



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Xio Alvarez and Matt Hutchins, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, August 14, 2025

Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Xio Alvarez, Rebecca Brunn, McCaela Daffern, Andrew Dannenberg, Dylan Glosecki, Matt Hutchins, Matt Malloy, Dhyana Quintanar, Dylan Stevenson, Kelabe Tewolde, Nick Whipple

Commissioners Absent: Cecelia Black, Julia Jannon-Shields, Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson, Radhika Nair, Monika Sharma

Commission Staff: Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Olivia Baker, Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Commission Coordinator

Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<https://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/meetings>

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Co-Chair Matt Hutchins called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm. Co-Chair Hutchins offered the following land acknowledgement:

'As we begin our meeting, we respectfully acknowledge that our meeting today is taking place on occupied Coast Salish land. We pay respect to Coast Salish Elders past and present and extend that respect to their descendants and to all Indigenous people. To acknowledge this land is to recognize the history of physical and cultural genocide and settler colonialism, which continues to displace Indigenous people today. It is to also recognize these lands, waters, and their significance for the resilient and wise peoples who continue to thrive in this region despite the consequences of displacement and broken treaties. Those who hold settler privilege in this city must work towards supporting the Coast Salish people and all Indigenous people using the various forms of wealth and privilege they reap due to it.'

Co-Chair Hutchins noted that this meeting is a hybrid meeting with some Commissioners and staff participating remotely while other Commissioners and staff are participating in the Boards and Commissions Room at Seattle City Hall. He asked fellow Commissioners to review the Color Brave

Space norms and asked for volunteers to select one or more of the norms to read aloud. He suggested to Commissioners that they collectively agree to abide by these norms.

Announcements

Ms. Murdock announced several upcoming Commission meetings and reviewed the format of this meeting. She noted that public comment may be provided in person at City Hall, submitted in writing via email at least eight hours before the meeting, or offered on the hybrid meeting platform MS Teams. Public comment must be able to be given in two minutes or less.

ACTION: Commissioner McCaela Daffern moved to approve the July 10, 2025 meeting minutes. Co-Chair Xio Alvarez seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Working Session: SPC comments on the One Seattle Plan and HB 1110 implementing legislation

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff, presented an overview of the City Council's proposed amendments to the One Seattle Plan and the permanent legislation to implement State House Bill (HB) 1110. He stated that the Select Committee on the Comprehensive Plan introduced amendments to the One Seattle Plan and Phase I Zoning Legislation on August 4. There are fifty-three amendments to CB 120985 (the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan), including text amendments, new Neighborhood Centers, and boundary changes to proposed Neighborhood and Urban Centers. There are also fifty-three Amendments to CB 120993 (the permanent legislation to implement HB 1110), including amendments related to accessory dwelling units (ADUs), affordable housing, corner stores, density and height, parking, stacked flats, trees, amenity areas, and setbacks. Additionally, two amendments were removed, two were corrected, and four new amendments were introduced on August 8.

Mr. Hoey stated that the Planning Commission will be discussing those proposed amendments that reflect themes and issues that the Commission has previously commented on. These amendments include the following:

Proposed Amendments to One Seattle Plan

#2: Add a policy to the Comprehensive Plan to support anti-displacement and equitable development pilots (Rinck)

- Supports zoning pilot programs, such as "Roots to Roofs," to encourage development and partnership structures to mitigate displacement and promote equitable development.

#6: Amend the Comprehensive Plan to support multigenerational housing (Strauss)

- Encourages a range of housing types, sizes, and affordability levels ... appropriate for families with children and other multigenerational households.

#7: Amend Comprehensive Plan policies to remove parking requirements citywide (Rinck)

- Would lead to removal of parking requirements in the Land Use Code. Pairs with Amendment 84.

- #19: Amend the Comprehensive Plan to add a goal for multi-bedroom units (Hollingsworth)
- Would add a new policy to the Housing Element stating a goal of at least 25 percent of the City's new housing having two or more bedrooms.

