



**City of Seattle**  
**Seattle Planning Commission**

Grace Kim, Chair  
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**APRIL 28, 2016**  
**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

**COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Molly Esteve, Sandra Fried, Yolanda Ho, Grace Kim, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Marj Press, David Shelton, Patti Wilma

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Michael Austin, Lauren Craig, Amalia Leighton, Tim Parham, Spencer Williams

**COMMISSION STAFF**

John Hoey, Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Administrative Staff Assistant; Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

**GUESTS**

Jessica Brand, Department of Neighborhoods

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Elia Sisay, Max Nicolai, Bonnie Williams, John Hubsy, Owen Pickford

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Chair's Report**

- Chair Grace Kim

Chair Grace Kim called the meeting to order 7:32 am.

Chair Kim provided an overview of upcoming Planning Commission meetings. She noted that today's meeting was Commissioner Yolanda Ho's last meeting as a Commissioner.

Commissioner Yolanda Ho moved to approve the April 14, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Kara Martin seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Jake McKinstry and Sandra Fried abstained.

## Briefing: Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda Outreach Plan

- Jesseca Brand, Department of Neighborhoods

Jesseca Brand from the Department of Neighborhoods provided the Planning Commission with an update on recent community engagement and outreach efforts related to the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) recommendations. She demonstrated the various sections of the HALA website (<http://www.seattle.gov/hala>) and distributed an April 2016 Update that includes a list of HALA accomplishments, upcoming actions, major initiatives, and an overview of the HALA Community Engagement Plan. This document will be posted to the HALA website in English and seven other languages. She stated that community outreach efforts in January, February, and March included conversations with approximately 1,000 individuals, a series of public meetings on the Housing Levy, neighborhood meetings, the citywide Livability Night Out, and innovative outreach methods such as a series of Telephone Town Halls.

Ms. Brand provided an overview of the HALA Community Focus Groups. The City received approximately 700 applications. The applicants were very diverse, representing all ages and included a few non-English speakers. The City has tried to address all potential barriers to participation and are holding the meetings at City Hall for maximum accessibility. Focus Group participants are not represented by geography, but rather by four types of future growth areas: Expansion Area Urban Village, Hub Urban Village (high density), Medium Density Urban Village, and Low Density Urban Village. An orientation meeting was held in early April and monthly meetings will be held for the rest of this year. The City is committed to holding conversations that are understandable to all participants without getting too technical. The Commissioners asked what the initial response from the Focus Groups has been so far. Ms. Brand stated that it is still very early in the process and the participants have only received general introductory knowledge at this point. There have been concerns expressed by participants about the scale and scope of the HALA program, changes to neighborhoods, and future taxation issues.

Ms. Brand distributed a handout with a detailed description of the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) program, including the community input process, principles and values, an informational graphic showing one example of how a MHA zoning change would result in either new affordable housing units or in-lieu payment toward affordable housing, and a hypothetical zoning map showing new MHA zone designations in an existing urban village. The MHA-Residential program legislation was introduced by the Mayor on April 27<sup>th</sup> and the legislation will be introduced to the City Council on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The MHA-Residential framework will be established first and then will be implemented through a series of re-zones in 2016 and 2017. The focus of these will be on multi-family zones, urban villages and expansion areas. The HALA team is conducting outreach to diverse and traditionally underserved communities to help them understand the process and the desired outcomes.

The Commissioners asked whether the specific amounts of in-lieu payment have been decided in case a developer chooses not to build affordable housing within their project, an action that is referred to as on-site "performance." Ms. Brand stated that the performance option is included explicitly within the MHA-Residential legislation and is a preference, but in-lieu payment may make sense in many cases, as it may result in more affordable housing units being built. She stated that the Office of Housing has shown that they would be able to leverage the payment funding at a 3:1 ratio and this money would be dispersed in affordable housing projects throughout the City.

The Commissioners suggested that the informational materials showing a hypothetical addition of affordable housing in a new development could be improved by showing opportunities for creative, integrated, flexible design. The Commissioners commented that public outreach materials should present examples that the public can relate to and present the scale of the highest and best use opportunities presented by the MHA-Residential program. The Commissioners stated that the City has an opportunity with this program to present a bold commitment to affordable housing and educate the public about its benefits. The Commissioners suggested that the proposal could be improved and offered to convene a working group to discuss and identify potential improvements.

The Commissioners asked about the role of the Focus Groups in reviewing and providing input on the MHA-Residential framework and the associated re-zoning proposals. Ms. Brand stated that the Focus Groups will be reviewing these, but

at the same time as the general public. Vanessa Murdock suggested that it would be helpful to show different examples to each of the Focus Groups to demonstrate how the MHA-Residential program would be implemented in their type of neighborhood future growth area. Ms. Brand stated that City staff will be highlighting additional components of livability to ease the transitions associated with future growth. For example, all new development will be built to the latest stormwater standards to capture and treat polluted runoff.

The Planning Commission thanked Ms. Brand for her presentation and dialogue.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 am.