



**City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission**

David Cutler and Amalia Leighton, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 27, 2014
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Co-Chair David Cutler, Co-Chair Amalia Leighton, Catherine Benotto, Josh Brower, Colie Hough-Beck, Grace Kim, Kevin McDonald, Marj Press, Matt Roewe, Morgan Shook, Maggie Wykowski

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Luis Borrero, Keely Brown, Bradley Khouri, Jeanne Krikawa, Tim Parham

COMMISSION STAFF

Jessica Brand - Policy Analyst, Diana Canzoneri-Senior Analyst, Robin Magonegil – Administrative Assistant, Vanessa Murdock - Executive Director

GUESTS

Patrice Carroll, Tom Hauger, DPD

IN ATTENDANCE

Rob Fellows, Patti Wilma, Ian Morrison

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

Co-Chair David Cutler called the meeting to attention at 7:36 am.

▪ **Action: Minutes Approval**

Action: Commissioner Kevin McDonald moved to approve the March 27, 2014 minutes. Commissioner Matt Roewe seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

▪ **Chair's Report**

– Co-Chair David Cutler

Co-Chair Cutler reviewed the upcoming meetings noting that the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee meeting has moved to Thursday mornings starting in April.

Chair Cutler reported that, in addition to the letter on large-lot development in lowrise zones that is up for approval at today's meeting, there will be several other letters that will be sent out to Commissioners in the next few weeks for approval. He noted that this would include letters on microhousing, lowrise multifamily code corrections, pedestrian zones, and the comprehensive plan draft planning alternatives. Co-Chair Cutler encouraged the Commission to review these letters and respond in a timely manner.

▪ **Briefing: Major Comprehensive Plan Alternatives**

- Patrice Carroll and Tom Hauger, DPD

Co-Chair Cutler welcomed Patrice and Tom.

Co-Chair Cutler called for disclosures and recusals.

Disclosures & Recusals:

- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Consulting is working on the EIS for the City of Seattle.

Ms. Carroll and Mr. Hauger gave a presentation on the [Comprehensive Plan Alternatives](#).

Ms. Carroll and Mr. Hauger noted that the scoping period is open and that they are taking comment until April 21, 2014. They added that the EIS will be published October, they will have a draft plan by the end of the year and the final EIS in January of 2015.

Commissioner Kim asked what areas they were considering from the Rainier Valley. Ms. Carroll responded that there are five urban villages in the Rainier Valley along the light rail station. Ms. Kim stated that along the light rail alignment on MLK there are places between two station areas that are neglected by zoning and development incentives. She noted that these areas were promised to have a light rail station and communities of color made their investments accordingly, however, ST did not follow through with locating a station where promised. Commissioner Kim continued that it was disappointing to hear that the pattern of dis-investment would continue with the current EIS alternatives and asked that a lens of equity be used in evaluating possibility of a transit corridor in the EIS alternatives. Commissioner Wykowski added that there was supposed to be a light rail station at Graham and this left the community out of the growth decisions and transit funding. Co-Chair Leighton stated that there could be a way to address this with adding a policy on corridor growth and address how the land use should be impacted. Commission Roewe wondered what happened to the planned station at 145th. Mr. Hauger replied that the City is leaving 145th to Shoreline planning since it is fully within Shoreline.

Co-Chair Cutler asked what the reason is for not approaching the golf course around the planned station at 130th. He wondered if they needed to replace parkland one to one.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked, under the first alternative, what happens to the other two focuses, urban villages and transit. She added that they want to encourage development around transit as is based on the Commission's Transit Communities work. Mr. Hauger stated that it will likely be a hybrid of these alternatives

and but we may adopt tools to emphasize growth in certain areas. He added that it would be a conversation during implementation.

Commissioner Press noted that last month they talked about APA's Sustaining Places Program for 10 cities. She wondered how that program might affect our Comprehensive Plan work, might it be for us, an opportunity, and where that is reflected in the process. Ms. Carroll noted that APA looked at best practices in urban planning and created a checklist that would form the backbone of a process that would allow folks to submit their plans and have them reviewed and graded. She added that it is sort of like the LEED certification. Ms. Carroll continued that APA wanted to test out the framework and Seattle is a part of the 10 cities pilot program. She added that DPD has been using best practices from APA Planning Places Initiative to guide our process.