- #33: Amend Plan policies to allow taller buildings in Neighborhood Centers (Strauss)
- Would allow seven or eight-story buildings near major transit stops or near existing concentrations of goods and services.

- #34: Add eight Neighborhood Centers (Rinck)
- Most were included in the FEIS. Additional environmental review to consider the proposed boundaries will be required.

Proposed Amendments to Permanent Legislation

- #56: Exclude ADUs from floor area ratio limits (Rinck)
- Would remove accessory dwelling units from calculations of floor area ratio.

- #57: Allowing larger maximum size for ADUs (Rinck)
- Would increase the maximum size of ADUs with 3 or more bedrooms to 1,200 square feet.

- #58: Exclude ADUs from density calculations (Rinck)
- Would only count principal dwelling units toward the maximum density allowance, allowing ADUs to be built in addition to that maximum density.

- #59: Exempt ADUs from Mandatory Housing Affordability (Rinck)

- #60: Expanding affordable housing bonus in neighborhood residential (Nelson)
- Would expand the alternative standards for development of low-income housing in NR zones to remove the criteria for location within a frequent transit area.
 - Would also include an increase in the maximum allowable FAR from 1.8 to 2.0 and a stipulation for no minimum required parking.

- #61: Expanding affordable housing bonus and extending bonus to social housing (Kettle)
- Would expand alternative standards for low-income housing development to all lots in NR zones, remove parking requirements, and extend the alternative standards to social housing.

- #62: Extending affordable housing bonus to social housing (Hollingsworth)
- Would include social housing in the alternative standards for development in NR zones currently proposed for low-income housing.

- #63: Expand affordable housing bonus FAR in LR zones (Nelson)
- Would provide bonus development standards (additional FAR and height) for affordable housing in multifamily zones.

- #64: Expand affordable housing bonus in multifamily zones (Strauss)
- Would apply an affordable housing bonus to any low-income housing development in multifamily zones that meet certain criteria.

#65: Allowing stores to be located anywhere in neighborhood residential (Nelson)

- Would remove the requirement that ground-floor commercial uses in NR zones be located on a corner lot.

#66: Allowing more commercial uses in more locations in neighborhoods (Rinck)

- Would allow stores with a wider variety of commercial uses to be located on any lot in NR zones, with no size maximum.

#67: Allowing stores to be located anywhere in NR, not just on corners (Strauss)

- Would remove the requirement that ground-floor commercial uses in NR zones be located on a corner lot.

#70: Increasing FAR for densest development and stacked flats (Kettle)

- Would increase FAR to 1.6 for all developments and to 1.8 for stacked flats on larger lots within frequent transit service areas.

#72: Amend density development standards to allow portions of a lot with environmentally critical areas to count towards density calculations (Rinck)

- Deletes references to riparian corridors, wetlands and their buffers, submerged lands and areas within the shoreline setback, and designated non-disturbance area in steep slopes from lot area calculations.

#74: Increase Neighborhood Residential and Lowrise 1 Height Limits (Nelson)

- Would increase maximum structure height in NR and LR1 zones from 32 to 35 feet to allow for higher floor-to-floor ceiling heights and thicker plates between floors.

#75: Require indoor air quality and noise improvements for development near interstates, highways, major truck streets, or railroad rights-of-way (Hollingsworth)

- Would add a requirement that development of housing, schools and childcare centers near highways and in the City's industrial zones include HVAC systems to improve indoor air quality and sound-insulating windows to reduce exterior noise.

#79: Bonus for Accessible Units (Hollingsworth)

- Would incentivize the construction of Type A accessible units in NR zones by allowing the square footage of Type A accessible units to be exempt from floor area ratio limits, maximum density, and lot coverage limitations.

#84: Remove off-street parking requirements citywide (Rinck)

- Would amend the Land Use Code to remove parking requirements citywide for all land uses in all zones. Would require adoption of Amendment 7.

