



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Leslie Miller, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
JANUARY 12, 2012
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair – Leslie Miller, Vice-Chair David Cutler, Josh Brower, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Martin Kaplan, Bradley Khouri, Kay Knapton, Jeanne Krikawa, Amalia Leighton, Kevin McDonald, Chris Persons, Matt Roewe Sarah Snider

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Catherine Benotto

COMMISSION STAFF

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

GUESTS

Marshall Foster, Tom Hauger, Gordon Clowers DPD;

IN ATTENDANCE

Rich Hill, Joseph Gellings, Jimmy Blais, Thomas Whitemore, Kristian Kofoed, Tony Mazzella

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 Leslie Miller called the meeting to attention at 3:02 pm.

▪ **Chair's Report**

- Chair Leslie Miller

Chair Miller introduced the new Planning Commission intern, Jiajia Ge and asked her to say a little bit about herself. Jiajia Ge stated that she was from China, attending the Evans School, and has applied for a MUP. She

talked about why she wants to study urban planning and her other interests include traveling, reading, and photography.

Chair Miller noted that the other new intern, Erika Harris, was unable to attend this meeting.

Executive Director Barbara Wilson gave some background regarding the citywide transit communities policy and noted that it should be adopted by resolution this year. She added that some parts should be adopted into the Comprehensive Plan in this and future cycles.

- **Briefing: City Planning Update**
 - Marshall Foster, DPD

Chair Miller welcomed Marshall Foster.

Mr. Foster noted that DPD has been doing a lot of work with Councilmember Richard Conlin and noted that there is a lot of alignment between DPD's planning priorities and Councilmember Conlin's. He added that the Transit communities is a top priority and DPD needs to help everyone get on the same page with what that means. Mr. Foster continued that there is a real awareness that they need to decide what their priorities are around transit.

Mr. Foster noted that, in regards to the Waterfront, they are entering into a really interesting and challenging new phase. He added that outreach would expand substantially and that they have a solid initial concept. Mr. Foster stated that they will be really pushing to bring in more local reactions and opinions. He noted that they would be hosting a series of discussions at Town Hall in February, which will frame the major issues and questions that have come out regarding the design.

Mr. Foster talked about the neighborhood plan updates in North Beacon and Othello noting that he likes Seattle mixed zoning not just as a zone but also as a philosophy. He added that they are finishing plan updates in Rainier Beach and Broadview/Bitter Lake/Haller Lake.

Mr. Foster noted that in the University District they are about to kick off a series of community conversations in partnership with the University of Washington. He added that they are not planning to update the whole urban center and that the University is ready to help with that community discussion.

Mr. Foster stated that Patrice Carroll and Radhika Nair are working on corridor planning on Elliot and 15th and that SDOT received funds from Sound Transit to look at high capacity transit from Ballard to downtown. He noted that they are looking at the scope of work and seeing what the land use tradeoffs are.

Mr. Foster noted that they are close to the final phase of work in Northgate and that they are looking at how TOD works around the transit center. He added that they are starting to see interest in development up there again and they would like to be ahead of the curve.

Mr. Foster reported on the TDR for TIF study and noted that they are a few weeks away from getting the study from Heartland. He added that there are quite a few wrinkles; PSRC assigns TDR allocations to each city in the region by growth targets from Vision 2040. Mr. Foster stated that Seattle gets the lion's share because we are about a quarter of the growth target. He added that it is very technical and they are working to change that with the PSRC.

Commissioner Johnson asked if Marshall had heard about the scale that the University of Washington and other developers are looking for. Mr. Foster replied that they are trying to build a community conversation from square one and that there is a lot of trust building that needs to take place. He added that they would like to make an investment in building a strong community.

Commissioner Khouri stated that if we need more capacity, why they do not look at single family. Mr. Foster answered that it is hard to do in a purely residential setting and that they are looking at downtown.

Chair Miller wondered if Mt. Baker is excited about the Seattle Mixed zone. Mr. Foster answered that they are very excited about jobs but that the key sites are tied up in long-term leases and they are trying to figure that out.

Commissioner Roewe stated that he is very pleased that they are looking at the University of Washington. He added that in 1980, that commercial district was so vibrant and it has a lot of potential and a lot of under-utilized land. Mr. Foster noted that the Chamber is also interested and that he would like to get the Planning Commission engaged.

Chair Miller thanked Marshall for his time.

▪ **Approval: November 10, and December 8, 2011 Meeting Minutes**

ACTION: Commissioner Josh Brower moved to approve the November 10 and December 8, 2012 minutes. Commission Mark Johnson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

▪ **Public Comment: 2011-2012 Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

Chair Miller asked if there were any members of the public that would like to comment regarding the Comprehensive Plan Amendments.