Commissioner Brower stated that the focus on alternative three is looking only at light rail. He noted that the Commission's work on Transit Communities is in the comprehensive plan. Commissioner Brower asked if they were going to put that in as part of the EIS. He added that the Commission spent a lot of time outlining a planscape. He wondered if the planscape is part of the EIS. Mr. Hauger responded that at this point alternative three is only on light rail. Metro has a shaky nature of funding and we do not want to rely on that. They are also looking at the fact that if we focused growth in all the areas served by transit that growth would be defused too much. He added that they are trying to identify the best ways to accommodate the many different implementation plans. Mr. Hauger continued that they have to be careful about documents we reference in the plan but we need to do a better job of getting these plans in there.

Commissioner McDonald stated he wants to insert the Transit Communities into the conversation as an important planning document. He asked if there are any locations where the Transit Communities Report identifies as a transit community that does not hit in an urban center/urban village. Ms. Carroll replied that there are other places that fell out but they rely on bus service and not light rail and we made the decision not to rely on that.

Commissioner McDonald wondered if they are making a commitment to expand urban village boundaries around the light rail stations for the 10-minute walk shed. Ms. Carroll answered that they are committed to study it and that all of those areas currently outlined will have an effect on the urban village.

Commissioner McDonald stated that, in reference to the Essential Components of Livability, it is not just about growth but that all areas need a certain level of service and a certain level of investment in Essential Components of Livability.

Commissioner Benotto asked, if it is within the scope of the EIS or could it be, to judge the impact on affordable housing. She added that, for example, the urban center growth would likely be more expensive and send to the hinterlands the less expensive housing. Mr. Hauger replied that it is within the scope, but it would be a qualitative assessment, not detailed and added that we are committed to working on this issue.

Co-Chair Leighton stated that they were hoping to address that not all urban villages were created equal. She added that Rapid Ride is a changing dynamic and they are not getting the same infrastructure that is focused on light rail. Co-Chair Leighton stated that the Planning Commission was told that in order to make bus dependent neighborhoods on par with light rail neighborhoods that Transit Communities would need to go through the EIS process. Co-Chair Leighton continued that the major update presents an opportunity within its EIS and it would surely comply with the growth alternatives set out by the DPD alternatives. Ms. Carroll

replied that it would help to investigate whether or not it is a corridor or a node. She added that they were talking about the node and the 10-minute walk shed.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked how the neighborhood plan updates would work with the comprehensive plan. She added that while working with neighborhoods she questioned how they get to outline what it is that meets their needs and how they want to see the growth come.

Commissioner Press stated that it would be a missed opportunity not to look at areas served by transit and making that a part of the EIS scope. She offered that it might be less apparent to go back and look at this later.

Co-Chair Cutler thanked Ms. Carroll and Mr. Hauger

▪ **Action: Approve Large Lot Lowrise 1 & 2 Council Letter**

Co-Chair Cutler stated that Council President Burgess and several other council members asked the Commission to comment on development projects over 2 acres in lowrise 1 and 2 zone. He added that Commissioner Press, the Chair of the LUT Committee, would outline the discussion and the letter.

Commissioner Press reviewed the main points of the letter.

Commissioner Roewe stated that the comprehensive plan is a good place to set policy but it is not immediately useful to neighborhood stakeholders addressing current projects. He added that it would be helpful to have each neighborhood set up their own land use committees to proactively get ahead of the planning issues and set up their own forum to discuss upcoming development projects. Commissioner Roewe continued that, while Design Review has limitations, it is still a public forum where the applicants hear the public's concerns and often take them into account as the project proceeds. Commissioner Khouri agreed and added that this is the only public forum that we have but that this review request was more about impact, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the impact that large developments make on the landscape. He added that the Design Review threshold does not acknowledge that there is more impact for a new apartment building next to single family than the new apartment replacing an apartment. Commissioner Khouri continued that the comprehensive plan is the right place to have this conversation.

Co-Chair Cutler noted that the amendment that clarifies the role of the Planning Commission as reviewing broad issues does give it some context.

Action:

- Commissioner Kevin McDonald moved to approve the letter. Commissioner Grace Kim seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 9:02 am.