#85: Amend parking requirements to implement State law (Rinck)

- Would reduce or eliminate parking requirements for a range of uses to implement the provisions of 2025 Senate Bill 5184, which must be in effect by January 2027.

#86: Remove parking regulations within frequent transit service areas (Nelson)

- Would broaden the exemption on parking requirements to frequent transit service areas outside of regional or urban centers.

~~#88: Expanding Stacked Flat Bonus (Hollingsworth) Withdrawn 8/8~~

- ~~• Would lower the minimum lot size to 5000 sq ft for stacked flats to utilize bonus FAR.~~

#89: Expanding Stacked Flat Bonus (Nelson)

- Would remove lot size standards for stacked flat bonuses, increase the FAR from 1.4 to 1.6, increase allowed density from one unit per 650 square feet to one unit per 600 square feet, and increase the allowed lot coverage from 50% to 55%.

#90: Expanding Stacked Flat Bonus (Kettle)

- Would remove lot size and transit proximity provisions, increase FAR from 1.4 to 1.6, and increase allowed lot coverage from 50% to 60%.

#96: Flexible side setbacks (Kettle)

- Would allow flexible, average five-foot side setbacks in NR zones. The minimum dimension of an averaged side setback would be three feet.

New Amendments added 8/8/25

#107: Allowing larger maximum size for ADUs for Legacy Homeowners (Hollingsworth)

- Would increase the maximum size of ADUs to 1,500 square feet for legacy homeowners in lowrise zones near transit, rather than 1,000 square feet.

#108: Exempt ADUs from FAR calculations in LR zones for legacy homeowners (Hollingsworth)

- Would allow ADUs in lowrise zones to be exempted from FAR calculations for properties owned by legacy homeowners in frequent transit areas.

#109: Reduced Setbacks in LR zones for Legacy Homeowners (Hollingsworth)

- Would reduce rear and side setbacks on lots near transit in low rise zones for legacy homeowners.

Proposed Amendments to Centers

- 10 new Neighborhood Centers proposed
- 9 of these were studied in the Draft EIS, without boundaries or zoning. Additional environmental review to consider the proposed boundaries of these centers will be required prior to final Council action.
 - Alki
 - Broadview
 - Dawson
 - Gasworks
 - Loyal Heights
 - Nickerson/South Canal or North Queen Anne/Nickerson
 - Roanoke Park
 - South Wedgwood
 - East Ballard (identified as West Phinney Ridge in DEIS)
 - Magnolia (would replace smaller Magnolia Village and North Magnolia NCs)

- Revisions to 14 previously proposed Neighborhood Centers and Urban Centers
 - Endolyne (renamed Fauntleroy)
 - High Point
 - Morgan Junction
 - Madrona
 - Bryant
 - Ravenna
 - Wedgwood
 - Magnolia Village
 - North Magnolia
 - Phinney Ridge
 - Tangletown
 - Upper Fremont
 - West Green Lake
 - Queen Anne
- Councilmember Strauss, District 6, has provided 3 options for each of the following NCs:
 - East Ballard
 - Magnolia
 - Magnolia Village
 - North Magnolia
 - Phinney Ridge
 - Tangletown
 - Upper Fremont
 - West Green Lake
- Additional environmental review of these changes would be required prior to final Council action

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners stated that two recent decisions from the Growth Management Hearings Board in Kitsap County and City of Mercer Island could be impactful for Seattle's Comprehensive Plan. These jurisdictions were expected to produce affordable housing numbers and incentives or subsidies. Their plans were determined to be insufficient. Ms. Murdock stated that Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) staff are aware of those decisions. Any revisions to the Plan that might trigger environmental review could affect the overall timeline and subsequent funding from the Puget Sound Regional Council. With 106 amendments, the City Council will be narrowing down the amendments into a final package for consideration by the City Council.
- Commissioners asked if the all the amendments represent a net gain or loss in Neighborhood Centers. Mr. Hoey stated that the amendments that propose new Neighborhood Centers represent a net gain, while several amendments proposing reductions in Neighborhood Center boundaries would represent a loss. Overall, all the amendments together represent a net gain. Olivia Baker, Seattle Planning Commission staff, stated that the final amendments package will be an interesting geographic distribution of gain or loss. Ms. Murdock stated that there will be a Supplemental EIS for Centers and Corridors.
- Commissioners stated that there are some big changes proposed to some of the Neighborhood Centers. For example, revisions to the Phinney Ridge, Wedgwood, and Fauntleroy Neighborhood Centers basically remove all single-family residential areas. The intent of Neighborhood Centers is

