



SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
September 23, 2004
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners in Attendance

George Blomberg, Chair; Angela Brooks, Mahlon Clements, Tom Eanes, Chris Fiori, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Mimi Sheridan, Tony To, Paul Tomita.

Commissioners Absent

Anjali Bhagat, Jerry Finrow, Matthew Kitchen, John Owen, Joe Quintana, Steve Sheehy.

Commission Staff

Barbara Wilson, Acting Director
Elizabeth Martin, Analyst

Guests

Scott Dvorak, DPD; David Graves, DPD; Lisa Rutzick, DPD

Call to Order

Chair Blomberg called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Brooks moved and Commissioner Eanes seconded to approve the September 9, 2004 Commission minutes with the following revision: the Tacoma comment was made but not by Commissioner Clements. Though no Commissioner claims these comments, Commissioners agreed they were indeed reflective of the discussion. Commissioner Eanes did not attend the 9/9/04 Commission meeting and the minutes should be corrected to reflect that he was absent. The motion was approved unanimously.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

New Commissioner Chris Fiori introduced himself. He is enrolled in the University of Washington's Master's in Urban Planning and Public Administration programs. Commissioner Fiori works for King County Metro and on Pioneer Square housing

issues. Elizabeth Martin, new Commission staff introduced herself. Ms. Martin worked last year in DPD's CityDesign as a Planning Intern. She graduated in June 2004 in the master in Landscape Architecture program at the University of Washington.

Chair's Report

- **Upcoming and Recent Activities**

Chair Blomberg referred Commissioners to the back of the agenda for a number of upcoming meetings and events noting in particular the two public meetings on the Neighborhood Business District Strategy will take place next week.

- **Center City Strategy Kickoff Event**

Chair Blomberg noted that the City had its Center City Strategy kickoff event on September 20th noting that many Commissioners were in attendance. He also noted that the Planning Commission Center City Strategy Recommendations document was distributed at the meeting. He thanked Commissioners for helping to finalize the Center City Roundtable report and noted there is a copy in everyone's folder. Ms. Wilson noted that this report and letter was distributed to all the roundtable participants as well as department heads, the council and the mayor. Chair Blomberg gave a special kudos to Commissioner John Owen for leading this effort. He also noted that the Commission document will be available on the web site in the next week.

Ms. Wilson noted that she and many commissioners also attended the Center City Kickoff event on 9/20 noting that there were remarks from Diane Sugimura, Mayor Nickels and a keynote presentation from Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution. Several Planning Commissioners attended the event including: Commissioners Bhagat, Clements, Eanes, Fiori, Krizanich, Owen, Quintana, Sheridan, To and Tomita.

Commissioner Fiori gave a general description of the event and stated that Mr. Katz gave a good national overview of what is occurring in different cities with a lot of statistics cited. Commissioner To stated that the overall message was to avoid a uniform, cookie cutter approach in Center City planning. Commissioner Sheridan noted that there is the problem of affordability and that generally, we know that the city gains by having rich, young residents living in the Center City. She noted that Mr. Katz's presentation did not address issues of affordable housing for the less than rich young residents. Commissioner To observed that it seems that topography saved Seattle from urban sprawl more so than strong planning policies. He stated that there is less of an affordability issue in many of these cities. He described Seattle's issues as the availability of redevelopable land in the Center City, densification, and neighborhood acceptance. Commissioner Sheridan noted that graphs comparing Seattle with other cities seemed to indicate discrepancies, for example Portland, but these discrepancies were not explored.

Commissioner Clements observed that several other cities have a considerable amount of redevelopable land in the Center City whereas Seattle does not. Chair

Blomberg asked if the City Council has these discrepancies in view or are they off the radar. He questioned whether there is an opportunity to make sure the focus is not lost. Commissioner Sheridan stated that the event emphasized support for the benefits of density rather than how to overcome obstacles to achieving density. Chair Blomberg mentioned that there was a vocal debate at a recent gathering in his neighborhood regarding densification.

ACTION: The Planning Commission will continue to be actively involved in the Center City efforts, will distribute its recommendations paper and other early work and will work to define its role and specific activities it will undertake in the coming months and in 2005.

