



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Linda Amato, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION FEBRUARY 12, 2009 MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair-Linda Amato, Vice-Chair Chris Fiori, Josh Brower, Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Colie Hough Beck, Mark Johnson, Martin Kaplan, Kay Knapton, Amalia Leighton, M. Michelle Mattox, Kevin McDonald, Leslie Miller, Tony To, Michelle Zeidman

COMMISSION STAFF

Barbara Wilson-Director, Katie Sheehy-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative Specialist, Diana Canzoneri-Demographer

GUESTS

Paul Fischburg, Office of Policy & Management; Judith Kilgore, Seattle Housing Authority, Ray Gastil, Gary Johnson, Department of Planning & Development

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 Linda Amato called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

- **Minutes approval**

Commissioner Kevin McDonald made some minor corrections to the minutes.

ACTION: Commissioner Mark Johnson moved to approve the January 22, 2009 minutes as amended. Commissioner Kay Knapton seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.

BRIEFINGS & DISCUSSION

- **Briefing: Northgate**
 - Paul Fischburg, OPM

Recusal & Disclosure:

- Vice Chair Fiori disclosed that, his firm Heartland worked with the City regarding policy issues in Northgate two years ago.
- Commissioner Johnson disclosed that, his firm ESA Adolfson, produced the draft EIS for the project.

Ms. Wilson stated that the presentation would provide a general overview of the project and that in the near future the Commission would receive a more detailed update about the proposed rezone and details of the urban design framework proposal.

Mr. Fischburg thanked the Commissioners for inviting him to provide an update about his work at Northgate, which has been called the first mall.

Mr. Fischburg then gave a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation is attached.

Commissioner Leighton asked if the CTIP [Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan] was considered. Mr. Fischburg replied that it was very an important factor. He stated that the CTIP considers how to keep the existing transportation network functional as growth occurs.

Commissioner Kaplan asked how the base for incentive zoning would be established. Mr. Fischburg replied that the current zoning would be the base and that the proposed urban design framework includes a height map that relates to the transportation system of the area.

Commissioner Miller asked whether or not Northgate could be used as a model for paying for infrastructure improvements in other neighborhoods. Mr. Fischburg responded that the City is discussing using a similar model for South Lake Union, South Downtown, and around transit stations. He noted that the key issues are to understand what public benefits are most important in a specific area and then establish appropriate regulations and incentives.

Commissioner Eanes asked if the City has considered establishing a LID. Mr. Fischburg said that it has been considered, but that it might not be as successful a tool for creating internal or mid-block connections as it would be for the other public improvements. Commissioner Eanes noted that the City's proposal to allow mid-block connections to count toward the open space requirement makes sense.

Vice Chair Fiori suggested that the City evaluate the cost of creating pedestrian connections compared to providing affordable housing. Mr. Fischburg agreed that it would be a good idea.

▪ **Briefing: Yesler Terrace**

- Commissioner Michelle Mattox
- Judith Kilgore, Seattle Housing Authority

- Vice Chair Chris Fiori disclosed that he is working on a contract for his firm, Heartland, for the Yesler Terrace project.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design, has a contract for the Yesler Terrace project.

- Commissioner Eanes disclosed that his firm, Hewitt, has a contract with the Seattle Housing Authority on an unrelated project.

Commissioner Mattox described her involvement with Yesler Terrace over the past two years and introduced Judith Kilgore.

Ms. Kilgore then gave a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation is attached.

Chair Amato introduced Gary Johnson, who is the City liaison for the Yesler Terrace project. Mr. Johnson said that the City sees this as an important and exciting opportunity and wants to help SHA create a successful project. He noted that the City has assembled an interdepartmental team for the project and that sustainability will be an important aspect of any new development at the site.

Commissioner McDonald asked about transit service in the area. Ms. Kilgore responded that the service is generally good and that a new streetcar route is being planned along Jackson Street and 12th Avenue, up Boren to Broadway. Mr. Johnson noted that the route was funded by Proposition 1 and that it is expected to start about 2010. Ms. Kilgore indicated that SHA expects to begin construction at Yesler Terrace in 2011 in phases.

Commissioner Finrow asked about the Minority Report. Mr. Johnson suggested that some members of the Yesler Terrace Citizens Review Committee advocate against any change and for the area to remain a low-density community. Ms. Kilgore added that the residents are very engaged in the planning process, even the most technical elements. Ms. Kilgore said that while they are still conducting initial financial analysis, creating a mixed use community could allow for many more low income units than currently exist. Commissioner Finrow responded that it will be important to keep communicating that message. Commissioner Mattox stated that through the planning process residents have really been able to understand the advantages of creating a new mixed-use community on the site.

Ms. Wilson asked about the current capacity of the infrastructure. Mr. Johnson responded that while the infrastructure needs to be replaced, the capacity is there. Ms. Kilgore concurred that the infrastructure does need to be replaced even without any other new development.

Commissioner Eanes clarified that all of the very low income housing would be replaced on site (one for one) and then additional low income housing for people earning up to 80% of median income would be provided. Ms. Kilgore said that is correct.

