



**City of Seattle**  
Seattle Planning Commission

Michael Austin, Chair  
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION**

Thursday, July 11, 2019  
Approved Meeting Minutes

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**Commissioners Present:** Michael Austin, Sandra Fried, Veronica Guenther, Grace Kim, Al Levine, Rick Mohler, Kelly Rider, Amy Shumann, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble, Patti Wilma

**Commissioners Absent:** David Goldberg, Julio Sanchez

**Commission Staff:** Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Connie Combs, Planning Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Commission Coordinator

**Guests:** Geoff Wentlandt, Office of Planning and Community Development

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

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Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/when-we-meet/minutes-and-agendas>

**Chair's Report & Minutes Approval**

Chair Michael Austin called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm and announced several upcoming Commission meetings.

**ACTION: Commissioner Grace Kim moved to approve the June 27, 2019 meeting minutes. Commissioner Sandra Fried seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.**

**Announcements**

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, announced several upcoming community events, including a LID I-5 open house on July 17th. Commission Chair Michael Austin and Commissioner Patti Wilma recently attended the Admiral Neighborhood Association's July meeting to talk about the Commission's Neighborhoods for All (NFA) report. Commissioner Wilma stated that attendees were interested in learning more about the role of the Planning Commission and its relationship to the work of the Department of Neighborhoods. She also stated that the group had questions about the NFA report's observations and strategies, including expanding urban village boundaries to reflect a larger watershed and application of design standards. Chair Austin reported that

the group had additional questions about application of the City's Racial Equity Toolkit and Accessory Dwelling Units being used as short-term rentals. Executive Director Murdock stated that Commission staff will be reaching out to additional community organizations to set up additional briefings on the NFA report. She announced that Chair Austin will be a panelist at an upcoming event sponsored by The Atlantic magazine in San Francisco titled "Building Opportunity for All." She also announced a panel discussion hosted by the Seattle Channel called "Seattle On The Line: Examining the History and Contemporary Impact of Redlining."

### **Briefing: Industrial Lands Policy**

Geoff Wentlandt, Office of Planning and Community Development

Mr. Wentlandt provided some preliminary comments on the Mayor's industrial/maritime workplan. He reminded the Commissioners that the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) is an office of the Mayor. He stated the Mayor would be providing more formal communication to the City Council announcing the workplan, concurrent with OPCD's recommendations on Comprehensive Plan Amendments to be docketed for further study.

Mr. Wentlandt described a series of near-term actions that call for consideration of an update to the City's industrial lands policies. These include the following:

- The Interbay Armory site, a 25-acre property within the Ballard Interbay Northend Manufacturing Industrial Center (BINMIC). The Washington State Department of Commerce has convened an advisory committee that is currently reviewing potential future uses of the property. This advisory committee's recommendations, which could include a range of alternatives, are due to the legislature and the Governor in November 2019.
- The Stadium District proposal. Seattle's professional sports stadiums stakeholders have proposed a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to create a stand-alone Stadium District on the Future Land Use Map. This proposal would remove land from industrial designation.
- Port of Seattle major investments. The Port of Seattle has issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for reuse of the northern third of the Terminal 46 as a cruise ship terminal. Responses are due in 2019. The Port is also making major investments upgrading Terminal 5 and is exploring a light industrial development concept on the Interbay uplands site.
- Future Sound Transit stations. Five new or expanded light rail stations are located in or adjacent to Manufacturing/Industrial Centers.
- Duwamish Valley Action Plan. Ongoing work in South Park and Georgetown includes a need to address land use conflicts with adjacent industrial areas.
- Federal proposals. There are extensive discussions at the Federal level around a "Green New Deal" including manufacturing in America, job training and access, and investments in renewable energy, that could inform the City of Seattle's policy on industrial lands.
- Speculative pressures. Developers of office and residential real estate are increasingly lobbying to change zoning to allow other uses in industrial areas. Non-industrial land uses command higher market prices for land.

Mr. Wentlandt shared the following potential draft goals for an industrial/maritime workplan:

- Strengthen and grow Seattle’s industrial and maritime sectors.
- Promote equitable access to living-wage jobs through an inclusive industrial economy and ladders of economic opportunity. Approximately 70% of industrial jobs are accessible to those without a higher education degree. Jobs in these sectors can be accessible to a range of employees.
- Improve the movement of people and goods to and within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers. Transportation would be a significant component of the industrial lands analysis.
- Align Seattle’s industrial and maritime workplan with key climate and environmental protection goals. These resiliency goals include addressing sea-level rise and liquefaction risks.
- Develop a proactive land use policy agenda to ensure long-term protection of inclusive jobs while addressing emerging opportunities and trends in maritime industrial sectors.

