

SEATTLE REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC FORUM DISTRICT 2 MINUTES

Thursday, May 19th, 2022

5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Zoom Meeting

Approved on May 24th, 2022

Commissioners Present: Commission Chair Eliseo EJ Juárez, Patience Malaba, Greg Nickels, Rory O’Sullivan, Neelima Shah

Commissioners Absent: N/A

Commission Staff and Guests: Logan Drummond: Department of Neighborhoods, Waing Waing: Department of Neighborhoods, Jenn Brandon: Department of Neighborhoods, Dennis Higgins: Districting GIS Consultant, Mary Ullrich: Districting GIS Consultant

(Transcriber’s Note: Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion. The recording of the meeting is available upon request.)

Meeting Minutes:

I. Call to Order

- This Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting was held virtually through Zoom with an option to meet in person at El Centro De La Raza at the Centilia Cultural Center. This meeting was open to the public and was advertised through appropriate channels. The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM once the Redistricting Commissioners had quorum.

II. Welcome & Housekeeping

- Reading of the agenda, welcome and land acknowledgement

III. Agenda Review and approval

- There were no further questions or concerns from the Commissioners on today’s agenda for the 5.19.22 public forum meeting and the agenda was passed unanimously with five votes.

IV. Public Comment

- **Andrew Hong** - “hi my name is Andrew Hong I'm a lifelong resident of south Seattle district 2 and a public school graduating community organizer here I'm also statewide coordinator of the redistricting justice for Washington coalition we're a coalition of community groups fighting for fair districts for communities especially communities of color in Seattle and across Washington state and redistricting um as an Asian American student from the south end um you know I've seen my voices and my peers my neighbors voices constantly being minority in the city and city politics and city hall the south end faces disproportionate rates of gun violence and environmental racism um and you know this is why it's so important that district two south side

communities of color are not ignored in this redistricting process um the south that needs to be kept together in a majority minority by citizen voting age population or eligible voters um that keep you know historic communities of interest in the south and together in district two I think especially I want to highlight Asian American and bipolar communities in beacon hill the Chinatown international district little Saigon new holly and rainier valley need to stay intact in district 2 in order for our vote and our voice to be heard in city hall specifically I'd want to make the ask along with community members in the coalition to not move district 1 west of i-5 doing that would split the beacon hill Asian American community um that is one ask and then also a second specific ask is to keep the Chinatown international districts illegal Saigon all together in district 2. that's a very you know dense area of the city so being really specific and careful with the blocks in those district boundaries is super important in the Cid um gentrification you know threatens to erase by people of colors and communities of color voting power in the south end so it's really important again that we make district 2 a majority minority by citizen voting age population for you know city council elections through 2030 as our community gets gentrified thank you”

- **Joseph Lachman** - “hello commissioners again this is uh Joseph Lachman him his pronouns with Asian counseling and referral service and also redistricting justice for Seattle um I mostly would like to just emphasize some of the points made a moment ago by Andrew who is also with our group I'm also a resident of district 2 and working in an organization located in the district as well and expressing of course concern that we'd like to see Asian American communities kept together communities of color communities of interest kept together in this district um making sure that we're able to elect representatives of our choice in this community and other than that um I just would also like to emphasize that we'd like to continue our dialogue with on the commissioners throughout this process um because of the last minute change to the format in terms of the I know I realized they were committed there were circumstances beyond the commission's control but we would be deeply grateful if there was a possibility for another opportunity for district 2 um community members to actually be in a meeting space in person with the commissioners when public health circumstances allow I realize again this is difficult um but we would very much appreciate the opportunity thank you”
- **Amy Kaminsky** - “I am a lifelong beacon hill resident we are writing from our beloved beacon hill council community neighborhood in Seattle our interest is to keep our 40 601 community intact as we are 73 percent people of color and 40 immigrants and refugees and to continue advocating for the resolution of justification air and noise pollution from road vehicles and airplanes that fly overhead and other environmental injustice issues we also have a strong relationship with the adjacent Chinatown national district Cid we were saying that they have our grandparents and we have their families speaking of population is close to half Asia pacific islanders our boundaries include i-5 to the west i-90 to the north and rainier then mlk way to the east uh plan one we propose that Cid remain in district two plan two we support uh we propose that Cid remain in district two and plan 3 we oppose moving the rest section of mid beacon hill to district 1. this disconnects our neighborhood we propose that cid remain in district 2 an area north of yesterday and west of 4th avenue south joined district 1 or 7. plan 4 we propose that Cid remain in district 2 and that doughnut remain in district 3. ideal plant we propose that district 2 include all of current beacon hill include a neighborhood between 15th avenue south and i-5 corridor as well as Cid to reflect our environmental justice educational justice and ethnic