Joseph Gellings, senior planner with the Port of Seattle, stated that in regards to the proposed mariner container element, he was proud to say that the Port competes well with others on the west coast; including some in Canada and they are doing well on that front. Mr. Gellings stated that they are generating 3 billion in annual business revenue just with the cargo in the port facilities as well as 255 million in tax revenue. Mr. Gellings stated that port jobs are family wage jobs and that the average annual salary is \$51,000. He continued that the element as it is written does a great job. Mr. Gellings thanked the Commission for their time.

Rich Hill & Jim Blais, Amarco. Mr. Hill noted that Amarco owns Pier 1 and has requested a FLUM change from IG to MU and that there has not been a lot of enthusiasm from the City for this. He felt that maybe there was support for changes from IG2 to IC. Mr. Hill added that there have been efforts to support heavy industrial use and that they have been fruitless. He suggested that IC would be appropriate to consider. Mr. Blais stated that he has been working on this property for 3 years and has not been able to find a long-term industrial user for it. He noted that there have been over 20 renters and only one, a crab company, has lasted for more than 3 years. He stated that he feels that there is a need for a rezone to accommodate commercial uses. Mr. Hill

added that they will be presenting this proposal to Council and hoped that the Commission might support a zoning change rather than a change to the FLUM.

▪ **Approval: 2011-2012 Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

Chair Miller noted that we want to discuss our recommendations and approve them today. She added that they would like to get this to council soon.

Chair Miller called for any disclosures or recusals.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner Chris Persons disclosed that his firm, Capitol Hill Housing, develops affordable housing throughout the City.
- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group PLLC, represents single and multi family developers throughout the city of Seattle.
- Commissioner David Cutler disclosed that his firm, GGLO, designs projects and advises clients that may be impacted by amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. He added that GGLO is also working with the Roosevelt Development Group on a project within the Roosevelt Urban Village boundary.
- Commissioner Martin Kaplan disclosed that his firm, MHK Architects, works on projects throughout the city. He added that he has served on the stakeholder group for the Lake-to-Bay Loop.
- Commissioner Mark Johnson disclosed that his firm, ESA, has the Port of Seattle and Sound Transit as clients.
- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, works on commercial, multifamily, and infrastructure projects throughout the city and that the Port of Seattle is a client.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design Company, works on both public and private projects throughout the city and that the Port of Seattle has been a client.
- Commissioner Sarah Snider disclosed that her firm, LMN, does urban design and various types of architectural projects in the Seattle metropolitan area.
- Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa disclosed that her firm, The Underhill Company, is on a consultant for team for a Sound Transit project.

Commissioner Krikawa asked about siting criteria and whether or not the city has it. Ms. Wilson noted that they do. Commissioner Krikawa suggested that it be recognized in the last paragraph.

Ms. Wilson walked the Commission through the recommendations.

ACTION: Commissioner Mark Johnson moved to approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment recommendations. Commissioner Josh Brower seconded the motion.

Chair Miller noted that in the past the Commission has said defer rather than do not approve. Ms. Wilson noted that she would make that change.

Commission Roewe wondered what the parallel was between this amendment and the Tree Ordinance. Commission Leighton replied that they are still working on the Tree Ordinance and that the Urban Forest Management Plan was never adopted. Commissioner Roewe asked how that affects any targets in specific areas. Commissioner Leighton stated that she believes this will allow more flexibility in that ordinance.

Commissioner Kaplan asked, in regards to the Amarco site, if you got the rezone, what they thought would be able to be down within the shoreline as a marine dependent use. Mr. Hill replied that the Shoreline Master Plan is going under a re-haul. He added that DPD has stated that they wanted to wait and see what Council says about the rezone. He noted that the SMP currently requires at least a percentage of maritime related and a percentage of non- maritime related use.

Commissioner McDonald stated that, in regards to heavy vehicles, the Executive Committee developed substitute lingo but wonders if it is precise enough. He suggested some language changes to make it more precise. The changes were accepted as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Krikawa stated that, in regards to the homeless encampments, if Commissioner Leighton's comment would be reflected. This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner McDonald wondered if the bullet points in the pre-amble section were necessary. He proposed striking those. This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Roewe asked for clarification regarding Amarco site. Ms. Wilson responded that the Commission recognizes that IG2 is not the best for this challenging site so the change to IC would be appropriate to consider.

Commissioner Roewe asked how the corridor study could affect 15th Ave/Interbay. Ms. Wilson noted that SDOT is already doing a lot of work around that corridor and initially DPD's motivation was to look at industrial uses in the BINMIC, so the study will look at all of those issues broadly.

Commissioner Kaplan suggested that, in regards to Amarco, it might read more affirmatively if we take the last sentence and either make it a separate paragraph, or move it up front.

ACTION: Commissioner Mark Johnson moved to approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment recommendations with the suggested friendly amendments. Commission Josh Brower seconded the motion. The recommendations were approved unanimously.

- **Briefing: Northgate**
 - Tom Hauger, Gordon Clowers, DPD

Chair Miller called for any disclosures or recusals.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, VIA Architecture is engaged in urban planning for Northgate with the City and King County.
- Commissioner Chris Persons disclosed that his firm, Capitol Hill Housing, develops affordable housing throughout the City.
- Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa disclosed that her firm, Underhill Company is on the consultant team for the North Corridor Transit Project, connecting Northgate to Lynnwood.

