



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, August 10, 2017
Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Michael Austin, Keiko Budech, Sandra Fried, David Goldberg, Grace Kim, Tim Parham, Marj Press, Julio Sanchez, Lauren Squires, Patti Wilma

Commissioners Absent: Eileen Canola, Kara Martin, David Shelton, Jamie Stroble

Commission Staff: Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; Katy Haima, Planning Analyst; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Administrative Assistant

Guests: Lyle Bicknell, Office of Planning and Community Development; Christopher Yake, Seattle Department of Transportation

In Attendance: Ellen Lohe, Ian Morrison, Lish Whitson

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:

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

Chair's Report and Minutes Approval

Chair Kim called the meeting to order at 3:08pm. She provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

ACTION: Commissioner Michael Austin moved to approve the August 3, 2017 meeting minutes. Commissioner David Goldberg seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Chair Grace Kim reminded the Commissioners of upcoming meetings.

Announcements

Executive Director Murdock thanked the Commissioners for their strong attendance during an unusually busy period of recent meetings, including an additional special meeting on August 3rd. She also recognized Get Engaged Commissioner Keiko Budech for her service over the last year. A new Get Engaged member, Ellen Lohe, will be starting a one-year term in September.

Public Comment: 2016-17 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Recommendations

Ian Morrison, on behalf of Intracorp, thanked the Commissioners for their support of the 1625 S. Columbian Way amendment. He stated that the site is proposed for development of 60-90 townhouses, and encouraged the Commissioners to add language to their draft letter emphasizing support for multi-family residential development.

Action: 2016-17 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Recommendations

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff

If you would like to view the 2016-2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Recommendations presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes section of our website.

Mr. Hoey presented the Commission’s draft letter on the 2016-2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendments. He highlighted revisions to the staff recommendations based on input received from the Commissioners at the August 3rd meeting. He emphasized the urgency of taking action on this letter in order to make it available to the City Council’s Planning, Land Use and Zoning Committee in advance of their public hearing on August 15th.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners suggested adding the word “multi-family” to the recommendation supporting the proposed 1625 S. Columbian Way amendment. The revised sentence now reads: “We support multi-family residential development of this property recognizing that this site is adjacent to existing public facilities that would support future residential use.”
- Commissioners suggested two additions to the recommendation to postpone review of the proposed 844 NW 48th Street and 1616 W. Bertona Street amendments. The revised sentence now reads: “As the Task Force’s recommendations are translated into policy by OPCD, we look forward to reviewing policies that address all industrial-zoned areas, including these specific parcels.”
- Commissioners recommended removing the following underlined language from the recommendation to approve the Chinatown/International District Neighborhood Plan amendment: “The Commission recommends that these amendments be adopted, but are concerned that the following language in ID-P6 “Enable greater access for the neighborhood’s residents and employees...” could be misconstrued as exclusive of individuals outside of this neighborhood.”

ACTION: Commissioner Tim Parham moved to approve the 2016-2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendment letter as revised. Commissioner David Goldberg seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed.

Briefing: Sound Transit 3; City complementary work

Lyle Bicknell, Office of Planning and Community Development; Chris Yake, Seattle Department of Transportation

If you would like to view the Sound Transit 3 presentations, they are included in the supporting documents found in the minutes section of our website.

Mr. Bicknell provided an overview of early analysis by the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) on the proposed Sound Transit 3 light rail station locations and alignments. He stated that although still early in the planning process, OPCD has identified several issues that they will be sharing with Sound Transit. Mr. Bicknell presented maps of each preliminary station area and alignment and discussed OPCD's early observations, concerns, and recommendations.

Mr. Yake presented a summary of SDOT's station area strategic planning approach and a case study on transit orientation comparing Portland and Seattle. The case study used several criteria to analyze each city's transit orientation score. Mr. Yake stated that Seattle has a very balanced transit orientation score and the city is in a good position for new transit system investments. Transit-oriented development will enhance station area neighborhoods along the future light rail alignment, especially if placemaking efforts are emphasized at these locations.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners expressed support for transit-oriented development and redevelopment around the proposed 130th Street and Graham Street infill stations.
- Commissioners noted the potential inequity associated with elevated and tunnel light rail segments in the north end of Seattle compared with at-grade segments in the south end.
- Commissioners expressed concerns about the potential lack of ridership at the proposed Interbay station, which could result in a similar situation to the current Sodo station, where there is insufficient rider-generating land use around the station. Mr. Bicknell commented that there may be potential for commercial-industrial transit-oriented development in the vicinity of those stations.
- Commissioners commented on the potential of light rail increasing access to parks and open space.
- Commissioners noted the similarity of some of the proposed light rail segment alignments to those included in the proposed Seattle Monorail Project. Commissioners commented that several of those segments include significant engineering challenges and encouraged Sound Transit to review the environmental studies that were conducted for the Monorail project.
- Commissioners suggested that public outreach efforts may result in comments supporting tunnels for light rail segments that cross Salmon Bay and the Duwamish River, rather than elevated crossings at these locations. Mr. Bicknell noted that both of these methods include significant technical issues and costs. Either method proposed for these segments will prove to be complex.

- Commissioners commented on Sound Transit’s announced intention to select a preferred alternative early in the environmental review process. It may be important to recommend several alternatives for additional analysis in some of the more complicated segments.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Bicknell and Mr. Yake for their presentation, and stated that they look forward to reviewing and commenting on the Sound Transit 3 proposed alignment and associated station areas as they are developed.

Reflections on being a Planning Commissioner

Keiko Budech, Get Engaged Seattle Planning Commissioner

Commissioner Budech shared her perspectives after serving a one-year term as the Commission’s Get Engaged member. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to learn first-hand about a number of different policy issues from a variety of perspectives. She especially enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the interesting conversations held at both the committee and full Commission level. She shared some details of the Get Engaged cohort’s year-long program, and stated that a highlight of that process was writing a letter with their comments on the Mandatory Housing Affordability regulations.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Budech for her service and discussed writing a letter to the Get Engaged program organizers stating how beneficial the program has been for the Commission and encouraging continued and expanded support for the program.

Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm