



**City of Seattle**  
**Seattle Planning Commission**

Tony To, Chair  
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**FEBRUARY 14, 2008**  
**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

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**Commissioners in Attendance**

Tony To - Chair; Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Chris Fiori, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Martin Kaplan, Kay Knapton, Kirsten Pennington

**Commission Staff**

Barbara Wilson-Director, Casey Mills-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative Specialist, Andrea Clinkscales-Intern

**Commissioners Absent**

Linda Amato, Chelsea Levy, M. Michelle Mattox, Kevin McDonald, Leslie Miller,

**Guests**

Bob Morgan, Council Central Staff; Councilmembers Tim Burgess and Bruce Harrell, City Council; Mark Troxel, DPD

**In Attendance**

Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Council; Christa Valles, 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**

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm.

**COMMISSION BUSINESS**

- Minutes Approval

**ACTION: Commissioner Jerry Finrow moved to approve the January 24, 2008 minutes. Commissioner Martin Kaplan seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.**

▪ **Chairs Report**

Chair Tony To noted the upcoming meetings and events. He called special attention to two important save the date items: On Thursday, February 28th the Commission will release their Affordable Housing Action Agenda and host a panel discussion. The event will take place at City Hall in the Bertha Landes Room, 6:00-7:30 pm. On Thursday, April 24, 2008 the Commission will hold an all day retreat.

Executive Director Barbara Wilson reported that there is a stakeholder advisory group for the Shoreline Master Plan and that Commissioner Mark Johnson will serve as the Seattle Planning Commission's representative on that group.

▪ **Welcome New Councilmembers Tim Burgess & Bruce Harrell**

Chair To welcomed Councilmembers Burgess and Harrell. He gave a brief background of the Seattle Planning Commission and then asked the Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves to the two new Councilmembers.

Chair To asked the Councilmembers to talk a little bit about their backgrounds, their goals and visions, and to tell the Commission how it could best assist them.

Councilmember Bruce Harrell began by sharing his background as a lawyer with experience in telecommunications. He noted that he will chair the Energy and Technology Committee, serve as Vice Chair of the Public Safety, Human Services and Education Committee and serve as a member of the Housing and Economic Development Committee. Councilmember Harrell thanked the Commission for their service.

Councilmember Tim Burgess shared his background noting that he is a Seattle native, married with three children. He added that he will chair the Public Safety, Human Services and Education Committee and serve as vice-chair of the Planning, Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee.

Commissioner Mark Johnson noted that in the Central District in regards to neighborhood planning that people pushed for up zones and ran into the gentrification argument. Commissioner Johnson asked the Councilmembers for their insight. Councilmember Harrell noted that we need to come up with financial tools and strategic plans to create financing for affordable housing.

Commissioner Chris Fiori noted that in terms of getting people to live in dense areas that development of infrastructure needed to be coordinated, for example between City Light, SDOT and developers.

Councilmember Harrell asked how City Light could get more creative about putting in more lighting without raising rates. Councilmember Burgess noted that a lack of coordination in regards to infrastructure is common and wondered if we could do things faster.

Councilmember Harrell wondered just what the capacity for the City is. He noted that we embrace density but we should work backwards from what is the maximum capacity for Seattle.

Commissioner Finrow asked the Councilmembers what their views were regarding preserving industrial lands. Councilmember Burgess stated the he would have voted in favor of Councilmember Conlin's

amendments that took some areas out of the ‘downzone’. He added that he supported the concept of preserving industrial land and does believe that we need to protect some of the core industrial areas. Councilmember Burgess noted that it is important for the diversity of the workforce and that he does not want to see a city comprised of only upper class and childless people.

Councilmember Harrell stated that he agrees with Councilmember Burgess. He added that he would like to see businesses recruit in Seattle schools for working class jobs.

Commissioner Kirsten Pennington questioned what the Council is doing to coordinate with other jurisdictions. Councilmember Burgess replied that there is a lot of coordination between police and fire departments regionally and that there is good disaster planning. He added that he would like to see a “Port of Puget Sound” and more of a metropolitan government. Councilmember Harrell noted that we must think regionally and have regular meetings to coordinate efforts.

Commissioner Martin Kaplan asked what Council is doing in regards to challenges with the school districts and families moving in order to get their kids into different districts. Councilmember Burgess noted that the City does not control the school districts but that he believes that the new Superintendent and the school board will bring about some good changes. Councilmember Burgess added that the City does give the schools a substantial amount of money and thus does play a role. Councilmember Harrell noted that many kids do not have adequate family support or role models.

### **COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

- **ACTION: Updating Neighborhood Plans**  
- Discussion & Possible Vote

**Recusal & Disclosures: Chair Tony To disclosed that he is a voting member of the Southeast District Council and a member of the Rainier Chamber of Commerce. Commissioner Tom Eanes disclosed that he is a member of the Belltown Neighborhood Districts Land Use and Housing Committee. Commissioner Martin Kaplan disclosed that he is a member of the Queen Anne Community Council and their Land Use Review Committee. Commissioner Kay Knapton disclosed that she is a consultant for the Capitol Hill Improvement District. Commission Mark Johnson disclosed that he is a member of a Central District Community Group.**

**ACTION: Commissioner Jerry Finrow moved to approve the letter. Commissioner Chris Fiori seconded the motion.**

Chair To called for discussion. Ms. Wilson noted that the goal is to approve the letter today in order to meet Councilmember Sally Clark’s request to provide commission comment and recommendation by mid-February.