Mr. Wentlandt stated a range of City departments would be involved in a robust, thorough review of industrial lands policies. Potential partner departments and agency partners would include:

- Mayor Durkan’s office
- Office of Economic Development
- Office of Planning and Community Development
- Seattle Department of Transportation
- Office of Sustainability and Environment
- Department of Neighborhoods
- Port of Seattle and Northwest Seaport Alliance
- Sound Transit
- Coordination with State legislature
- Public Stadium Authority and Public Facilities District

Mr. Wentlandt stated that the potential study area geography includes all the City’s designated Manufacturing/Industrial Centers. He stated this effort would include a robust community engagement effort to inform future industrial lands policies. Potential community engagement methods and opportunities would include:

- Citywide roundtable groups of subject matter experts, stakeholders and agency representatives
- Subarea stakeholder groups (South Park and Georgetown, SODO/stadium area, Ballard, Interbay)
- Online and social media
- Community meetings and face-to-face engagement in a variety of formats and venues

Mr. Wentlandt stated that it will be important to look at a range of policy options and study the potential outcomes, such as the number and quality of industrial/maritime jobs, resiliency, etc. He described the following potential framework for analysis:

- Evaluate several alternate policy scenarios, including a no action scenario of maintaining existing industrial lands policies.
- Evaluate a modelled future condition for each alternate policy scenario (i.e., type and quantity of jobs, racial equity outcomes, transportation performance, climate change resiliency, etc.).
- Stakeholder and community input – objective, data-driven alternate policy analysis to inform the industrial/maritime workplan.

Mr. Wentlandt stated this policy analysis and community engagement will inform decisions around both the near-term projects and long-term opportunities in station areas and industrial districts. He stated that now is a very good time in the process for the various departments to ask the Planning Commission what should be included in this analysis framework.

#### *Commission Discussion*

- Commissioners asked if the industrial lands work was considered a new study, or would it reference previous work. Mr. Wentlandt stated that the industrial/maritime workplan was not a new study, but a reboot of the previous industrial lands processes with a different lens and set of stakeholders.
- Commissioners requested more information on the timeline for the work. Mr. Wentlandt replied by saying that he could not be very specific at this point, but the Mayor's office is hoping for recommendations by spring or mid-year 2020.
- Commissioners expressed support for the goal to promote equitable access to living-wage jobs, stating that is perhaps the most important of the draft goals. Commissioners acknowledged ongoing land use pressures but stated the importance of preserving industrial lands. Commissioners noted that ongoing changes to the Manufacturing/Industrial Center boundaries have led to the erosion of workforce jobs.
- Commissioners noted the absence of Seattle Public Utilities on the list of departments involved in the industrial lands policy development process. Mr. Wentlandt stated that department will most likely be involved and thanked the Commissioners for the suggestion.
- Commissioners stated that industrial land uses generate impacts that fall heavily on adjacent communities. Those communities do not have equitable access to amenities such as tree canopy and access to transit. Commissioners recommended engagement and outreach efforts should include residents of those communities. Mr. Wentlandt highlighted previous community outreach to the South Park and Georgetown communities for the Duwamish Valley Action Plan.
- Commissioners asked for more information on how the Interbay Armory process relates to the Mayor's industrial lands workplan. Mr. Wentlandt stated that the Armory task force is scheduled to make recommendations to the state legislature in November. Those recommendations may include alternatives that recommend changing the property's land use designation. However, land use regulation is controlled by the City. The Mayor may decide to issue a comment letter from the City. The ultimate disposition of the property will take many years.
- Commissioners expressed concern with the lack of environmental review on the consideration of residential uses on the Interbay Armory site. Commissioners noted recent studies on the environmental impacts of housing adjacent to train tracks.
- Commissioners recommended adding Seattle Parks and Recreation to the list of departments involved in the work, especially because of the location of the Interbay Athletic Complex.
- Commissioners noted that the City's last industrial lands study did not address a twenty-year horizon. Many trends in industrial land uses are emerging, as demonstrated by a recent McKinsey study and development of a new Prologis logistics warehouse in Georgetown.
- Commissioners noted a previous industrial lands inventory conducted by Community Attributes. Highlights of that study included the employment productivity of Seattle's industrial lands with 106,000 jobs, which is eighteen percent of citywide employment. Commissioners noted the importance of these lands to the Seattle economy.

