



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Tim Parham, Chair

Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, February 14, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present:	Sandra Fried, David Goldberg, Veronica Guenther, Grace Kim, Tim Parham, Kelly Rider, Julio Sanchez, Amy Shumann, Lauren Squires, Patti Wilma
Commissioners Absent:	Michael Austin, Eileen Canola, Rick Mohler, Marj Press, Jamie Stroble
Commission Staff:	Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Connie Combs, Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Administrative Analyst
Guests:	Carrie Avila-Mooney and Sandra Fann, Sound Transit; Aly Pennucci, City Council Central Staff; Nick Welch, Office of Planning and Community Development; Cindi Barker, Deb Barker

Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/when-we-meet/minutes-and-agendas>

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Commissioner Patti Wilma called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm and announced several upcoming Commission meetings.

<p>ACTION: Commissioner David Goldberg moved to approve the January 24, 2019 meeting minutes. Commissioner Grace Kim seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed. Commissioner Sandra Fried abstained.</p>

Announcements

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, announced a City Council Planning, Land Use and Zoning Committee public hearing on the citywide Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) legislation on Thursday, February 21. She also announced an Imagine Greater Downtown open house on February 28th and a 130th/145th Street Community Planning open house on March 13. Sound Transit has opened their formal scoping period and will be holding open houses in West Seattle, Ballard, and Downtown. The scoping period is open from February 15-March 18 and

includes an online open house. Executive Director Murdock provided an update on the upcoming Commission openings. An announcement has been out for several weeks. Applications are due by February 15. Commissioner Grace Kim announced the 2019 slate of Commission leadership. The Commission will take action on this slate at the next full Commission meeting. The new leadership will be in effect at the March 14 meeting.

Public Comment: Mandatory Housing Affordability Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Cindi Barker and Deb Barker spoke on behalf of the Morgan Community Association. Cindi Barker quoted from the Commission's draft MHA Comprehensive Plan Amendments letter, highlighting the sentence about parity among neighborhoods. They said that the new proposed Morgan Junction Comprehensive Plan policy does not disrupt parity and does not usurp the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that the proposed policy language is not what they submitted. The intention was to provide direction to stakeholders in the neighborhood to monitor growth in the urban village and engage with the City. This policy is not intended to usurp any other neighborhoods. It is intended to serve as a trigger for future stakeholders to monitor growth. Deb Barker referred to a letter that was recently submitted to the Commission. She stated the Morgan Community Association has been following this issue since 2017 and has valid rationale for the proposed policy language. She stated that 25% growth is a reasonable trigger.

Bonnie Williams spoke on behalf of the Wallingford Community Council. She stated that Wallingford was not included in the Director's Report. She sent pictures from the outreach event where Wallingford was not included to the City Council and the Office of Planning and Community Development. She stated that the neighborhood has a growth target of 95% and that target is too high. She believes that growth target will displace people including renters and seniors. She stated the City's outreach process is not genuine and is a perfect example of a top-down policy.

Action: Mandatory Housing Affordability Comprehensive Plan Amendments

If you would like to view the Mandatory Housing Affordability Comprehensive Plan Amendments letter, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes section of our website.

Commissioner Wilma asked for a motion to approve the MHA Comprehensive Plan Amendments letter.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners stated their appreciation for public comments from the Morgan Community Association and expressed sympathy for the neighborhood's position.
- Commissioners stated they felt the language in the letter expressed the position of the Commission.
- Commissioners stated they would like to discuss the role of neighborhood planning moving forward.

Commissioner Wilma asked if there were any changes or amendments to the letter. No changes were proposed.

ACTION: Commissioner Grace Kim moved to approve the letter. Commissioner Amy Shumann seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed. Commissioner Julio Sanchez abstained.

Briefing: Sound Transit West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Level 3 Evaluation Results
Carrie Avila-Mooney and Sandra Fann, Sound Transit

If you would like to view the Sound Transit West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Level 3 Evaluation Results presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes section of our website.

Ms. Avila-Mooney provided an overview of Sound Transit’s recent community engagement and collaboration efforts. She stated that community feedback has led to refinements to the project alternatives being considered. The agency has added one month to its project schedule due to the recent federal government shutdown. She stated that Sound Transit is working on materials to help potentially affected property owners understand the property acquisition process. The agency is also working with Metro on potential impacts to existing bus service. She stated that Sound Transit does not yet have visualizations for the Level 3 alternatives, but those will be available very soon. Sound Transit is currently working with the City on a Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Level 3 memo. The scope of this work includes the Chinatown/International District (C/ID) and Delridge neighborhoods. The scoping period will open on February 15 and includes open houses in Ballard, West Seattle, and Downtown, as well as community workshops in the C/ID and Delridge. The next meetings of the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) and Elected Leadership Group (ELG) are April 17 and April 26.

