



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Linda Amato, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MAY 28, 2009 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Vice Chair- Chris Fiori, Catherine Benotto, Josh Brower, David Cutler, Jerry Finrow, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Marty Kaplan, Kay Knapton, Amalia Leighton, Kevin McDonald, Christopher Persons, Matt Roewe, Michelle Zeidman

COMMISSION STAFF

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Chair-Linda Amato, Leslie Miller

GUESTS

Bob Fischer, OPM; Gordon Clowers, DPD

IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Jenkins, Council Central Staff

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

Vice Chair Fiori called the meeting to order at 7:31.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

- Minutes approval

ACTION: Commissioner Kay Knapton moved to approve the May 14, 2009 minutes. Commissioner Michelle Zeidman seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

▪ **Chair's Report** – Commission Vice Chair Chris Fiori

Vice Chair Fiori announced the upcoming meetings: the next Executive Committee meeting is Tuesday, June 2; the next Housing, Neighborhoods and Urban Centers committee is on Tuesday, June 9; the next Full Commission meeting is on Thursday, June 11; and the next Land Use and Transportation committee is on Thursday, June 18. He noted that there will be a North Beacon Hill community meeting at El Centro de la Raza on May 30 from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Ms. Wilson reminded the Commissioners that they will co-host a series of open house meetings in June and July with the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee to solicit feedback about the draft neighborhood plan status reports. She noted that the dates and locations for the open house meetings have been selected and asked Commissioners to indicate their availability.

ACTION

▪ **APPROVE: Commission Letter to City Council Committee of the Whole on the Seattle Housing Levy Proposal**

Record of Recusal & Disclosure:

- Chair Linda Amato disclosed that her firm, ICF Jones & Stokes, works on affordable housing policy and currently has a contract with PSRC.
- Vice-Chair Chris Fiori disclosed that his employer, Heartland, is providing consulting services for affordable housing in Yesler Terrace, and that Yesler Terrace is a project for which levy funding may be sought in the future.
- Commissioner David Cutler disclosed that his employer, GGLO, designs affordable housing projects that may seek funding through the Housing Levy
- Commissioner Colie Hough-Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, provides landscape architectural services for low income housing developments.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR, provides services for affordable housing providers.
- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed he is currently President of Elderhealth Northwest, a non-profit that has received funding under the expiring levy, and will likely seek levy funding in the future to develop boarding home for impoverished elders suffering from dementia. He also disclosed that he and his firm, Tupper Mack Brower, represent developers, some of whom develop low-income housing.
- Commissioner Marty Kaplan disclosed that he is currently a candidate for City Council.
- Commissioner Christopher Persons disclosed that his firm, Capitol Hill Housing, manages and develops affordable housing and that he serves on the Housing Development Consortium's board. Capitol Hill Housing has received funding for this purpose under the expiring levy.
- Catherine Benotto disclosed that her firm, Weber Thompson, designs affordable housing.

Ms. Canzoneri reviewed the content of the DRAFT letter to Commissioner McIver about the Planning Commission's recommendations for the proposed 2009 Housing Levy. She noted that the Committee of the Whole is still reviewing the proposal and will hold their final meeting on June 11 and that the Full Council would likely vote on the proposal in mid-June.

Ms. Wilson briefly noted that the “A&F” (administrative and financial) plan directs the Office of Housing’s implementation of the ordinance. She explained that Council can make changes to the A&F plan, but that changes to the ordinance would require another public vote. The Commissioners discussed how best to express the importance of having specific requirements in the A&F plan rather than the ordinance and suggested a few grammatical revisions to the draft letter.

Commissioners discussed what level of funding should be supported and agreed that a funding level that would serve at *least* as many households as the current level would be most appropriate.

Commissioner Finrow made a motion for the Commission to write an op ed letter in addition to the letter to City Council. Commissioner Persons seconded the motion.

ACTION: Commissioner Jerry Finrow moved to approve the Housing Levy letter as amended, Commissioner Mark Johnson seconded the motion. The motion to approve the Housing Levy letter as revised and to submit an op-ed letter to the Seattle Times passed unanimously.

BRIEFINGS & DISCUSSION

- **Northgate Urban Design Framework**
- Paul Fischburg, OPM; Gordon Clowers, DPD

Recusal & Disclosure: Commissioner Mark Johnson disclosed that his firm, ESA Adolfson, is preparing the EIS for the Northgate rezone. Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design, reviewed the Draft Northgate EIS for sewer and drainage information for Seattle Public Utilities.

Mr. Fischburg presented a powerpoint of the Northgate Urban Design Framework (see attached).

Commissioner Finrow asked why North Seattle Community College is not included in the framework. Mr. Fishhburg replied that the current study focuses on the north portion of the urban village and that subsequent work will address the south portion, most likely as design of the light rail station proceeds. Commissioner Finrow indicated that it will be very important to connect this work with the college.

Commissioner Roewe commented about the location of the light rail station and asked whether or not there are any plans related to Northgate Mall itself. Mr. Fischburg replied that the focus has been on the property around the mall where new development is most likely to occur. Commissioner Kaplan suggested that this is a great opportunity to improve connections in the area and that it will be especially important to plan for the light rail station. Commissioner Finrow reiterated Commissioner Kaplan’s suggestion that the light rail station needs to be considered, particularly because significantly increased density could be appropriate for the area and would help to maximize the regional transit investment.

Commissioner Kaplan noted that while incentive zoning is a strategy to create affordable housing, it is important to be realistic about how it gets implemented in order to leverage public benefits. Commissioners Johnson and Zeidman agreed that it will be important to structure the incentives available to developers that would provide the desired public benefits.

Commissioner Hough-Beck asked about the Green Factor and whether or not any of the newer projects have green roofs. Mr. Fischburg replied that none of the new buildings have green roofs. Mr. Clowers indicated that DPD staff is currently reviewing built projects to determine what Green Factor requirements can realistically be achieved.

Commissioner Leighton asked about how the proposed changes would impact residential and economic capacity in the area. Mr. Fischburg replied that zoned capacity would be increased.

Commissioner Brower thanked Mr. Fischburg and Mr. Clowers for their presentation and suggested that the review process should be shortened for projects that meet the requirements of the urban design framework. Commissioner Zeidman agreed that the review process should be streamlined and that the light rail station should be a top consideration.

Vice Chair Fiori suggested that it would be helpful to see the current permitting process compared with the proposed process. Commissioner Finrow agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Fiori adjourned the meeting at 9:06 am.