- Commissioners expressed concern that short-term projects may be driving the need to review citywide industrial lands policies. Commissioners stated a preference for long-term industrial/maritime goals to be the primary driver. Commissioners recommended this process be conducted and completed in a timely fashion, referencing several Comprehensive Plan amendments that have been waiting years for decisions pending a comprehensive industrial lands policy.
- Commissioners encouraged a focus on indigenous land in this analysis. Seattle's shoreline is a critical part of native tribes' livelihood and culture. Much of the tribes' history and culture has been practically erased or ignored.
- Commissioners recommended the City partner with the Urbanism Next team at the University of Oregon. This group has already done two studies on innovations in freight distribution.
- Commissioners highlighted the future expansion of light rail where two lines will be coming through SODO and the stadium district. Many employees in this area will be close to transit opportunities. The City should consider the balance between transit investments and industrial lands. Mr. Wentlandt noted that intensification of land use with jobs close to transit stations was a focus of previous industrial lands work. This new analysis will include a study of how people are getting to work in the industrial areas.

**Public comment: 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket Setting**

John Persak stated he works at the Port of Seattle docks, was a stakeholder representative on Mayor Murray's previous industrial lands task force, and is currently a member of the Freight Advisory Board. He spoke in opposition to the Stadium District being docketed at this time. He referenced changes at the Port of Seattle and changes in transportation as reasons necessitating a comprehensive study of industrial lands. He stated that increased density in the proposed Stadium District area will contribute to increased transportation challenges.

Dan Fiorito stated that he submitted a Comprehensive Plan amendment that was previously docketed. He has interacted with the community about the potential for maker space and/or worker housing on his property. He stated that jobs and housing do not have to be mutually exclusive. He noted interest in serving on an industrial/maritime task force if one is formed.

Joseph Gellings spoke as a representative of the Port of Seattle on the proposal to create a Stadium District that would remove land from the Duwamish MIC. He agreed with previous comments that this proposal should be considered holistically with all citywide industrial lands. He stated a previous study of the Stadium District in 2013 included residential uses on only three parcels, while the current proposal would allow residential uses throughout the district. He noted that only one-third of the Port's Terminal 46 property is proposed to be converted to a cruise ship terminal, which is still inherently a maritime industrial use.

Charles Royer stated that he has been working on the Stadium District issue for eight years and is hoping for this proposal to be docketed. The Stadium Transition Overlay District was created in 2000. Since then, there have been some dramatic changes and a significant amount of economic development around the new stadiums, including housing and office space. He stated that the

stadiums need a neighborhood around them to avoid a fate like the Kingdome. He commented that the Stadium District proposal should not be tied to a citywide industrial lands process.

**Action: 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket Setting**

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff, reviewed the Commission’s draft docket setting recommendations on the proposed 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan amendments. He provided an overview of the annual amendment cycle and the process by which proposed amendments are reviewed for inclusion on the docket for further analysis. The draft recommendations include direction whether the Commission recommends docketing four proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), nine proposed amendments to the text of the Plan, and one FLUM and text amendment. Mr. Hoey reminded Commissioners that proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan were not reviewed on a basis of merit for inclusion on the docket for further study, but rather against seven criteria established by Council resolution.

***If you would like to view the 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket Setting presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes section of our website.***

*Commission Discussion*

- Commissioners asked for clarification on how the proposed amendment mentioned by Dan Fiorito during the public comment period relates to the letter being discussed today. Executive Director Murdock stated that the letter under consideration only includes Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals submitted this year. Mr. Fiorito’s amendment was docketed in a previous year and is hopefully moving forward for further study, given that it was docketed before.
- Commissioners proposed an edit to the draft letter regarding the proposal to create a Stadium District. This edit would read as follows “The Commission recommends this proposal for the docket- because the proposal meets the criteria and as such warrants further study.” This edit was proposed to clarify that the Commissioners supported docketing the Stadium District proposal for future study, but this action does not necessarily imply support for the merits of the proposal.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on why the draft recommendation was made to docket the Stadium District proposal rather than recommend it would be better addressed by another process (criterion B5). Executive Director Murdock stated that in the absence of another City process moving forward, staff recommended that the proposal should be docketed. The timeline for the Mayor’s industrial lands workplan was unclear at the time of the draft recommendations.

**ACTION: Commissioner Patti Wilma moved to approve the 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Docket Setting letter, as revised. Commissioner Rick Mohler seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed.**

**Public Comment**

Lindsay Wolpa spoke on behalf of the Port of Seattle and expressed disappointment on the Commission’s action to recommend the proposed Stadium District for docketing. She stated this area is directly tied into the MIC and the Mayor’s office needs to take a comprehensive view of industrial lands.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.