



## City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair

Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, September 08, 2016

Approved Meeting Minutes

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Commissioners Present:	Michael Austin, Keiko Budech, Lauren Craig, Sandra Fried, Grace Kim, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Tim Parham, Marj Press, David Shelton, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble
Commissioners Absent:	Eileen Canola, Julio Sanchez, Spencer Williams, Patti Wilma
Commission Staff:	Katy Haima, Policy Analyst; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director; Robin Magonegil, Administrative Assistant
Guests:	Jessica Brand, Department of Neighborhoods
In Attendance:	Cindi Barker, Daniel Hoffman

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

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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 3:05 pm. She reminded the Commissioners of the upcoming Land Use and Transportation Committee and Executive Committee meetings.

#### **Minutes Approval**

Commissioner Marj Press moved to adopt the August 25, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Sandra Fried seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed. Commissioners Lauren Craig and David Shelton abstained.

#### **Public Comment on Freight Master Plan (FMP)**

There was no public comment given on the FMP.

#### **Action: Freight Master Plan Letter**

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission Senior Policy Analyst, presented revisions to the Commission's draft letter of support on the Freight Master Plan. The Commissioners discussed a proposed revision regarding the benefits of innovative transportation technologies and alternative delivery modes that rely less on fossil fuels and would reduce the cumulative impacts of freight movement. The Commissioners suggested adding one additional sentence recommending additional research on these

emerging technologies to inform the planning process. The letter was adopted with the proposed revisions.

**Discussion: Commercial Affordability Program**

Katy Haima, Seattle Planning Commission Policy Analyst, presented an overview of the recent Commercial Affordability Advisory Committee recommendations. This committee was convened in April 2016 to make recommendations on addressing the rising cost of commercial space for small businesses. Ms. Haima suggested that the Planning Commission provide comments to this committee before they submit their recommendations to the Mayor on September 20. The Commissioners thanked Ms. Haima for her research and stated that this issue is very complex. Small businesses are often challenged in renting commercial spaces, not only because of the rent prices but often because of the build-out costs. The Commissioners discussed the need for flexibility in the zoning code to allow for a range of commercial spaces for small businesses. A suggestion was made to create a list of small businesses that are looking for commercial space and making that list available to real estate brokers. The Commissioners discussed the availability of affordable commercial spaces within affordable housing projects. Some affordable housing developers subsidize the commercial spaces in their projects. Ms. Haima asked the Commissioners to provide additional comments by September 14.

**Discussion: Draft Mandatory Housing Affordability Editorial**

Valerie Kinast, Seattle Planning Commission Interim Executive Director, presented a draft editorial on the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) program. This editorial would be authored by the Planning Commission to express their support for the merits and benefits of the new MHA regulations. The Commissioners discussed potential media sources for distribution of this editorial and suggested that it should be written for a general public audience. The Commissioners recommended that the editorial could be turned into a potential series addressing issues such as growth, density, and affordability. It was suggested that the content and tone be informative, relevant and understandable to those who are most opposed to the MHA regulations, and also useful in countering any potential concerns with the regulations and the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) recommendations.

**Briefing: Update on HALA Outreach**

Jesseca Brand from the Department of Neighborhoods provided an update on the City's HALA outreach efforts. She presented the number of meetings the HALA team has attended and the total number of participants at those meetings. Many of those meetings included residents that were new to the HALA process. The Department has been utilizing new and creative ways to conduct outreach, including the HALA website, videos, and a new Myth vs. Fact document. The HALA focus groups have been meeting on a regular basis and will hold a combined meeting in September. The Department has been using a web-based tool called Consider It to solicit resident input on a series of questions related to HALA. The outreach team has been to a variety of community events, such as farmers' markets and festivals, and has held community conversations called CityScoop (with free ice cream) at the Seattle Summer Parkways events. The Department has been working with the Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs) to inform diverse ethnic groups and translate HALA information as needed.

The Commissioners asked Ms. Brand how they have attempted to engage youth in the community conversations. She answered that they have presented to the Youth Commission, but it is an ongoing challenge to reach youth with a complicated policy subject such as HALA. The Commissioners suggested a few non-profit organizations that could be helpful in reaching the youth community. Commissioners

also inquired about how the HALA outreach efforts and the focus groups will participate in the upcoming urban village rezoning and boundary changes. Ms. Brand responded by saying that the HALA team will rely on data-driven information and utilize a variety of outreach mechanisms as that process moves forward. She also mentioned that Councilmember Johnson, Chair of the Planning, Land Use and Zoning Committee, has been invited to the September HALA focus group meeting. The Commissioners expressed an interest in assisting wherever needed and thanked Ms. Brand for her presentation.

### **Public Comment**

Daniel Hoffman introduced himself and stated that he recently moved to Seattle. He is very interested in planning issues and potentially pursuing a career in planning. This was his first Planning Commission meeting and he enjoyed learning more about the issues that the Commission is working on.

Cindi Barker recommended that the Planning Commission review the performance and payment amounts included in the MHA regulations, and compare them with regulatory approaches in other cities. She cautioned the Commission to avoid Conservation Districts or any other opportunities that would allow the neighborhoods to dictate what constitutes “neighborhood character.”

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.**