- **Waterfront Advisory Team Meeting**

Chair Owen asked Commissioner Krikawa to give a short briefing on the Waterfront Advisory team meeting on 9/22. Commissioner Krikawa noted that she along with Ms. Wilson, and Ms. Martin attended the Waterfront Advisory Team meeting on 9/22. She also noted that Design Commissioners and staff were in attendance as well. She noted that it was a good group with very good insight although she did note that the Advisory Team includes designers interested in redesigning the proposed concept designs.

Commissioner Krikawa conveyed that three concept designs were generated by the Inter-Departmental Teams (IDT) groups and consultant, OTAK, in a charrette process this past summer. IDT staff analyzed results from the 22 public charrette teams and distilled concepts into 3 different concept designs. Commissioners will receive copies of these concept designs. Commissioner Krikawa mentioned that east-west connections were emphasized as well as getting people to the waterfront. Other items up for discussion included the possible relocation of the Seattle Aquarium to Interbay or an east-west configuration that took advantage of topography to include multi-levels built into the hillside. Commissioner Krikawa stated that the 3 different concept designs were very similar visually and it was difficult to discern the differences between them from the maps and sections displayed. Each concept design was depicted by one map in plan view and one section.

Ms. Wilson stated that results from the 22 plans generated in the public charrette were used by the IDT staff and consultant to generate 3 concept designs entitled: bow tie, linear, and string of pearls. Commissioner Krikawa noted that all 3 plans depicted Terminal 46 as redeveloped with a different use than the current working Port. The Longshoremen Union was represented in the Advisory Team and objected to this depiction. The Advisory Team concurred that the aim was no net loss in jobs or production although acknowledged that Terminal 46's function and jobs could potentially move to another location in future. Commissioner Krikawa mentioned that as the meeting was a formal session it did not seem appropriate to voice

Planning Commission thoughts and concerns, however, after the meeting concluded, she received input that Planning Commission comments would be appreciated. She cited Commission concerns about public involvement and transparency. She thought that the IDT process, filters, selection criteria, and what was considered important by the review teams should all be shared with the public and participants in the Waterfront Planning process.

Commissioner Krikawa stressed that at this stage in the process, the Waterfront Advisory Team should be working on a Concept Plan and that it was perhaps a mistake to graphically depict specific elements in the plan and section. Advisory Team members were honing in on specific streets and street widths. She suggested that a list of common themes identified by the IDT groups would have been more on target.

ACTION: The Planning Commission will continue to monitor and observe Waterfront Advisory Team meetings. The Planning Commission will continue to make recommendations to staff and City officials on substance and process through its SDC/SPC Joint Waterfront Subcommittee. The Planning Commission is particularly interested in weighing in on the Concept Plans and the continued public involvement strategy.

COMMISSION PROJECT REVIEW

UPDATE ON MONORAIL

- **Monorail Review Panel**

Lisa Rutzick, DPD Staff and Coordinator of the Monorail Review Panel, briefed the Commission on the Monorail Review Panel (MRP) activities. The MRP has been engaged in reviewing the Monorail project for the last year. She reminded Planning Commissioners that the Monorail Review Panel is a subcommittee of the Seattle Design Commission with members from the Seattle Planning Commission and the Seattle Design Review Boards. MRP was created to review the Seattle Monorail Green Line project to ensure design excellence and the integration of the Monorail into the City. Ms. Wilson noted that currently Commissioners Sheridan and Tomita are representing the Planning Commission on MRP and we have one vacancy.

Ms. Rutzick noted that the MRP activities have been on hiatus in the last few months as the Seattle Monorail Project (SMP) is engaged in reviewing the current proposal submitted by Cascadia Monorail team. She noted there was a tour of the Green Line and Commissioner Tomita attended. Starting in October the group will again start to meet regularly. MRP will talk with the SMP contractor to plan for the next phase of the project. Ms. Rutzick expressed the hope that the Planning Commission would continue to take part in the MRP through the end of 2005. She

complimented the Commission on their invaluable input. The anticipated review process consists of a 1st level review that is more station specific; a 2nd level review that looks at the station and the broader surrounding area. Ms. Rutzick asked the Commission to remain involved through the 2nd level review process. The 3rd level review will consist of design specifics such as details and finishes and is not appropriate for Commission involvement. There will be updates by the Station Area Task Force. The 2nd level review schedule is still to be determined. Most likely, the first half of 2005 will wrap up the 1st level review and the second half of 2005 will complete the 2nd level review process. This is assuming that the contract will be awarded next month. Other factors that might slow this timeline down are the recall initiative and upcoming holidays.