to identify commercial cores and delineate an area around those cores for residential development. Proposed revisions to several Neighborhood Centers are eliminating the highest opportunity areas. If these centers are reduced to only the commercial cores, those neighborhoods will experience displacement of existing small businesses.

- Commissioners stated that the proposed revisions to the Neighborhood Centers do not set up these areas for long-term success. We should be advocating for the original intent, which is seeding future commercial areas. Commissioners stated that the same intent could also apply to corner stores. The vision for both Neighborhood Centers and corner stores is basically the start of 15-minute cities. There should be a vision for expanding this across the city. The overall goal is to allow residents access to goods and services without a car and to support small businesses that need a sustainable customer base.
- Commissioners commented that the proposed amendments present an unequitable distribution of Neighborhood Center revisions across the city. The City Council should embrace the vision for these areas to flourish, rather than protecting the status quo.
- Commissioners stated that the Neighborhood Centers are the frontier for new affordable housing. The proposed amendments that allow higher buildings, stacked flats, and density bonus will boost affordable housing.
- Commissioners noted that Councilmember Hollingsworth's amendments would help protect legacy homeowners in lowrise zones. Commissioners inquired about expanding these amendments to all homeowners. Ms. Murdock stated that these amendments may prevent displacement. Commissioners stated that the intent of these amendments is to provide an opportunity for partnerships between homeowners and developers. This is especially true for homeowners who do not have resources or capital; the land they own can be turned into equity.
- Commissioners asked about the potential effect of any amendments that would require additional environmental review. Ms. Murdock stated that any amendments that would require a Supplemental EIS would prevent the Plan from being adopted this year.
- Commissioners expressed enthusiasm for several amendments related to parking. Commissioners indicated support for removing parking minimums and implementing parking maximums. This would prevent the construction of massive parking garages and reduce on-street parking.
- Commissioners recommended support for the proposed amendment to expand the definition of Major Transit Service to include frequent transit service.
- Commissioners suggested specifying a one-quarter mile radius for Neighborhood Centers.
- Commissioners expressed support for several amendments that include incentives for the right kind of development. These amendments create an opportunity for specific niches or landowners. These will create complexity in the Land Use Code but are a net positive.
- Commissioners stated that there are a lot of good amendments, but the process has demonstrated bad governance. It is difficult to provide feedback without knowing which amendments will be in the final legislation. Ms. Murdock recommended that this letter focuses on high-level comments. There may be a future opportunity for a "lessons learned" document. Commissioners suggested leading with positive comments but expressed concern that it is too late in the process.
- Commissioners asked if the letter should include references to amendments that the Commission does not support. Ms. Murdock stated that the intent of the Plan is to remove barriers to building

more housing. The Commission cannot support amendments that create more barriers or procedural hurdles to meeting that goal.

- Commissioners stated that the Planning Commission has consistently supported more Neighborhood Centers, not fewer. Commissioners expressed disappointment with the abrupt changes to the Plan. The large number of amendments after months of engagement undermines the trust that OPCD has been working to build. OPCD has been doing its own outreach; a Councilmember survey to determine individual Neighborhood Center boundaries goes against the good faith of that process.
- Commissioners stated that many of the individual amendments that the Commission is not discussing do not belong in the Plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:14 pm.

Resources

[Pathways to Removing Obstacles \(PRO Housing\)](#)

[Black Legacy Homeowners](#)