

SEATTLE REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
ADDITIONAL CITYWIDE PUBLIC FORUM #2 MINUTES

Thursday, September 15, 2022

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Approved on September 20, 2022

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

Commissioners Absent: N/A

Commission Staff and Guests: Logan Drummond: Department of Neighborhoods, Elsa Batres-Boni: Department of Neighborhoods

(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 the L280 Boards and Commissions Room on the L2 floor at Seattle City Hall. This meeting was open to the public and was advertised through appropriate channels. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 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 9.15.22 public forum meeting and motioned for approval by Commissioner Malaba and seconded by Commissioner O’Sullivan. The agenda was passed unanimously with five votes.

IV. Acknowledgment of Received Comments and Disclosures

- Commissioners acknowledged that they received and reviewed received comments. There were no disclosures made by the Redistricting Commissioners.

V. Purpose of the Forum

- Commission Chair Nickels gave the public an overview of where we are currently at in the process of redistricting, why the redistricting process is occurring, and what to expect in terms of timelines in the coming weeks. There will be one more additional public forum, on Saturday October 8, 2022 from 10:00am-12:00pm at the Bertha Knight Landes Room (BKL) on the first floor of City Hall on 600 4th Avenue, Seattle WA, 98104.

VI. Public Comment

- **Detra Segar** - "Good evening um my name is Detra Segar I'm with the East Lake Community Council and we presented at um the meeting um a couple of weeks back and our position is the same we've submitted a plan that kept East Lake in one District the district is currently in District Four because we feel that we are rather small district and we've grown in population the continuity of our lakefront and our businesses would be served best if we are kept together as a community as we have been for many years so we're asking you please to consider the proposal that we made the map that we drew and keep East Lake in District Four and keep it as a whole rather than dividing it between several districts and horizontally at Lynn Strait, thank you."
- **Janice Traven** - "I'm Janice Traven so I live in Magnolia and um I have two questions and a couple of comments uh my general question uh is that I'm going to I'm asked a lot from people what happens next you're hearing a lot of comments and um we want to know what happens is the commission going to take them in our comments into account and what is the process for that so that's the general question it would be helpful I think at the beginning for you to address this uh my other question uh is uh the definition of districts being contiguous according to the draft map uh where I live which would be in the new District Six I have to leave District Six to go into District Seven to get back to District Six I leave Magnolia to go over the Ballard bridge I can't do that except on foot and that's one of the many reasons why I'm wondering whether yes whether the draft map meets the rules so once again we invite you to come and visit us we'll give you a tour we'll show you what we're talking about so my comments are this I've read all through all of the comments that have been posted so far I've attended the meetings and what I keep hearing is comments I keep hearing are that we want Magnolia and we want Queen Anne to be together in a district the international um Chinatown International District wants to be together with Yesler Terrace and that he's like wants to be on District preferably in District Four I encourage you to look again at commissioner Nickels map because his map does all of those things uh I think that there are tweaks that could be made to accommodate um other issues that have come up those are the resounding issues that have been brought up at all of these meetings and I really encourage you to take a second look at commissioner Nickels map and um let's get through this process thank you so much."
- **Ann Goos** - "I'm Ann Goos I testified before and I'm going to follow up on something Janice brought up uh in her comments uh just before me if there's anything that we're hearing from Magnolia residents is the real concern about the fact that 15th Avenue West from Smith Cove to the Ballard Bridge is going to be in district 7 but most of the residents and many of the businesses are going to be in District Six and I know that you guys all know you live in Seattle just how much development is going on along 15th Avenue West in Interbay and certainly the plans at the Port of Seattle has both in smooth Cove at Pier 91 as well as all of the growth that's going to be happening in Fisherman's Terminal with the new Marine Innovation Center and some other things then you add that there's the Armory that is in inner bay that's now owned by the state and that's going to be redeveloped plus you have Sound Transit that is likely to have the Ballard inter Bay um stationed there bottom line is Magnolia as you know only has three entrances it has Magnolia Bridge it has Emerson Street Bridge it has the Davis Street Bridge all of those are accessed off of 15th Avenue West and all of those are directly connected in the Inner Bay Area mostly adjacent to all of the growth that is planned both by the city of Seattle the Port of Seattle and the state of Washington now most of those plans are somewhat integrated

because that is the Ballard Interbay manufacturing and Industrial Center that's also going under a CIPA analysis for new growth all of that is going to impact traffic and access to those five lanes and that's all Magnolia has its five lanes to get in and out we strongly believe that the residents who depend upon those three bridges and 15th Avenue West should have a voice within the same district as 15th Avenue West and all of that development so again what we'd like to see is all of Magnolia particularly 15th Avenue West be connected in one district so we have a voice in all of these important growth transportation issues and we back to what Janna says we think that's within redistricting we're a community of interest and that's showing a caring about contiguous uh line making so thank you so much again for all your work."

- **Joanna Cullen** - "Hi um well I don't have something really prepared but I'll say that I am sympathetic to East Lake being in District Four because I can see how their transportation is more connected to the University District in Wallingford I would be very appalled to see The District 4 go south of the ship canal or District three to go into the downtown retail core um in that the retail core is not related to the central district in in culturally or um anything so I still appreciate the work that you've done to not go south of the ship canal with um district four but I am sympathetic to yeast like being with district four um and I'll probably I'm just trying to listen to what other what people are saying and I might actually work on some maps again out of interest to see how this can be can be maybe done a little bit better so thank you."
- **Ron Davis** - "I have testified before but I am here today to address an issue that arose last time about a possible lawsuit over Magnolia while I assume that the commission knows that such a claim as baseless theater uh we do have an ugly history in Seattle of wealthy communities threatening losses to hijack the political process so I would like to get that baselessness on the record I am an honors graduate of Harvard Law School where I earned a legal doctorate in 2012. I've won I won awards there for being the top student in four courses well I don't practice law in the state of Washington I did a statutory interpretation and this is an easy case article 4 section 2 subdivision D subsection three it's quite a mouthful of the city Charter is quite clear on the matter it includes two hard rules and one soft rule the hard rules are indicated by what I'll call the lonely shells in these rules the word shall is not qualified by any other language it stands alone the two rules with lonely shells limit the shapes of the districts and their population variants you've done a banger of a job on both I will add to the question earlier about contiguity which is one of in one of those rules that requires something like avoiding a district having separated islands like Kaliningrad is to Russia and you've met that requirement in Spades in the soft rule relevant to this discussion about what came up last time about a lawsuit shall has its hard edge shaped off with the qualifier to the extent practical Anyone who reads statutes for a living will see that the drafters differentiated this rule as a softer requirement in three ways by including the qualifier by putting at the beginning of the sentence to draw attention to it and by using a word like practical that implies a judgment call extent subsection 4 best power in this commission to draw a map it's quite clear that you have significant discretion to make trade-offs and determine what is practical given also the publicly documented work you've done to maximize compliance with this Rule and the fact that your map divides fewer communities and crosses fewer waterways than Seattle's current map there is really no way a court would take that claim against this map as anything but frivolous now this doesn't mean you can't do better or that I don't think you can do better in fact I think redistricting Justice coalitions map is a great indicator of the changes I think you should make in Magnolia and in the

Northern areas of the city as well I've mentioned in the past in my own Community shared walk sheds involving Green Lake and Roosevelt tangle town and Wallingford we share neighborhood schools as well you know Roosevelt kids go to Green Lake Elementary and you district and Greenlight kids go to school in tangle town and McDonald as do some of the schools with larger Footprints also cross these boundaries uh we're a shared community and thank you should grenada's reunite us as voters too but be that as it may you can do better is no grounds for a legal Pace here no court would entertain a challenge to this map on the grounds of the soft rule so if anyone does say to you you'll hear from my lawyer about this matter please don't lose a wink of sleep because that lawyer will get an earful from the judge and the matter will be done thank you."

- **Nirae Petty** - "Hello Commissioners my name is Nirae Petty and I'm a Seattle resident in the second city council District Welcome today I'm testifying from the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle I'm a member of the RJS Coalition redistricting Justice for Seattle we're requesting that the commission prioritizes increasing Equitable representation for BIPOC and low-income neighborhoods in Seattle by keeping them together historical BIPOC neighborhoods such as the CD Yesler Terrace Rainer Beach Beacon Hill the Cid in districts two and three have and still do face pressures of the economic environmental and education disparities in the city these neighborhoods deserve better and Equitable representation for a better chance of electing someone that understands these issues firsthand Seattle has made a commitment to eliminate racial disparities and Achieve racial equity in the city fighting for representation and acknowledgment has been the burden of communities of color that wealthier and politically enfranchised areas of the city cannot fathom therefore we ask that the commission goes forward with the current draft map Proposal with minor changes that prioritize the values I've just mentioned you can fill Seattle's commitment to equity diversity and inclusion thank you for your time."
- **Jude Ahmed** - "Hi uh my name is Jude Ahmed I have um testified before I am a resident of District three I'm also an employee at the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle and a member of the redistricting Justice for Washington Community um so I am just once again on another public forum I'm wanting to thank the Commissioners for really taking in the feedback on that redistricting Justice for Seattle Coalition has developed we have worked very hard to do Coalition building um amongst our communities and we're going to maintain our communities of color in District 2 and District 3 together um a big piece of that has been ensuring that District 2 remains majority BIPOC and eligible voting population um as you continue to tweak and adjust the maps I hope that we can receive some further updates on what the Commissioners are thinking towards some of the issues that have been brought up regarding prioritizing communities of color in this process overall though I do just again want to highlight that the redistricting Justice for Seattle on that proposal was the one that split the least number of residents from their neighborhood's primary District compared to all of the maps um released by the commission since the commission is aiming to split the least communities of possible we just really want to highlight that the RJS map is doing this best and we hope that any feedback that is incorporated from community members um outside of the Coalition are able to be incorporated while maintaining our priorities so these are to keep the historically Redlined communities and Yesler Terrace Beacon Hill and the Chinatown International District together as well as keep those young diversifying and renter communities in district 7 and South Lake Union

as well we do still want to see more feedback from the community to ensure that our gains aren't undone from the pressure of wealthier or politically influential areas of Seattle and we continue to work to bring those voices to the commission and hopefully we'll be bringing some folks in person at the next public forum from District 2 to speak on their experiences and expectations for the redistricting process um thank you for the good work um and I appreciate this time to speak today thank you."

- **Katie Stultz** - "Hello my name is Katie Stultz I use she her pronouns it's great to see all of you Commissioners again uh and for the public comment um it's just great to see everybody here at the end of this Marathon process with one more public hearing to go uh and I just wanted to say thank you to all of you and the staff for your commitment to public engagement throughout this process um and really excited to secure the continued comments for the next um two public hearings I wanted to take a moment to also introduce myself a bit more um and what brings me to this process my name is Katie Stultz I'm joining today with the redistricting Justice for Seattle Coalition I'm also joining today as a Seattle resident I live in the green lake neighborhood but I previously lived in Lake City and Utah strict for the past 15 years and I grew up in South King County I also grew up connected to my home Faith Community downtown Seattle at Plymouth Congregational Church so most of my closest community is scattered across almost every District in Seattle so I have definitely grown up in homes and districts and in neighborhoods and traveling between those districts um and really an understanding of just uh the fact that while we are we are a very large and diverse City our neighborhoods uh differ uh really by geography and by um many other things I've also worked and organized in the city of Seattle since I was about 18 as a student at the University of Washington so most of my life has been spent working to expand representation in our democracy through my volunteer and professional work and this process is no different from that the process to move Seattle to districted-based election system from the very beginning came from under understanding that the city of Seattle would have a more representative government if we move from at-large Council to a districted council as many of the previous councils included council members from the same neighborhoods um this process must keep that value of representation at its core across the whole city and we really I want to say we saw that commitment from this Commission in the draft map of not splitting historical bipoc communities in neighborhoods and so we urge you to pass the draft map with little changes if at all possible and specifically to keep your commitment to keeping Yesler Terrace Beacon Hill and the Chinatown International District together in District Two uh keeping District 4 north of the mount light cuts and keeping down town in South Lake Union rent your communities together in District 7. we do lift up that redistricting is a challenging process but we know based off the analysis that the map is going to have to jump the water uh in the northern area and so it is a matter of really just figuring out where um and so I am grateful to this commission for opening this process to hearing from the public and thank you for your time tonight take care."
- **Andrew Hong** - "Hi my name is Andrew Hong I am the Statewide coordinator of the redistricting justice for Washington Coalition also a lifelong resident and Public School grad of District two um redistricting Justice For Seattle is our Seattle City Coalition that formed to ensure that underrepresented voices and communities are heard in this process throughout the whole city again we support the commission's draft final map proposal and we urge the commission to pass it with small minor edits and several places that we pointed out in a submitted memo that

we sent him about a month ago uh also I want to highlight again that by a data analysis from Scott Shawcraft that's linked in that memo the rjs map which we asked the commission to reference and uh you know making any final adjustments to the draft map does the best job numerically at keeping as many people uh in the same district as their neighborhood is primarily into the RGS map through a bunch of community input that we've gathered for months um on the specially highlighting Community received from you know historically underrepresented communities in the city especially in the South and in the Central District um you know this redistricting process this map should not just be about one neighborhood or a couple neighborhoods but it needs to really represent and work for the whole city and so we urge this commission to look at public comments not just in the last couple weeks but throughout the whole process and including reviewing public comments from the first seven forums to ensure that all voices in all neighborhoods are centered in this process not just a few wealthy white voices uh yeah thank you."