Asian pacific honor communities of interest we support keeping the central distance for historical and current African American communities we are more happy to answer any questions okay but we will um the beacon health council will be mailing this letter to the redistricting commission so thank you.”

- **Nirae Petty** - “good evening my name is Nirae Petty I live in district 2. I was born in a central district otherwise known as a cd and was raised throughout the city in south Seattle area I'm also here in my capacity as the advocacy program manager for the urban league and we're one of the multiple organizations part of the redistricting justice for Seattle coalition a coalition dedicated to keeping the commission accountable to equitable community engaged and transparent redistricting in Seattle um in my testimony today because my colleagues went before me I just want to spotlight our values and echo our goals in the redistricting process this year which are to keep communities of color and other underserved communities together prioritizing people over politicians and gerrymandering the importance of culturally competent outreach and incorporating informed input and as mentioned before transparency I also urged the commission to prioritize in keeping Rainier beach an area that is sadly gentrifying at a rapid pace the Chinatown and international district area including little Saigon vegan hill and yes la terrace a neighborhood that is literally split right now all those neighborhoods together I also ask that you preserve district 2 as a majority BIPOC cbap district and we also request that you host more forums for each district before the end of July and also if I have time I do want to give a disclaimer that our intentions of keeping these communities together is not because we are a monolith or to support quote unquote affirmative gerrymandering rather it's because we are unified in our experiences of constantly fighting the system of white supremacy which includes voter suppression and misrepresentation so separating our communities into different city council districts will further perpetuate these issues that we're already facing um so that's all thank you for the opportunity to speak today and we look forward to working with you thank you.”
- **Gregg Petrie** - “first comment I really impressed with the work here you're doing and I'd like to see a better documentation so that in the future when this happens again in 10 in 10 years uh people will be able to draw on your work and maybe do a better job uh secondly I would like to ask if you could have your gis counsel allow them to release the datasets that they're using to the general public so that could be explored by other people so that's all I have to say thank you and just thank you for the work that you're doing I'm really quite impressed thank you.”
- **Yuan Tao** - “hi my name is yuan and I um also would like to wow this feedback um I would also like to emphasize trying to keep the Asian American community together I'm very concerned about the I realized that two of them were auto-generated maps but the four maps that were presented tend to cut into the Asian American community both in the Cid and in beacon hill and especially the auto generated maps if they follow along major highways historically those highways have cut through the Cid and through Asian American communities and therefore is only reinforcing historical damage that has been done to these communities and we just want to make sure that the commissioners please look into where the Asian American community lives because it is very spread out but it is really important that we keep our community together because otherwise we lose a lot of our power we've seen even just recently how a lot of people dismiss the concerns of the Asian American community just within uh just around the recent sound transit expansions and really the only way that we can make sure that there's someone

advocating for us is that there's a commissioner that really is focused on a city council member that's really focused on our needs and our values so I implore the commissioners to please take that into account I'd also uh want to reiterate one of the earlier asks which is to have another public forum this just happened extremely quickly there wasn't enough time to let our communities know what's going on or to properly organize there are a lot of people that I've never even heard about this redistricting process so I would please ask you all to have another public forum later in the year thank you."

