

**SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

Monday, November 5, 2018

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Seattle City Hall, L280 Boards & Commissions Room

Approved January 7, 2019

**Commissioners Present:** Beverly Aarons, Farah Ali, Marci Taitt-Lamar, David Mooney  
Michael Padilla Ocampo, Devin Silvernail, ChrisTiana ObeySumner  
Laurie Rocello Torres, Jessica Westgren

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**Commissioners Absent:** Clifford Cawthon, Laurie Goff, Daniela Lopez

**Commission Staff:** Maureen Sheehan, Department of Neighborhoods

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**Guests:** Jeannette Blakenship, City Budget Office  
Hilary Nichols, PACE Department of Neighborhoods

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

**Welcome & Announcements**

- Ms. Jessica Westgren opened the meeting. Brief introductions followed.
- Ms. Westgren reminded the Commissioners to check their emails regarding a survey about how you feel the work group is progressing this year and any items the group would like to discuss for 2019 that is within the purview of the workgroup matrix. There will be a conversation about the survey results at the December meeting.
- Ms. Sheehan mentioned that Councilmember Mike O'Brien's office and City Council Central Staff is tentatively on the December agenda to do a briefing on ADU (Accessory Dwelling Units) and DADU (Detached Accessory Dwelling Units) legislation that the Housing Supply workgroup had a preview of.
- She also noted that an update on the Fort Lawton conversation will be happening in the January 2019 meeting.

**Minutes Approval**

- There was a motion to adopt the October 1, 2018 minutes and it was seconded. The Commission voted, and the motion was adopted.

**Budget 101**

Jeannette Blankenship, City Budget Office (CBO), Deputy Director  
Hilary Nichols, Department of Neighborhoods (DON) PACE program

[The Commission participated in activities and discussion around the budget process]

**Public Comments**

- Ms. Westgren opened the discussion for public comments. There were no public comments.

## Work Group Report Out/Work Time

- **Housing Supply** reported that they met with Mr. Andres Mantilla and Ms. Jesseca Brand of DON to discuss single room occupancies (SROs). The conversation went into DON's relationship in managing the citywide conversation regarding housing and how DON interact and responds to the needs and expectations of the community.
- **Outreach & Engagement** reported about their meeting regarding the Seattle Renter's Portal. The group went through the website and provided user experience feedback. The group will continue to follow up and provide suggestions on user accessibility.
- **Rent Stabilization/Rent Control** reported that the group did not have any bandwidth to meet and discuss. The group mentioned Proposition 10 on the ballot in California. Proposition 10 is about unrestricted rent control at the state level. A suggestion was made that this maybe a good model that this group can look further into if it passes. Ms. Maureen Sheehan suggested to draft a summary and send it to the Mayor's Office or the City Council to gauge if there is an interest and she can connect with them the Office of Intergovernmental Relations. Ms. Beverly Aarons commented that she and Mr. Clifford Cawthon mapped out the goals for the work group to work on including getting more time for renters to respond to rent hikes and this information is available in the group's file folder.
- **Renter Protection** reported that the group took a backseat for this quarter and they are waiting for after the election results to talk to the state lawmakers who oversaw the expanding of notifications for eviction process. The group will try to contact them again if these lawmakers would retain their current seats.
- A suggestion was made to have a calendar be available to all Commissioners, so everyone could see their availability for any scheduled work group meetings. The calendar will also allow the Commissioners to participate in the meetings in they are available. Ms. Sheehan reminded the Commission to utilize the Google drive and google documents to share any work group and Commission information.

## Commissioner Opportunity to Share

- Ms. Westgren shared the current litigation that is currently happening regarding Fort Lawton. The Office of the Hearing Examiner mentioned that she has until November 2<sup>nd</sup> to supply her closing arguments and/or witnesses. Fort Lawton is about converting the unused army barrack lands into affordable homes for seniors and for people who were homeless before. The lawsuit is about the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) and the environmental impacts of the proposed buildings in Fort Lawton.
- Ms. Westgren shared about the ADU/DADU lawsuit. The Office of the Hearing Examiner decided on the environmental impact statement and the Queen Anne Community Council decided to speak on behalf of everyone in the City and has filed an appeal to the Hearing Examiner's decision. The council meeting will be on Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. She added that these current lawsuits may be predatory delay tactics where it would take several years to resolve in court and adds to the costs and makes the building less affordable in the long run.
- Mr. Silvernail shared about an upcoming rally event this Wednesday at Yesler Community Center at 6:00 pm in support of Councilmember Kshama Sawant's office working to find ways to publicly fund more affordable housing in the City of Seattle. He will be having a renter's rights workshop at 5:00 pm. He also mentioned that he has been talking with the Tenant's Union and they expressed interest in doing a presentation to the Commission about tenant's rights.
- Ms. Marci Taitt-Lamar formally introduced herself to the Commission. She has a background in domestic and sexual violence advocacy in LGBTQ communities both locally and nationally. She was born and raised in the Central District neighborhood and she is passionate about disability justice.
- Mr. Jones shared that Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda introduced a budget proposal to form a Race and Social Justice analysis on the City's growth strategy. He noted that since 1994, the City of Seattle has concentrated its housing in urban villages. The proposal will formally look at how the city is

growing and what neighborhoods should contribute more. He will be reaching out to her office if they are willing to start a conversation with the Commission.

- Ms. Westgren added that Councilmember Mosqueda would like to use the Racial Equity toolkit and apply it to single-family zoning. She suggested having the Commission draft a letter of support on her proposal.
- Ms. Torres shared that she will not be attending the December meeting.
- Ms. Sheehan reminded the Commission that the attendance tracking record was reset when the Commission updated the bylaws in the October meeting.
- Ms. Obey Sumner shared that there will be an Intersectional Night on Thursday, November 8 at the Bertha Landes Knight Room. The Disabilities Commission will be having an including jubilee entitled "Grasping At Straws". She mentioned that Mr. Dae Shik Hawkins Jr. is receiving an Advocate of the Year award for his work in the sweeps, encampments, and housing justice. She added that the Commission can use this as advocates and social organizers and collaboration with Office of Civil Rights. The City Council recently adopted the UN Human Rights Defenders legislation. The legislation states that there is no protection for human rights defenders for cyber terrorism and bullying in the internet. The Seattle Police Department does not have any infrastructure for this type of protection.

### **Adjourn**

- No further business being held before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.