Commissioner Sheridan expressed her concern that the SMP Board is interested in different things in the monorail stations than the MRP. She is concerned that the two groups are going in different directions. Commissioner Clements asked if the MRP has jurisdictional authority. Ms. Rutzick responded that the MRP is purely an advisory board subcommittee and that it can make recommendations similar to the role of the Planning Commission. However, the MRP is working closely with the permitting staff to recommend conditions attached to permit approval. In this way, the MRP can propose conditions based on panel deliberations and permitting staff may choose to accept MRP conditional recommendations. The conditions are appealable, but if enforced, do carry regulatory authority.

Chair Blomberg asked about the status of MRP determinations and conditions. Ms. Rutzick responded that two Master Use Permits have been applied for: the Dravus Street Station and the Elliott/Mercer station. The Dravus station location has changed since the permit application was made; consequently, that application is on hold. An application for the Elliott Mercer Station was also submitted and is currently on hold as well. Future reviews of the stations are likely to occur in at least three design phases, while design review of the guideway is likely to occur in at least two separate phases.

Commissioner Sheridan pointed out that in the case of the Pioneer Square Station the Pioneer Square Board will also review. Commissioner Clements asked how MRP will check to see if their recommendations are followed. Commissioner Sheridan responded that MRP has a set of design guidelines that specify when the next review is to take place; however, there are new staff and a new process which is impacting the situation.

Ms. Rutzick stated that staff is considering urging for an open house to review all of the station work noting that many of the SMP architectural firms have completed about 10% of the work but it has not been presented to the public. She mentioned that there is the concern that some of the previous work will be changed and that some people may become too wedded to these preliminary designs. Her view is that the MRP needs to see what is out there and either endorse it or not. Commissioner Tomita recommended that if there is such an open house, there be room for other proposals, comments and alternatives to each station.

Chair Blomberg asked if the staff's draft linear review process has been shared with the MRP. Ms. Rutzick agreed that it is an important document though the review process is still a draft developed by the City. It is called the First Implementing Agreement.

Ms. Wilson urged the Commission to think in terms of the 2005 Work Plan and to consider the Commission's role in the monorail project. She stated that there seems to be a strong continued role for the Planning Commission in MRP through 2005. She noted that Commissioner Sheridan will continue her involvement in the MRP. Commissioner Tomita's term will end; however the Planning Commission may take action to continue his involvement with the MRP as a Planning Commission representative. Commissioner Tomita announced that he would be open to another Commissioner assuming that position but may be willing to stay on as a representative of the Planning Commission if so desired. There is currently a vacancy in the Planning Commission's three allotted position as Commissioner Sheehy stepped down from MRP a few months ago. The Executive Committee has nominated Commissioner Bhagat to join the MRP and she is considering the position. Commissioner Bhagat has requested more information regarding what is entailed to ensure it is a good fit for her expertise. The City Monorail Staff has requested that the Planning Commission stay involved with MRP through the 1st and 2nd reviews and perhaps some of the 3rd review.

ACTION: The Commission will make a formal determination about its involvement in the MRP in the context of its 2005 work plan. The Planning Commission will continue to have the primary review responsibility for monorail station area planning throughout the project planning phase.

- Monorail Station Area Planning

Scott Dvorak and David Graves, DPD Monorail Station Area Planning staff, presented an update on monorail station area planning. Staff is working on draft Station Area Action Plans and will attend the Planning Commission's October 14th meeting to give a more thorough briefing of the Action Plans. Mr. Dvorak noted that Commissioners will receive copies of the plans to review beforehand but noted some basics of how the plans are organized. He stated that in each plan there are eight elements, three corridor elements and five station elements. The Corridor Elements include operations, streetscape, and zoning and land use. The Station elements include access, parking, zoning and land use, strategic development sites, and the public realm. Specific access improvements around each station will be included, such as more details about corners and intersections.

