



**City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission**

Amalia Leighton, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
DECEMBER 10, 2015
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Austin, Molly Esteve, Sandra Fried, Yolanda Ho, Grace Kim, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Tim Parham, Marj Press, David Shelton, Spencer Williams, Patti Wilma

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Luis Borrero, Lauren Craig, Amalia Leighton

COMMISSION STAFF

Diana Canzoneri - Demographer, Robin Magonegil, Administrative Assistant, Vanessa Murdock – Executive Director

GUESTS

Susan McLaughlin, SDOT; Laura Hewitt-Walker, Geoff Wentlandt, DPD; Lindsay Masters, OH

IN ATTENDANCE

Cindi Barker, Gabrielle Esser, Wren McNally

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

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

- Vice-Chair Marj Press

Vice-Chair Press called the meeting to order at 3:17 pm. She gave a quick update on upcoming meetings, the annual holiday party and the hiring of a new Commission policy analyst.

Commissioner Jake McKinstry moved to approve the November 12, 2015 minutes. Commissioner Yolanda Ho seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Update: Right of Way Improvement Manual

- Susan McLaughlin, Seattle Department of Transportation

Vice-Chair Press welcomed Ms. McLaughlin.

If you would like to view the documents presented on the Right of Way Improvement Manual (ROWIM), it is included in the supporting documents found in the minute's section of our website.

Presentation overview:

- The Right of Way Improvement Manual is a users guide on how to design, build and manage elements in the Right of Way (ROW)
- Adopted by Directors Rule
- Used by City staff, Design Consultants, Contractors, Advocacy groups and community members
- The update is intended to reflect:
 - Modal plan design guidance (freight, transit, ped, bike)
 - Right of way allocation and priorities
 - Activating and adapting public space
 - Definitive street improvements to influence private development outcomes
- New to the manual are
 - Illustrative street types
 - Modal plan integration and design standards (extensive bike design standards)
 - Adaptive street strategies
 - Improved design guidance for green storm water infrastructure
 - Improved design guidance for ADA

Commission Discussion:

Commissioners wondered if the 10 year update cycle is standard or typical. Ms. McLaughlin replied that a 10 year update is not mandated and SDOT recommends a 5 year cycle with smaller incremental updates more often.

The Commission asked how the ROWIM dovetailed with the Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP). Ms. McLaughlin responded that the PMP is a policy document and the ROWIM is a technical document. She added that the PMP will prioritize segments of the ROWIM – the ROWIM being more of a toolkit of how to build.

Commissioners questioned protective intersections design in regards to bicycle safety. Ms. McLaughlin noted that there is a robust bicycle section in the manual.

There was some discussion regarding how SDOT would coordinate with DPD. Ms. McLaughlin stated that SDOT is trying to get to the table earlier when a Master Use Permit application is submitted and discussed with the applicant. She added that SDOT has a list of changes that they would like to see in the Land Use Code.

Vice-Chair Press thanked Ms. McLaughlin.

Action: 2016 Seattle Planning Commission Leadership

- Vanessa Murdock, SPC Executive Director

The nominees for the Seattle Planning Commission's 2016 Leadership are:

Chair – Grace Kim; Vice-Chair – Kara Martin; Housing & Neighborhoods Committee Co-Chairs – Tim Parham & Michael Austin; and Land Use & Transportation Committee Co-Chairs – David Shelton & Spencer Williams

Commissioner Patti Wilma moved to approve the slate of nominees. Commissioner Sandra Fried seconded the motion. The slate of nominees was approved.

Briefing: Mandatory Housing Affordability – Residential Program

- Laura Hewitt-Walker, Geoff Wentlandt, DPD; Lindsay Masters, OH

If you would like to view the Powerpoint presented on Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA), it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes' section of our website.

Presentation overview:

The Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) program is a new program to create affordable housing units as the city grows. The program will:

- Require that NEW multi-family residential and commercial development contribute to affordable housing
- Provide additional development capacity to offset the cost of these requirements
- Utilize a state-approved approach used by other local cities

Principles of the MHA program include the following:

- Aim to generate 6,000 affordable units toward the 20,000 affordable unit goal
- Target households with incomes less than or equal to 60% of Area Median Income (\$38,000 for one person and \$54,000 for a family of four)
- Build upon existing Incentive Zoning program
- Encourage a mix of performance and payment
- Apply broadly while considering specific exceptions (e.g., for historic areas, lakefront blocks, and the shoreline district)

Commission Discussion:

Commissioners asked several questions during and after the presentation. One question was about the process for identifying the required percentages for affordability in the MHA-Residential program. DPD staff explained that the Grand Bargain outlined methods for getting to the rates.

Another question was raised about the recruiting process and criteria for selecting participants for the neighborhood-based working groups. Staff responded that City staff is currently working on a process for forming these working groups.

Commissioners suggested including small groups who can have discussions in their native languages.

Commissioners asked the presenters how the expansion of urban village boundaries associated with implementation of HALA will occur and be integrated into the current Comprehensive Plan update process. The presenters noted that the urban village boundary expansions may be outlined provisionally in the meetings, with the Comp Plan update draft initially reflecting the provisional boundaries. It may take additional time to finalize the boundaries.

Staff added that there will be consideration regarding development standards improvements, e.g., related to setbacks and landscaping, that can help ameliorate the impacts of increased density in areas that are upzoned.

In response to a question about tradeoffs between performance and payment, Ms. Masters stated that both performance and payment are important components of the program. She added that staff is trying to make sure that people served by the program get the kinds of housing that they need. Staff is particularly interested in what might encourage developers to produce more family-sized housing.

A question was asked about providing more flexibility in materials to help reduce construction costs. Mr. Wentlandt noted that staff will be putting together a package of potential adjustments to the Building Code. Commissioners suggested a number of ideas that could help ensure that program implementation goes smoothly. They suggested hosting a developer forum to assist developers with less experience with affordable housing. They also suggested the possibility of pairing an intermediary consultant with a developer as well as outreach to lenders.

The Commission stated concern that the funding to help with implementation in these kinds of ways might be too small. Mr. Wentlandt agreed that resources are limited.

DPD and OH staff finished their presentation by asking the Commission for feedback on options for structuring the working groups, emphasizing that it will be important to use the 8 to 12 months' time period available efficiently. Commissioners discussed tradeoffs associated with options for grouping neighborhoods either by geography or by other characteristics.

Commissioners wondered what role the working groups would have. Mr. Wentlandt responded that they would be advisory but with very clear parameters on what they would be asked to weigh in on. The Commission suggest that the process be very transparent and suggested that the City consider working with an outside facilitator to work with the stakeholders.

The Commission noted that having a video as a sort of primer could be helpful for workgroup participants as well as for members of the general public interested in understanding what the work groups are being asked to do.

The Commission also suggested using imagery to help community engagement participants picture what new developments could look like.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gabrielle Esser gave public comment. She referenced the Woodward building in Vancouver, BC as a good example of how to achieve a mix of unit types and affordability with 536 market rate housing units, 125 single-occupancy affordable housing units and 75 affordable family sized housing units. In addition, the building has retail, offices, a daycare, public atrium and plaza, and a new 130,000 square foot addition to Simon Fraser University's downtown campus.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Press adjourned the meeting at 5:25 pm.