context of HALA, mainly around encouraging shared parking and more effectively using the parking that already exists.
- Working on legislation to address the problem of vacant structures awaiting demolition during permitting process, as trespassing and illegal activity on some sites is challenging for owners to control.
- Exploring strategies to improve outreach and education on rules and regulations for landlords and tenants.
- Noted that SDCI's new permitting system, Acela, should be going on line in March. The system has better accessibility and should make it easier for residents and the development community to access information and manage permits.
- Mentioned a few major projects currently under review including the Expedia campus, the Convention Center addition, and Terminal 5 improvements.
- Noted that SDCI would be hosting a booth at the Phinney Ridge Home Fair, and is planning a City-sponsored Home Fair in South Seattle.
- Continuing work on revamping public notices on proposed land use actions.

Commissioner Discussion

- Commissioners noted that while SDCI may be expediting permits for affordable housing projects, other department reviews including SDOT and SCL can prolong the process. SDCI is aware of this, and will continue working with other departments to make the process more efficient.
- Commissioners requested more information regarding the Convention Center and contribution to affordable housing. At this point, parties are still negotiating if the contribution would be a payment in lieu or if affordable housing would be provided on site. Noted that the project is requesting a street vacation; that King County owns the land around Convention Center Station; and that the project is pursuing a planned community development permit to allow for flexibility across the sites.
- Commissioners asked when the Design Review Program updates would be going to Council. SDCI is hoping to get final recommendations to the Mayor's office in Q1 with transmittal to Council following shortly after. Due to the substantial amount of time and resources dedicated to MHA-related legislation, an exact timeline is difficult to predict.
- Commissioners asked about the ADU/DADU legislation, and if there were plans to move forward. Commissioners discussed that one tactic to consider is the importance of these unit types as a mechanism to allow aging in place.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 am.