Mr. Dvorak gave an overview of upcoming public involvement activities noting that in October staff plans to introduce the Action Plans to the community by attending regularly scheduled community meetings. He noted in November there will be three city-wide open houses in Ballard, Downtown and West Seattle. He stated that the information on all of the 19 stations will be on display at the public open houses.

Staff plans to work with the media to disseminate information and announce the open houses as well as get some of the specific segment-oriented information into neighborhood papers. The Commissioners are welcome to attend the community outreach meetings and/or the public open houses. He noted that in December staff will compile the Final Draft Station Area Action Plans.

Mr. Dvorak noted that City monorail staff has been talking with the Mayor's Growth Management Sub-Cabinet and Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis regarding the implementation plans for station areas plans. It is not yet finalized and he would love Planning Commission input in this regard. Mr. Dvorak mentioned that of the elements in the implementation plan, some have specific stewards and funding sources and some do not particularly in the area of public realm. DPD staff asked if the Commission would consider being a steward of the public realm element. Other elements have a timeframe and a responsible party or parties.

Commissioner Krikawa asked if there were specific things in the transit way agreement that DPD staff could promise the community. For example, at the West Seattle station, are there specifics regarding sidewalk widths. She asked whether there are certain streets identified for improvements that the community has requested. She emphasized that this is important to people who have attended monorail meetings and given their input. These community members need to know that their requests are being heard and that certain things are actually going to happen. Mr. Graves answered that the transit way agreement identifies major pedestrian routes within a quarter mile of the stations. SMP is required to make major improvements along those routes. At this stage, a guideway permit or MUP will trigger Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to specify those improvements along major pedestrian routes. Mr. Graves noted that Exhibit C in the Transit Way Agreement details parking impacts, etc.

Ms. Wilson asked DPD staff what would be helpful feedback from the Commission at the 10/14 Full Planning Commission meeting. Monorail staff replied that summaries and draft station area action plans would be distributed to Commissioners. Commissioner Krikawa pointed out that a presentation on a specific example of a station area action plan from monorail staff at the next meeting would be more helpful and would illicit more useful feedback for DPD staff rather than a 20-page document that she would read and review. There was strong concurrence for this approach from the other Commissioners. Mr. Dvorak and Mr. Graves noted that they will focus their presentation to the Commission on one or two specific examples. They also stated that although they would not be giving presentations at the open houses - it will be more of a walk around format to look at boards of the 19 stations -- it might be a useful way for Commissioners to get a look at all the stations area action plans.

DPD staff then handed out outlines of City policy regarding "hide and ride". Mr. Dvorak stated that "hide and ride" refers to monorail riders who park in neighborhoods adjacent to monorail stations. Commissioner Krizanich asked what is the station area planning role regarding parking. He responded that parking is

under the SMP's purview. He also noted that most monorail stations will be located in urban villages. In general the City's comprehensive plan and neighborhood plans discourage single purpose parking facilities in urban villages. Thus parking is dealt with as a combination of City policy and SMP's ability to build parking facilities. Mr. Graves mentioned that the neighborhoods are strongly divided, about 50-50, of those in support of constructing parking facilities and those against. Commissioner Krikawa inquired about the relationship of Metro transit service to the monorail stations. Staff responded that Metro is revamping its routes and intends to coordinate with monorail station locations. He noted however, that Metro's timeline is different than SMP's and this coordination will not happen for several years. Mr. Graves mentioned that Metro starts their next 6-year planning process this year.

ACTION: The DPD Station Area Planning team will brief the Planning Commission on October 14th. The presentation will focus on a specific example of a station area action plan. The Commission will provide DPD staff feedback on the elements and types of details included in the plans. The Commission will also provide advice regarding the station area action plans implementation proposal.

Northgate Open Space & Pedestrian Connections Draft Plan

Ms. Wilson presented an overview of the Northgate Open Space & Pedestrian Connections Draft Plan to Commissioners. The Plan includes the following sections: Background on the Plan; Existing Policies & Regulations; Public Involvement; Conclusions and Recommendations; and Implementation. The Conclusions and Recommendations section contains recommendations from the Planning Commission followed by recommendations by DPD. The Implementation section includes a matrix and vignettes.

In his absence Commissioner Owen submitted comments regarding the Plan. He stated that the map started out as a record of the Northgate public workshop. Ms. Wilson noted that Lyle Bicknell, DPD staff, brought the map to the Northgate Stakeholders group and added their input into the map. Commissioner Krikawa stated that she agreed with Commissioner Owen's comments regarding the map: she would like to see included a map specifically from the charrette. Commissioner Krikawa asked if the 8 ½"x 11" report is more of a Commission product and the 11"x17" document (map and vignettes) more of a DPD/Hewitt Architects document. Ms. Wilson responded that the Plan report has evolved and is a combination of both.

Commissioner Eanes commented that he agreed with Commissioner Owen's comments about the emphasis on the Northgate Mall, however, the focus at the public workshop was different. Participants were interested in the area surrounding the Mall but did not seem to care about the Mall itself. Commissioner Eanes asked if one map from the workshop should be included or four, one from each of the

working team. He commented that this process seems analogous to other City planning processes in that public involvement appears to get lost. He mentioned Northgate workshop participants who made specific recommendations regarding access to bus stops, and that this level of detail in the public comments has been lost in both documents. Commissioner Sheridan noted that the Commission was originally concerned that the plan not focus on just the mall and it look more broadly at the Urban Center and pedestrian connections. Commissioner Krikawa mentioned that the Northgate Subcommittee recommended including some specific language about pedestrian connections through and around the Mall. She suggested that the Commission add a recommendation in the SPC recommendation section of the report that addresses this issue. Commissioner Eanes recalled a discussion he had with Commissioner Owen about this subject. They discussed a ring of barriers around the Mall and the aim to specify where connections could occur. He stated that the Commission could address a particular property owner and recommend that these interventions and connections be addressed. This would stop short of a redevelopment plan for the Mall.

Chair Blomberg asked if the DPD recommendations align with the Commission's recommendations. He asked whether there are important distinctions that we don't want to lose. Commissioner Sheridan pointed out that she thought it was the Commission's role to say things that DPD is not able to say. Ms. Wilson commented that it is appropriate for the Commission to make either general or specific recommendations that may refer to specific properties such as the Northgate Mall. Ms. Wilson asked if the Commission wanted more time to review the document before issuing an action and suggested that Commissioners review the set of recommendations in the document attributed to the Commission and DPD. Commissioner Sheridan asked if there are blatant contradictions between the sets of recommendations. Ms. Wilson answered that there are not and the DPD recommendations actually build on workshop results and the Planning Commission recommendations.

ACTION: The Planning Commission approved the Northgate Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Draft Plan pending the inclusion of the public workshop map in Section 3 Public Involvement, a statement about pedestrian connections through and around the Northgate Mall and additional final refinements up until October 5th (or the final document revision deadline). The Commission will also present its recommendations to City Council for adoption in late October.

ALASKAN WAY VIADUCT

Ms. Wilson provided copies of the City Council's revised guiding principles for decisions related to the Viaduct/Seawall project. The principles were originally crafted by Councilmember Conlin and include much of the Planning Commission and Design Commission recommendations. The two Commissions were invited to attend the City Council Committee of the Whole (COW) meetings on 9/13/ 04 and

9/20/04. Chair Blomberg and Commissioner Owen attended the first COW on this topic and Commissioner Owen attended the recent 9/20/04 session as well. David Spiker and Nic Rousow of the Design Commission attended the 9/13/04 meeting. David Spiker attended the 9/20/04 session on behalf of the Design Commission. The guidelines have been significantly revised and will be available to provide decision-making direction at a forum on the Viaduct on September 24th where Council, the Executive, SDOT and WSDOT will all come together to work through the decision-making process for a preferred alternative. Ms Wilson noted that the general public is invited to attend this forum from 8:30 am – 12:00 pm.

2005 DRAFT WORK PLAN

Ms. Wilson noted that Commissioners have a draft 2005 work plan in their red folders. She noted the draft work plan to date represents some preliminary discussions in the Commission committee meetings. She encouraged Commissioners to look it over and to consider the projects that are listed and make sure the right projects are included. She noted that over the next few months the goal will be to fill in the blanks by considering what projects and activities the Commission will work on in 2005.

Public Comment

No public comments were made

Adjournment

Chair Blomberg adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.