

MEETING MINUTES

Bruce A. Harrell
Mayor

Rico Quirindongo
Director, OPCD

Jill Crary, Chair

Kevin O'Neill, Vice Chair

Adam Amrhein

Phoebe Bogert

Kate Clark

Ben Gist

Brian Markham

Zubin Rao

Molly Spetalnick

Caitlin Truong

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February 6, 2025

Convened 10:00 am

Adjourned 12:00 pm

Projects Reviewed

Commission business

Overview of land use code changes - West Seattle and
Ballard Link Extensions

Commissioners Present (all attended virtually)

AP Amrhein

Phoebe Bogert

Jill Crary

Kate Clark

Ben Gist

Brian Markham

Kevin O'Neill

Molly Spetalnick

Caitlin Truong

Commissioners Excused

Zubin Rao

Staff Present (all attended virtually)

Michael Jenkins

Valerie Kinast



Commission Business (10:00 – 13:00 am)

The Commissioners received a staff briefing on the days activities. The Commission also discussed details of their February 20, 2025 retreat.

WSLE & BLE City Land Use Code Changes (10:30 am to 12:00 pm)

The Commission received its initial briefing of proposed land use code changes to support light rail investments, in response to Sound Transit's West Seattle and Ballard Light Rail Extension project.

The following people were presenters:

- Lindsay King, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI)
- Gordon Clowers, SDCI
- Katy Haima, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
- Jennifer Muelenberg, SDOT

The following people attended:

- Sara Maxana, SDOT
- Bryan Stevens, SDCI
- Susan Stoltzfus, SDOT
- Erik Rundell, SDOT
- Saranya Gujuluva Rajan, SDOT
- CJ Holt, SDOT
- Rebecca Frestedt, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON)
- Genna Nashem, DON
- Daren Crabil, Sound Transit
- Julie Montgomery, Sound Transit
- Ryan Packer, The Urbanist
- Marianna Hyke, NW Carpenters Trade Union
- Elisabeth McLaughlin

The Commission provided the following recommendations.

1. Convene a subcommittee to go over a comprehensive timeline that identifies milestones of City work together with the milestones of the Sound Transit SDC WSLE & BLE reviews. Provide clarity about when City work will be completed in relationship to the station reviews. Provide information on what is different and what is the same in comparison to City CIP and large project reviews.
2. Provide additional wording in the new code on the natural environment and social equity elements of reviews.
3. We suggest setting sustainability rating expectations in the partnering agreement or transitway agreement.
4. Support the holistic approach of the Tree and Vegetation Management Plan (TVMP).

5. Request clarification on the relationship between the Design Guidelines and the light rail development regulations, and a conversation about how the Design Guidelines relate to and align with the values in our mission.
6. Provide more clarity on SDC role in the development regulations. For example, if the design is exceeding a wall height limit, can the SDC recommend allowing it to do so?
7. Also provide similar clarity on SDC role and the binding and discretionary requirements in ROW standards, Streets Illustrated and street concept plans.
8. Evaluate the City permitting streamlining and the SDC process in light of Sound Transit's new design and contracting process that they are developing. Evaluate the potentials of SDC subcommittees in conjunction with full SDC reviews in collaborative design processes.
9. Find a way to communicate efficiently with the SDC the analysis that is going on in departments, such as about station access improvements.
10. Anticipate that station area planning will identify City CIPs and inform station design.
11. Light rail regulations and design guidelines are not enough. The City must plan the areas around stations so that the stations can be integrated into the future vision of these places. The SDC needs the plans as much as Design Guidelines to inform our reviews.

We look forward to continuing to build a streamlined review process, and to helping the City be a strong partner on WSLE & BLE. The expertise of the SDC can be a valuable resource for the City on what is the most large, complex infrastructure project of our history.