- Commissioner Kevin McDonald disclosed that he represent the Planning Commission on the Light Rail Review Panel.
- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group, serves as outside land use council to Sound Transit on the Capitol Hill Station.
- Commissioner David Cutler disclosed that his firm, GGLO, designs projects and advises clients that may be impacted.
- Commissioner Martin Kaplan disclosed that his firm, MHK Architects, works on projects throughout the city.
- Commissioner Mark Johnson disclosed that his firm, ESA, works with Sound Transit on projects including the Northgate design.
- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, works on commercial, multifamily, and public infrastructure projects and public park projects throughout the city.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design Company, works on both public and private projects throughout the city and has done a lot of work with Seattle Public Utilities at Thornton Place.
- Commissioner Sarah Snider disclosed that her firm, LMN, does urban design and various types of architectural projects in the Seattle metropolitan area and that Sound Transit is one of their clients.

Tom Hauger gave an overview of the outreach and general background of the Northgate Station area development. He suggested that at some point the Commission might want to have a briefing from the staff of the PSRC.

They presented a powerpoint, which can be accessed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/NorthgateStationAreaDevelopment/Overview/default.asp>

Commissioner Persons asked when the station opens. Mr. Hauger answered that it will in 2021 but construction will begin in 2014.

Commissioner Leighton stated that, in looking at the connection to BRT that is outside of the .5 mile radius, she wondered if that connection might be accommodated with a pedestrian bridge. Mr. Hauger replied that there is no certainty regarding the pedestrian bridge but it is a potential way to access more ridership. Commissioner Leighton stated that the STIP has some sort of bridge crossing. Mr. Clowers stated that it has been a long-term idea. Tony Mazzella, SDOT, noted that it was identified in the Northgate study that happened a few years ago as an important project for the community as a whole.

Commissioner Chris Persons stated that it was a great presentation and wondered if the Growing Transit Communities project is focusing on equity as one of the guiding principles. Mr. Hauger noted that they are mostly thinking of the design principles but overall equity does need to be a part of it.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked what the reaction was to the three different scenarios. Mr. Clowers stated that it was quite interesting. He noted that most questions were about the Park Place concept, people were trying to understand what that was all about and they did not necessarily favor it. Commissioner Hough Beck asked if there was opposition to the height. Mr. Clowers stated that there were pros and cons to both and he felt that the blended alternative could be a good thing.

Ms. Wilson wondered if this level of density would be allowed under the current zoning. Mr. Clowers replied that it was but that rezones would be needed south of 100th to get the towers. He added that if they wanted a more residential presence there they would have to nudge the zoning.

Commissioner Cutler asked how they have been integrating with Sound Transit. Mr. Hauger replied that the project design is a bit of a closed shop and that they are on a mission to finish 60% by April. He added that they have been attending the public meetings and are working with King County about integrating the bus layovers and drop-offs. Mr. Hauger stated that they are expecting KC and COS to adjust to their plans.

Commissioner Cutler wondered with this station in particular, if they would have a different pace. He added that they have 8 years so do they really need to be at 60% by April and he would advocate for a more innovative approach. Mr. Clowers responded that King County has not made the final choices and that plus the unresolved parking amount does factor into what they see as possible today.

Commissioner Roewe noted that the interesting thing about the station was that it was elevated 45' and with 18 different bus layover/terminus, there were big challenges. Commissioner Cutler wondered if it really needs to be 40' in the air. Mr. Clowers agreed that the structure of the station is quite prominent.

Commissioner Brower asked, even though KC has backed away from increased heights, why do not they rezone it anyway. Mr. Hauger replied that there is no rush to change the zoning right now as the market is not there. Commissioner Roewe added that FAR is currently 6 and that is a huge number and difficult to utilize.

Commissioner Khouri asked how they would provide something that immediately attractive/connective to the station. He added that it is not ending in a vibrant place. Mr. Clowers replied that it is hard to adapt these low scale retail and injecting the best mix into that area would be important. Commissioner Khouri stated that a buffer would happen because the highway is right there.

Commissioner Leighton asked if the light rail comes out on 90th. Mr. Hauger stated that it comes out at 94th and that it will terminate here for two years.

Commissioner Knapton asked what they gained by the additional height. Commissioner Johnson stated that it was spectacular views.

Commissioner Kaplan wondered if it is critical to consider what KC thinks or should we think more aspirational. Mr. Hauger replied that their work on this project is funded by a grant from the PSRC and that there is not enough funds for and EIS or a full zoning analysis.

Commissioner Roewe wondered if bringing the tunnel out where they did was an attempt to avoid residential impacts. He added that he would love to see something happen near that station that is more vital than the parking garage.

Chair Miller thanked Tom and Gordon for their time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no further public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 5:36 pm.