- **Shomya Tripathy** - "hi everyone my name is Shomya Tripathy representing Asian counseling and referral service a service provider located in district 2 serving Asian pacific islander immigrants and refugees as an agency serving communities of color who have been historically excluded from culturally meaning serve meaningful services and resources we have a responsibility to be here today to advocate for a redistricting process that serves marginalized clients and community members on behalf of acrs who's also a member of the redistricting justice Seattle coalition we are advocating that the redistricting commission strongly consider preserving and maintaining d2 as a majority poc district keeping it as a district where people of color are the majority allows residents of district 2 to get the representation and political power they deserve in city council as our city faces unprecedented population growth and historic neighborhoods of color suffer the impacts of this growth through gentrification and displacement it is extremely important that the commission prioritize keeping communities of interest and neighborhoods of color together we asked that the commission preserved the majority poc status of d2 so that communities of color out in south Seattle including many of those clients that we serve at acrs do not lose their voting power this means keeping asian comedian beacon hill as well as Asian community and the Cid including will Saigon in district 2. we ask that you deeply consider how this city has time and time again made decisions about communities like the Cid and beacon hill perhaps asking for input but ignoring it in the end we also ask that you create additional time like many folks have asked here for meaningful input from d2 residents through another hybrid meeting where commissioners are present this is the time to listen and actually implement feedback from communities in t2 and preserve our political power thank you so much for your time."
- **Jude Ahmed** - "hello commissioners and thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today my name is Jude Ahmed and I'm testifying on behalf of the advocacy and civic engagement department at the urban league of metropolitan Seattle we're a non-profit that serves black and underserved communities in the greater Seattle area and while I do not live in district 2 our main office is in yesler terrace and it is actually in district 3 on the other side of the district line that splits yesler terrace into multiple districts we're here today to affirm the values of the rjs coalition being keeping communities of interest together prioritizing people over special interests participating in active outreach and incorporating community input as well as being transparent in the process and i want to bring attention that yesler terrace is an area of diverse black and brown renters landowners and working class communities and within this neighborhood there are so many languages spoken and community activists on the ground need more support in finding language interpreters with the subject matter expertise on redistricting to be able to get the most meaningful feedback from residents there are folks in that area that have worked there for 10 20 even 30 years and families that have grown up and rely on relationships within the community as a bridge to their political involvement that makes it even

more imperative to keep this community together as neighbors who are street apart who could be coming together to discuss issues important to them find themselves suddenly a district apart with different council members so we asked the commission um to maintain communities of color such as yesler terrace but in addition rainier beach beacon hill and Chinatown together in one district and because of that concern of in language outreach please hold a second district 2 meeting as early as possible within the commission's timeline thank you.”

- **Amina Abdalla** - “good evening commissioners my name is Amina Abdalla and I'm testifying today on behalf of the urban league which is centered in the central district but I also teach a class at rainier beach high school which is in district 2. I'm joining as a member of the redistricting justice of Seattle coalition a coalition of organizations working to call for an open transparent and community engaging redistricting process statewide and locally I just want to reiterate some of the things I've already said that's most important to us which is keeping communities of interest communities of color and other marginalized communities together higher professional interests and politicians actively doing outreach and incorporating community input and being transparent in data use and process moreover we should recognize rainier beach steep relationship with the skyway community in rainier beach in district 2 which shares elected officials of other political districts that encompass both rainier beach and skyway I also believe that we should maintain the majority people of color status of district 2 to preserve the bipoc voting power in south Seattle thank you for the opportunity to share today and we look forward to continue to continue the engagement throughout the process.”
- **Katie Stultz** - “my name is Katie Stultz um and I'm joined today as a Seattle resident and also lifelong resident of king county and a member of also the redistricting justice for Seattle coalition um so exciting to have heard from other folks tonight and really I just wanted to echo a few of the pieces sort of um uh that we've heard from other folks I think um the biggest thing I wanted to sort of lift up is really um you know we appreciate the opportunity here from community voices but really in a city um like Seattle with rapid gentrification rapid income inequity and the devastating housing crisis and others it is really critical that our districts maximize the opportunity for truly representative leadership the intention of really when districts were created for city elections was really to increase that opportunity for representation on the local level in a city as large as Seattle and so um we thank you for the opportunity really to have this public input I definitely want to echo the ask that really by um nature of district two being uh really at the top um it is definitely happened pretty quickly and so to really be able to fully um organize and sort of get the word out um about the topic of redistricting we ask that there's an opportunity for a secondary hearing as well as the opportunity to speak in person with commissioners um and would we would really love to see that and then the last I think just echoing a couple of the key points that have lifted up really in terms of the actual map proposals we do plan to hopefully able to send in map examples and proposals but um really want to make sure that we're also getting feedback as well um so really making sure that we're keeping and maintaining the um the poc status of the voting power of south Seattle in district 2 and really ensuring that we're keeping the historically Asian American communities together in the Chinatown international district including little Saigon in district 2. thank you for your time tonight.”
- **SuYoung Yun** - “hi my name is SuYoung Yun I am a resident of Kent who has lived and worked in district 2 for several years I serve as a civic engagement program manager at utopia Washington