- **Cindy Black** - "Good evening Commissioners and staff my name is Cindy black I'm the executive director of fixed democracy first a pro-democracy organization that works on ensuring Fair representation across Washington including the city of Seattle we were also an active member of redistricting Justice for Seattle Coalition as you know who focuses on centering people of color and renter Community communities in the Seattle redistricting process as mentioned earlier by both Jude and Andrew the redistricting Justice for Seattle's map does a really good job of splitting the least number of residents from the neighborhood's primary District compared to some of the draft Maps released by the commission we recommend the commission examine our map to help minimize the splitting of communities I also want to mention that the redistricting Justice for Seattle's map also works better to accommodate Magnolia's business district which might be a possible solution to some of the feedback that you've been getting from Magnolia residents in the business Community there though ultimately we really do support the Commissioners August 2nd map draft as it does align with our values as people have mentioned there could be some minor tweaks and changes as previously mentioned that could help strengthen the commission's map but overall we do support that and hope that you will continue to Center those communities of Interest we've been highlighting thank you for allowing me to speak today and for all your efforts on the redistricting process in Seattle we know it's not easy thank you."
- **Camille Baldwin-Bonnie** - "Thank you for um hearing my testimony I'll be brief but I just wanted to call in support of um the redistricting map by the rjs Coalition um as other speakers have said it might need some minor tweaks and changes but I think it is really the um the best map there's been an analysis that showed it um uh has the least amount of separation of peoples from their communities and It Centers the voices of BIPOC communities which is an important thing that should be centered in top priority in any redistricting thank you."
- **Theresa Huey** - "Good evening Commissioners my name is Teresa Huey I am joining again this evening as a current resident living in District 2 who's grown up in the city in South Bend most of my life although I have lived for a short time um by Northgate and Wedgewood I lit um I'm in the hillman neighborhood and I'm here to reinforce previous testimonies I'm also participating as a member of the redistricting Justice for Seattle Coalition a coalition of organizations working to call for an open transparent and Community engaged redistricting process Statewide and locally our Coalition has been together for over the past six months to lift up the voices of

people of color Working Class People renters and other marginalized populations in the redistricting process our Coalition applauds the commission for the draft maps and for continuing to listen to the voices of historically divided communities in Seattle I believe the commission should approve the 8-2 commission draft map the final draft map with very little changes the commission should make changes for their draft map so it aligns with the redistricting Justice for Seattle rjs map proposal a data analysis by Scott Shawcraft shows that the rjs map proposals proposal splits the least number of residents in their neighborhood's primary District compared to all maps released by the commission and the commission should aim to split the least communities as possible and the rjs map does this the best I feel the rjs Coalition map centers BIPOC and renter communities in Seattle redistricting process we do this by keeping historically redlined communities and Yesler Terrace Beacon Hill and the Chinatown International District together in District Two keeping downtown and South Lake Union young diversifying renter communities together in District seven sorry about that the rjs Coalition would also like to see the following in the final map keep the Central Area together in District 3 by keeping District Four North of the Montlake cut to Green Lake and Meridian and District Four keep all of Interbay as possible in district 7 and set the district six the seventh boundary on 28th Avenue West to keep Magnolia Village together I appreciate another opportunity to share my view and we look forward to continued engagement throughout the process thank you."

- **Paul Mueller** - "Thank you chairman Nickels and Commissioners as well um I'm Paul Mueller from the Queen Anne Community uh I represent the Queen Anne Community Council and we would like to ask that the commission reconsider the proposed division of Magnolia community and to keep Magnolia and Queen Anne which surprisingly to some is actually a community primarily of renters uh in the same district the Magnolia and Queen Anne communities have important shared asset interests and issues and developments in the Interbay neighborhood that joins us and that significantly impacts both our communities we believe that an option that meets this goal and the provides better cohesive representation for our bipoc communities are both achievable we must then hold our elected representatives responsible for effectively representing all communities within their respective Geographic districts thanks for all of your hard work and thanks for taking my comments."
- **Jennifer Nagel** - "I just wanted to say many have said this better and I just want to give credit to Janice and Ann for what they said because it was so well spoken I want to thank you all for all your hard work uh I've lived in the Magnolia Community since 1984 and have been involved with many of the groups here and Magnolia is very much one community and I really feel strongly that we need to remain together we all utilize the three accesses to the community as well as the businesses here and we all need to have input into what happens in our neighborhood um many have referred to us as a privileged Community but there are many people of medium and low incomes here and many renters as well and we all need to have a voice in our community so I would please ask the commission to please keep us together in one District thank you very much."

VII. Next meetings – September 20th

- The next Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting will be on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, from 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM.

- There will be one more additional citywide public forum on Saturday October 8, 2022, from 10:00am-12:00pm in the Bertha Knight Landes Room (BKL) at 600 4th Avenue, Seattle WA, 98104.

VIII. Adjourn

- Commission Chair Greg Nickels asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Shah motioned for adjournment, and Commissioner O'Sullivan seconded. The motion for adjournment was approved unanimously with five yes votes.
- The next Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting will be on Tuesday September 20, 2022, from 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM.
- Questions and comments, please send them to Elsa.Batres-Boni@seattle.gov