Ms. Fann reviewed the Level 3 alternatives and the Level 3 evaluation results. She stated that Sound Transit is trying to narrow the number of alternatives to be studied in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). She stated the Downtown segment is the only one with different ridership numbers between alternatives. She then reviewed some potential mix-and-match opportunities between the various alternatives, and the pros and cons of each of these opportunities.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners asked if an equity impact analysis will be included in the EIS. Ms. Fann said yes, primarily related to environmental justice and displacements. Commissioners stated they would like to review the environmental justice methodology, especially if it is different from standard analysis methods.
- Commissioners asked for more information about the process Sound Transit will use to select the final two alternatives to be studied in the EIS. Ms. Fann stated they do not feel comfortable eliminating any of the alternatives at this point. They will take two alternatives to the Board for

their consideration and see what happens. Commissioners expressed appreciation to Sound Transit for their willingness to keep the possibilities open at this point.

- Commissioners stated that the current cost estimates should not be used to eliminate station options. This is a long-term project and we should plan for our future. The most expensive components should be identified as needing third-party funding, but not eliminated only for that reason.
- Commissioners stated the Representative Project should not be included as a preferred alternative. They recognized that the voters approved it, but there are other components that deserve further analysis. Ms. Fann stated some mix-and-match combinations will be studied in the Draft EIS. Other mix-and-match options may be identified and be studied further in the Final EIS.
- Commissioners asked whether it possible to extend the scoping period as has been requested by some stakeholder groups. Ms. Fann stated the scoping period will not be extended but comments can be received beyond the formal scoping period.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Avila-Mooney and Ms. Fann for their briefing.

Briefing: Accessory Dwelling Units Final Environmental Impact Statement

Aly Pennucci, City Council Central Staff; Nick Welch, Office of Planning and Community Development

If you would like to view the Accessory Dwelling Units Final Environmental Impact Statement presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes section of our website.

Ms. Pennucci and Mr. Welch provided an overview of the Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Ms. Pennucci described how previous Planning Commission comments were addressed in the FEIS. Mr. Welch explained the “highest and best use” analysis used in the FEIS to determine how a property owner would identify the most economically productive use of their property. This analysis was used to estimate the number of ADUs that could be expected to be built, as well as the number of single-family house demolitions, over ten years. Mr. Welch stated the No Action Alternative would lead to the largest number of teardowns (replacing a smaller single-family house with larger single-family house).

Ms. Pennucci and Mr. Welch described other ongoing ADU efforts outside of the FEIS, including a Racial Equity Toolkit, development of pre-approved detached ADU (DADU) plans, better resources for future ADU owners, and opportunities to support/deliver affordable ADUs. Ms. Pennucci stated the RET is intended to help communities gain access to tools to encourage ADUs. Community outreach results have demonstrated that people are more interested in ADUs to provide options for family or community members than as short-term rentals. The City is working to identify opportunities to support/deliver ADUs to lower income homeowners or lower income renters. This includes opportunities to collaborate with builders on innovation in ADU construction and with non-profits working on ADU financing. The Office of Planning and Community Development is working with the Department of Construction and Inspections to assist in navigating the permitting process. This includes exploring the potential for a website to help determine the suitability for an ADU on individual lots.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners asked if there are neighborhoods with smaller lots that would experience disproportionate impacts with development of ADUs. Ms. Pennucci stated that certain neighborhoods could see some localized parking impacts. The City would address this situation with its typical tools including Residential Parking Zones.
- Commissioners described concerns shared at a recent community meeting in the Central Area about property taxes, especially for those with lower incomes or those on fixed incomes. Commissioners encouraged the City to look at property taxes as a way to incentivize development of ADUs.
- Commissioners inquired about the potential for ADUs to be homeowner opportunities. Mr. Welch stated that ADUs can be owned either as a condominium or with fee-simple ownership if the City allowed single-family lots to be subdivided for construction of an DADU.
- Commissioners asked for more information about the single-family floor-area ratio (FAR) limit that was included in the FEIS. Mr. Welch stated the 0.5 FAR limit is not that different from existing conditions. Only 11% of existing houses in Seattle exceed that limit.
- Commissioners encouraged incentivizing ADUs for low-income renters. Commissioners asked if there is a way to replicate the Section 8 voucher program to be Seattle-specific. Commissioners encouraged providing resources to those that may be interested in creating ADU condominium opportunities.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Pennucci and Mr. Welch for their briefing.

Public Comment

Deb Barker stated that she is a member of the Sound Transit Stakeholder Advisory Group representing West Seattle. She is hearing a lot of feedback from the community on a new elevated alternative that has been proposed. This new alignment impacts a ten-block area. Neighborhood residents only recently became aware of this proposal and have a lot of concerns. She encouraged the Commissioners to spread the word about Sound Transit's project alternatives and encourage others to get involved.

Bonnie Williams stated that she has seen a lot of research on DADUs but not as much on attached ADUs. She expressed concern about the height requirements for basement ADUs. She stated a preference for ADU homeownership. She also expressed a concern that people need two incomes to build backyard cottages. She stated someone on a limited income might not qualify for financing.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.