in order to preserve and represent the great diversity of district 2 the commission should ensure the majority of district 2's citizen voting age population is people of color keep Asian American communities together in the Chinatown international district including a little Saigon keep Asian American community the Asian American community of beacon hill fully intact in district 2 keep district 1 west of i-5 and recognize Rainier beach's deep relationship with the skyway community and draw rainier beach in district 2 as well we need to keep our communities voting power together and we need good leadership to represent this extremely diverse district thank you council."

- **E. Bailey Medillo** - "my name is Bailey Medillo and I live in south Seattle's Columbia city neighborhood and I'm here today to ask this commission to preserve the international district in beacon hill in Seattle's second city council district I want to pre-face this with how much I am grateful for this commission's work but also how wary I am of the current example maps that have been shown to the public in multiple instances has the northern boundary of district 2 been butchered splintering communities of color in Chinatown international district Yesler terrace and also on our western border in beacon hill I have also seen iterations of district 2 that combine leschi and madrona areas that I do not believe are of concern to our communities here in district 2 of south Seattle and Chinatown and clearly and though I do not want to make accusations appear to be gerrymandering I want to urge this council to listen to voices of color and do not draw out our communities our Asian American communities our Filipino communities here in beacon hill and in the international district I urge this I urge this commission to act non-partisanly and non-politically and listen to your constituents in the voices of Seattle's people of color and I thank you for your work again and I want you to consider my concerns seriously thank you."
- **Wren Wheeler** - "I do work in district 2 at the wing luke museum and I we do have concerns about how many of the maps um if you were to overlay many of the sample maps on top of the st3 uh alternatives um it really takes voices away from people of color who could be affected by all the different alternatives connected to transit and the timing is a little suspicious I'm just saying it looks that way um and I encourage you to have additional sessions with folks so we can take a much closer look at these different maps and how they would affect our communities thank you."
- **Deirdre Curle** - "'I'm Deirdre Curle I'm a resident of beacon hill I live west of 15th avenue south and I'm asking that you keep that area west of Jefferson park and west of 15th avenue south in district 2 as part of beacon hill so that all of our interests could be represented together I also request that you continue to keep Chinatown the international district part of district 2 and keep them with beacon hill so that our Asian communities are connected and can receive the same representation thank you."
- **Alex Cooley** - "my name is Alex uh I'm a d3 resident uh in Jenkins park area right on the border of d2 um I am the president of Jackson place community council as well as work with the central area neighborhood district council I'm here mainly observing to understand the relationship between d2 and d3 and definitely echo the sentiments of having the Cid together and truly together not as it is currently split slightly as well as having yes or pairs together we are working on a map that's about 95 complete that brings unification of yes or terrorists and the Cid into district 2 as well as protects beacon hill and the rainier valley we're very excited about sharing that with all the pertinent groups involved I also want to echo the sentiments of I feel like the

commissioner is doing a very good job could do a slightly better job and I'm here to hold the commission accountable so thank you very much for the time.”

V. Next meetings

- The next Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting will be on Tuesday May 24th, 2022, from 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM.
- The next Public Forum will be for District 3, which will take place at Location TBD on June 2nd, 2022, from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

VI. Adjourn

- Commission Chair Eliseo EJ Juárez asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Malaba motioned for adjournment, and Commissioner Nickels seconded. The motion for adjournment was approved unanimously with five yes votes.
- The next Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting will be on Tuesday May 24th, 2022, from 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM.
- Questions and comments, please send them to Elsa.Batres-Boni@seattle.gov