Eugene Wasserman with the North Seattle Industrial Center inquired if he could ask a question and the chair allowed it. He then asked whether the Commission knew if the BINMIC neighborhood would be part of the neighborhood plan update. He added that the decision making process for the updates

seems unclear. Ms. Wilson replied that she understands that the intent is to look at all 38 neighborhoods that previously planned during the neighborhood planning process which would include both of the MIC's.

Commissioner Colie Hough-Beck asked what the Commission's role was in the process. Ms. Wilson noted that Council and the Executive have both indicated a strong interest in the Commission's deep involvement in the effort but the exact details of the involvement still need to be worked out.

Commissioner Finrow questioned if they will identify any neighborhoods beyond the 38 original ones. Ms. Wilson answered that question remains and that is an issue the Commission could address.

**ACTION: Commissioner Jerry Finrow called the matter to question. The motion to approve the letter passed unanimously.**

▪ **2008 Proposed Comp Plan Amendments**

- Presentation of (first round) proposed amendments  
Bob Morgan, Council Central Staff

Chair To called for disclosures or recusals.

**Recusal & Disclosures: None**

Ms. Wilson noted that, while discussing a particular amendment it may become clear whether a Commissioner feels that they may need to disclose. She recommended that they disclose or recuse at the moment it becomes clear to them that they should.

Bob Morgan, Council Central Staff, reviewed the process and background of the proposed comp plan amendments. He noted that City Council is not making decisions on the merits of the proposed amendment but just deciding if it is appropriate to be reviewed this year. Mr. Morgan added that Councilmember Clark has extended the deadline for submitting amendments so there may be more added. Mr. Morgan gave a brief description of each of the proposed amendments.

- 1) Add a policy to the Neighborhood Planning Element related to constructing lids over I-5 to connect First Hill and Capitol Hill to Downtown.
- 2) Remove the Sand Point policies from the Comprehensive Plan. Policy language would be incorporated into another planning document.
- 3) Amend the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to redesignate areas within the Livable South Downtown study area from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use and remove some areas from the Duwamish / Manufacturing Industrial Center (MIC).
- 4) Amend the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to redesignate a portion of the South Lake Union Urban Center from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use.
- 5) Amend the FLUM to redesignate a one block area, bounded by 15<sup>th</sup> Av. NW to the east, NW 50<sup>th</sup> St. to the north, 17<sup>th</sup> Av. NW to the West and NW 49<sup>th</sup> St. to the South, from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use.

- 6) Amend the FLUM to redesignate an area east of Harbor Av. SW and North of SW Spokane St., known as the Harbor Avenue Corridor Property, from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use and remove the area from the Duwamish MIC.
- 7) Amend the FLUM to redesignate an area bounded by Airport Way S. to the north and east and interstate access ramps to the south and west, known as the Stadium East Property, from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use and remove the area from the Duwamish / MIC.
- 8) Add new goals and policies to the Utilities Element related to development of solar energy infrastructure.
- 9) Add new goals and policies and consider adding a new element to the Comprehensive Plan related to preservation of existing trees and increasing Seattle's tree canopy.
- 10) Add a new policy prohibiting location of bicycle trails within 100' of an existing short line railroad within the Ballard Interbay Northend MIC.

Commissioner Finrow asked if they had more information on the lids proposed in the first proposed amendment. Mr. Morgan asked if Mark Troxel from DPD could field the question. Mr. Troxel answered that there could be an opportunity for Federal funds during the rebuild of Interstate 5 to create some lids. Commissioner Tom Eanes said that Yesler Terrace is being redeveloped and that they want more connectivity to downtown, which the lids could provide.

Commissioner Pennington wondered if the Commission is deciding if they agree with the proposed amendments or only if they should be studied further. Ms. Wilson answered that the Commission is only determining if they should be studied and put on the docket for the 2008 update cycle.

Mr. Morgan stated that the Future Land Use Map does not have to match up exactly to zoning. He added that rezoning of small areas does not necessarily need a comp plan amendment.

Commissioner Finrow asked how many square feet are being considered for rezoning from industrial to other uses. Mr. Troxel did not have an answer but stated that he will work on getting one.

Commissioner Finrow wondered what the current underlying zoning was on amendment 6. He also wondered what the boundaries of the super fund site were. Mr. Troxel did not have an answer but stated that he will work on getting one.

**Recusal & Disclosures: Commissioner Colie Hough Beck, Hough Beck and Baird, disclosed that the Port of Seattle is one of her clients.**

Commissioner Kaplan noted that it seemed premature to get specific about the properties within the South Downtown study before DPD had completed the South Downtown study. He wondered if it was reasonable to table the sixth amendment until the study is complete.

Commissioner Finrow suggested including seismic liquefaction zones for amendments 3, 6 & 7.

Chair To stated he felt the amendment 8 pertaining to solar energy seemed very technical and specific and was perhaps inappropriately specific for a comp plan amendment.

Commissioner Finrow agreed and stated that many of the proposed amendments seemed to be inappropriate in the context of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Eanes noted that the applicant of amendment #8 should have more information about

what changes were made in the suggested language.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Center, stated that in regards to #10 there is ongoing conflict between bicycles and industrial lands. He noted that many areas in other parts of the county bicycle paths are separated from railways by fences. Mr. Wasserman noted that 5 people have died in Seattle and Portland due to being struck by trucks and other heavy vehicles.

Commissioner Kaplan questioned if there are other way to solve this besides the Comp Plan.

Commissioner Johnson noted that this seems like a very specific thing for the comp plan and wondered if it should be looked at by neighborhood planning instead.

Mr. Wasserman noted that the Ballard neighborhood plan is for the new proposed bike path, while the Ballard Interbay Northend Manufacturing Industrial Center plan is against it, so neighborhood planning will not solve it.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Chair To adjourned the meeting at 5:32 pm.