Commissioner To noted that the market for commercial uses is very different at Yesler Terrace than New Holly and Rainier Vista and provides a unique opportunity to create workforce housing. Mr. Johnson stated that they are also working to help train people for new jobs that will be created through the construction process in addition to those in the anticipated mixed use and commercial buildings. Ms. Kilgore added that SHA is working with the Seattle Jobs initiative to help residents get training for these jobs. Mr. Johnson noted that more than 300 units were lost at Yesler Terrace when I-5 was constructed.

Commissioner Johnson asked if SHA would continue to own the property after development. Ms. Kilgore indicated that without federal funding, there really is no other choice than to sell a portion of the current site.

Commissioner Finrow expressed concern that such a huge project requiring massive public investment could actually be constructed. He suggested that the team think very creatively about how to construct the project over time. Ms. Kilgore responded that they expect the project will take 10 to 15 years to complete, after construction begins in 2011. She indicated that SHA has made a commitment to minimize displacement as much as possible. She noted that residents do not want to leave and SHA is looking at creative ways to keep them there.

Commissioner Miller agreed that displacement was very hard for a lot of the residents at New Holly. She also asked about the cultural history of the site. Ms. Kilgore responded that, during this past summer, 12 kids were employed to produce an oral history of Yesler Terrace. Ms. Wilson asked to have a copy of the DVD and Ms. Kilgore indicated that she would be happy to send one to the Commission.

Commissioner Kaplan thanked Ms. Kilgore for her thoughtful presentation. He then asked how residents feel about the area being transformed from a very low income community to a very different one with mixed incomes. Commissioner Mattox responded that from her perspective, the residents seem okay with the proposed changes as long as they still have a place in the new development. Ms. Kilgore noted that the planning process they underwent this past summer addressed this issue. She also indicated that through that process, residents have been able to see that while they will be giving up something, they will also get something in return.

Chair Amato thanked Ms. Kilgore and Mr. Johnson for their time. Ms. Kilgore said that she would like to come back in a couple of months to provide another update.

- **Planning Director Report**
- Ray Gastil, DPD

Mr. Gastil expressed his excitement about the Commission's upcoming trip to Portland. He also indicated that the Neighborhood Plan Update team is fully staffed and doing a lot of work. He noted that they have scheduled the first three neighborhood charrettes and that other outreach is underway.

Mr. Gastil briefly described the administrative design review process for townhouses that is being developed.

Commissioner Johnson asked about the Mayor's 'Jobs Forward' project and the plans for the Port's Interbay site. Mr. Gastil replied that Mr. Hauger with DPD would be able to provide more information. Ms. Wilson noted that Mr. Torgelson with the Mayor's office will be at the next full Commission meeting and should be able to address the issue.

Vice Chair Fiori asked for a quick update about South Lake Union. Mr. Gastil replied that the City does not have any funding for the EIS but that they continue to meet with the neighborhood organizations.

COMMISSION UPDATES

▪ **Chair's Report & Projects Updates**

- Chair's Report: Commission Chair Linda Amato

Chair Amato announced the upcoming meetings: next Tuesday, February 17 will be the Executive Committee meeting; next Thursday, February 19 will be the Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting; and Thursday, February 26 will be the next Full Commission meeting.

Ms. Wilson indicated that the new commissioners have been selected but will not be approved by the PLUNC until March. She said that they are all very well qualified and will be great additions to the Commission. David Cutler is an urban designer at GGLO. Chris Person is the Executive Director of the Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Program. Catherine Benotto is an architect and landscape designer with Weber Thompson. Matt Roewe is an urban designer with Via Architects. She noted that while they will not be able to vote until confirmed by Council, they will probably start attending meetings.

Commissioner Leighton asked if the retreat date has been finalized. Ms. Wilson said it will either be April 16 or 17 and that it will be confirmed soon.

- NPAC: Commissioner Josh Brower

Commissioner Brower provided a brief history of NPAC's work to date, including holding a 'Planning 101' study session that lasted four and a half hours on Monday afternoon. He noted that they have adopted their charter, agreed to ground rules for their meetings, and approved their workplan. There are 13 milestones identified in the resolution that NPAC is expected to reach by the end of the year. He also reminded the Commission about the open house meetings that will be co-hosted by NPAC and the Commission. Ms. Wilson noted that staff is working on the logistics of those meetings.

Commissioner Knapton commented that Commissioner Brower does an exceptional job as co-chair of NPAC. She noted that there is not clear agreement about the role of NPAC in the neighborhood plan updates. Commissioner Leighton agreed.

Ms. Wilson suggested that the Commission provide advice about what the neighborhood status reports should look like.

Commissioner Leighton noted that the status reports will include information about how neighborhood plans have been implemented. She suggested that while City departments do use the neighborhood plans, there is a perception that they are not used.

Commissioner McDonald suggested that the updated neighborhood plans should be closely coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan and that any topics beyond that should be retained for the record and clearly identified as other applications beyond the scope of neighborhood plans.

Ms. Wilson reported that there are 38 neighborhood plans altogether, three of which are being updated through the station area planning process. 24 neighborhoods will receive status reports and Ms. Canzoneri is helping to prepare those. Ms. Wilson noted that the Commission and NPAC will co-host a series of open house meetings this spring to get feedback about the draft status reports.

Another series of open house meetings will take place in the fall related to the final status reports. Commissioner Brower stated that the status reports will also be used to prioritize which of the 24 plans need to be updated next.

Commissioner Johnson noted that it would be helpful to get the dates of the open house meetings as soon as possible.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Amato adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm.