

CNC January 28, 2013 Meeting Minutes

District Council representatives in attendance: Chas Redmond, (Southwest District Council); Phil Shack, (North District and CNC Chair); Chris Leman, (Lake Union District and CNC Budget Committee Co-Chair); Laine Ross, (Downtown District and CNC Neighborhood Matching Fund Committee Chair); Irene Wall, (Northwest District Council and Neighborhood Planning Committee Chair); Tony Provine, (Northeast District); Jody Grage, (Ballard District Council); Lauren Balter, (Magnolia/QA District Council); Sharon Sobers, (Central District Council); Andrew Taylor (East District); Dick Burkhart, (CNC Transportation Committee Co-chair); Gabrielle Gerhard, (Northeast District Council) Ed Marquez, (CNC Vice-chair); Bill Bradburd (CNC Budget Committee Co-chair)

Guests: Marco Lowe, Office of Intergovernmental Relations; Morgan Shock and David Cutler, Seattle Planning Commission

Others in attendance: Cindi Barker, Tod Rodman, Kirk Robbins, Victoria Nelson, Kate Martin

Agenda and Meeting Minutes Approval

Members approved the agenda and minutes from the November CNC meeting. CNC members wished to add agenda items relating to social media and DON support if time allowed.

Seattle Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is comprised of 16 volunteer members who advise the Mayor/SDOT/DPD, etc on “anything plannerly”, transportation, land use, etc. The commission act as stewards for the Comp Plan, which outlines how growth is to be managed in the city. Will be briefing Council in March on transit communities. There was no coordinated policy around emerging transit nodes, including trolley, light rail, bus rapid transit, etc. Planning Commission released a report in 2010 called Seattle Transit Communities, which looked at broad city strategies for coordinating land use and transit issues. City agencies asked how this information could be included in the Comp Plan. Looking to better leverage transit investments, including housing, employment, etc.

Transit communities augments 1990’s urban village strategy. Benefits include diversity, better housing, support of business districts, reduction of carbon footprint, preservation of agricultural lands. Transit communities differ from urban villages in that they address additional factors.

Goal is to provide a transparent, intentional, proactive way to address land use issues. Each transit community is unique and city will need to tailor zoning etc. to best address the community’s needs. Adjustments can be made for topography, such as hills, highways, etc.

Boundaries presented are not set at this time, but serve as illustrations.

Q. CNC member asked for clarification of how areas were determined? Is each dot on the map a stop?

A. No, do not want to include every stop. Idea is to include nodes of transit activity. One point designates the average of many important points.

Q. CNC member asked about Greenwood and Alaska, which are defined as transportation corridors and single transit lane arterials. If density is increased past a certain point, transit begins to fail.

A. In those cases, and others like them, they would be identified as a special case. This policy does not get to the level of specifics. There will be a community-driven, planning approach to address this type of issue. Heart of the policy is to get land use/transit, etc out of silos and look at them more holistically.

C. Street typology is vague and should be more specific. Density level is not well spelled out. Don’t see the need for this policy...urban village policy is adequate.

A. City is looking for better way to direct investments to align with regional and city transit investments. Urban village strategy does not always line up with this. This policy simply establishes framework, does not get down to a granular level; this work needs to follow. Each neighborhood is unique and community needs to be involved to determine how this policy would be implemented.

C. Need to make language apparent. "Frequent Transit Service" is vague. Document doesn't clearly spell out need to address at neighborhood level.

A. Did stakeholder outreach, engaged business, labor and civic groups, housing and equity groups. Welcome CNC's suggestions as well. Will present this information to Council in March.

C. We're talking about a lot of money. Transit corridors are already full. Adding density will only exacerbate existing problems.

A. Only addresses existing or planned transit; not looking at adding additional transit/density. Not intended as a way to direct more transit lines.

C. Neighborhood plans were more than a tool for accommodating growth, but rather a tool to enhance, protect and promote neighborhoods by increasing livability, affordability, supporting business districts, etc. Neighborhoods were originally promised that neighborhoods that exceeded their growth targets would be looked at and infrastructure needs, etc. would be addressed before more growth would be encouraged. There was no outreach to plan stewardship groups, etc.

Q. When jobs are mentioned, do you mean construction jobs?

A. Most resilient business districts are surrounded by high density areas....Queen Anne, Capitol Hill, etc. District is served by bus, walking etc.

C. Wondering how to bring in higher-paying jobs, not just retail.

C. Urban village goal was to include everything needed in the neighborhood, rather than increasing ways to get out of the neighborhood. Not looking at congestion on I-5, I-90, etc. Importing workers from outside.

C. Urban villages and plans are old. Much has changed, boundaries have moved. Need to increase densities in some areas, need to provide affordable housing. Shouldn't see Planning Commission as evil entity....change is coming and we should be glad that people want to live here and our economy is not as bad as other areas.

C. Urban village strategy has not been very successful at attracting money for improvements in neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are looking for ways to access funding; this policy should help with that.

Q. How does the walk shed strategy address an aging population who may not be able to walk to transit?

A. The policy does not address this. These are the types of issues to be addressed at a neighborhood level. This policy allows us to have that discussion.

C. Comprehensive plan is a broad, high-level policy document, BUT also contains the neighborhood plans. Some of this creates conflicts, as the plans are much more specific and may contradict higher level policy.

C. Planning Commission has supported policies that have over-ridden neighborhood plans. Feel there is a hidden agenda.

C. Would like to see language in the document pointing out that neighborhoods will steer actual outcomes.

C. Implying that there is investment to be made. Need to be sure money is actually available before encouraging increased density/zoning changes. Need to improve transit first, not after.

C. Transit communities are not a panacea. Lots of transportation dollars have gone to areas without high ridership. Hope is to improve use of funds and improve communities. Will be providing feedback from tonight and from stakeholder groups to Council in March. Planning Commission is advisory only; Council will make final changes.

Transportation Committee/Dick Burkhart

Committee drafted a letter for CNC input/approval. Copies were distributed to CNC members. King County enacted a \$20 car tab fee for transit last year; however, this will be expiring. Letter advises finding a stable, secure funding source for transit. Doesn't look like much direct funding is available from the state, so the letter focuses on local option fees. State has micro-managed regional funding. A variety of funding sources should be considered, including a small increase in gas tax in the county. Money could also be taken from tolls to fund transit.

CNC member asked if there were any bills in the legislature to address this issue. CNC member stated that there is not, but there will be, perhaps as part of larger transportation package. CNC member stated that the legislators from the suburban and outlying areas are the ones who must be swayed, not those from Seattle. CNC member stated he had not seen the letter, and would like to have had time to look it over. Letter is purposely vague to leave options open for negotiation by legislators. CNC member stated it would be a good idea to have each district send to their representatives. Letter could be adapted for each district.

Could go to Olympia on transportation lobby day and deliver it personally. Concern that letter does not have a specific ask, nor does it contain any data. CNC member stated legislators are familiar with issues. CNC member stated ask in first section was important. CNC member stated the lobby day was a good idea, but need to identify a specific ask. Committee had wanted to keep requests vague, since they don't know what might be put forward in the legislature. CNC member stated need to include larger transit community...need is statewide, not just King County. At least should make it part of the tri-region planning area. CNC member stated it would be helpful to include deadline when sending out letters for review.

CNC voted to move the letter forward, with one abstention.

Budget Committee/Chris Leman/Dick Bradburd

Committee has created a draft workplan. Committee asked for input from the CNC. What issues would they like to focus on? Would like to be more proactive, not just reactive. One area of concern is the City's pension plan...it is in mini-crisis. Another is special tax exemptions. Quarterly budget adjustments are another area of concern..public is not involved. Might look at silos between SPD, Emergency preparedness departments...opportunity for synergy. Seattle TV has cut back on airing of City Council, other areas.

Might look at finding more resources for DON. CNC member stated it would be useful to see how budget money has moved around/up/down. What is being funded, what is not?

Concern that CNC no longer is allowed to give input into Capital Improvement projects at start of the year. Would like to see 10-year look ahead on Capital projects and where funding is going. Transportation Committee going to begin considering input for next Bridging the Gap Levy.

Please send any ideas to be addressed this year to the Budget Committee.

Marco Lowe/OIR

State facing a \$2 billion budget shortfall. Part of the gap is related to the Supreme Court ruling that state must fully fund public education. City will lose money related to alcohol sales under proposed state budget. Gov. Inslee will unveil his

budget in mid-late February. Waiting for Supreme Court ruling on 2/3 ruling to raise taxes. Senate is very different; seeing bills that haven't been seen since the 90's.

City B&O tax – developing portal so taxes can be paid locally, not in Olympia. Transportation package being discussed. May be a motor vehicle excise tax.

Q. Any thoughts around expiration of \$20 car tab tax?

A. Deal has been brokered, not passed yet. Metro looking at double digit decreases after this year, if funding not found.

C. Concern over proposal for city to start charging for time filling “egregious” public record requests and other changes making it more difficult to access government.

A. City spends lots of time fulfilling requests for large law firms who turn around and sue over minor issues. Gold Bar has been bankrupted over these types of requests. Agree Boards and Commissions Room should be wired for recording.

Other issues he is working on in Olympia: human services, public health, housing trust fund, education funding and reform, transportation, economic development, public safety. Always look to federal government for funding as much as possible. Issue of using red light camera recordings for criminal cases is under discussion.

Q. CNC member asked about revenue to be raised under legalization/sale of marijuana.

A. There are tight boundaries; there will be some money, but not a lot.

Q. Question around tax increment proposals

A. Speaker Chopp is opposed to them. Cascade Land Conservancy is looking at possible use for affordable housing; but not sure this is going forward. LIDs are similar.

Q. Question about tax exemptions for buildings in South Lake Union...could redevelopment generate more funds? Why is city so broke with so much growth going on?

A. Glad to see more housing being built and holes being filled. City is actually not doing that badly....state and other cities are doing much worse.