



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Tim Parham, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Final Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sandra Fried, David Goldberg, Grace Kim, Ellen Lohe, Rick Mohler, Tim Parham, Marj Press, Kelly Rider, Julio Sanchez, Amy Shumann, Jamie Stroble, Patti Wilma

Commissioners Absent: Michael Austin, Eileen Canola, Lauren Squires

Commission Staff: John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst

Guests: Brennon Staley, Office of Planning and Community Development

In Attendance: Erica Barnett, Aly Pennucci

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 & Minutes Approval

Chair Tim Parham called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

ACTION: Commissioner Patti Wilma moved to approve the June 14, 2018 meeting minutes. Commissioner Sandra Fried seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Chair Parham provided an overview of the meeting agenda and upcoming Commission meetings.

Announcements

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission Staff, announced several upcoming community events.

Briefing: Incentive Zoning Update

Brennon Staley, Office of Planning and Community Development

If you would like to view the Incentive Zoning Update presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes section of our website.

Brennon Staley from the Office of Planning and Community Development presented an overview of the City update to the Incentive Zoning program. Incentive zoning allows property owners to gain extra floor area beyond the base development limit up to a maximum development limit by providing public benefits. Mr. Staley presented details of the existing incentive zoning program, benefits of the program to date, the goal of the program update, and details of the initial proposal. He provided information on the geographic areas of the city where incentive zoning applies and the public

benefits options of the program, including transfer of development rights (TDR) and amenities such as open space and green street improvements. Mr. Staley stated that TDR has been the most frequently used benefit of the incentive zoning program. Several open spaces and plazas, including the Amazon open spaces and green streets on Terry and 5th, are a direct result of the program. He presented a timeline for the update process and answered questions from the Commissioners.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners stated that the TDR option of the incentive zoning program has been a huge benefit for historic preservation and rehabilitation as well as urban design by encouraging different scales and ages of buildings within neighborhoods. Commissioners also acknowledged that the TDR option in South Lake Union has preserved rural areas in King County. Mr. Staley provided more information on the unique incentive zoning program in South Lake Union that contributes to regional TDR.
- Commissioners asked how TDR public benefit options will be prioritized in the incentive zoning program update. Mr. Staley stated that OPCD is considering this and seeking input during the public outreach process.
- Commissioners acknowledged a previous discussion about the idea of developing a prioritization list/plan for incentive zoning public benefits and encouraged developing such a plan for areas where incentive zoning will apply.
- Commissioners asked if the program update has considered including TDR for unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings that are not currently landmarked and stated that would be attractive to affordable housing projects in URM buildings that do not have funding for retrofitting the buildings.
- Commissioners expressed an interest in including TDR if there will be incentive zoning in the First Hill neighborhood after MHA implementation. Mr. Staley stated that the existing incentive zoning program in First Hill, which is focused on affordable housing benefits, is proposed to be replaced by MHA.
- Commissioners asked for more information on how race and social equity are incorporated in the TDR program, especially in the Chinatown/International District neighborhood. Commissioners stated that the TDR program could improve equity and access by contacting property owners of URM buildings in different languages.
- Commissioners requested more information on details of the open space benefits of the incentive zoning program, including who is responsible for operation and maintenance of the newly created open spaces. Mr. Staley stated that ongoing maintenance is the responsibility of the property owners. Commissioners expressed a concern with inadequate signage noting the mandatory public access to these open spaces.
- Commissioners encouraged OPCD to consider using in-lieu fees for offsite open/public space benefits. Mr. Staley stated that there is no ongoing program for offsite funding. Fees collected from the incentive zoning program for open/public space benefits need to be spent within five years.
- Commissioners asked for more details on the City's green streets program and the connection to incentive zoning. Mr. Staley stated that green streets include non-standard changes to the right-of-way that make a difference to the pedestrian experience. These changes may include such interventions as moving the curb and accommodating more street furniture, trees, and art. He indicated that green streets will get renewed attention as part of the One Center City process.
- Commissioners expressed a cautionary note about the incentive zoning proposal to include cultural spaces, stating that a similar effort in Bellevue led to vacant spaces. Commissioners encouraged partnership with the private sector, the City's Office of Arts and Culture, and non-profit organizations to create cultural spaces that are not limited only to arts but could include gathering spaces. Mr. Staley stated that the City is interested in community feedback on this topic and noted that the City will have very limited resources or capacity for monitoring or enforcement of how these cultural spaces are being used.
- Commissioners asked if the incentive zoning proposal includes any provisions for publicly accessible off-street bike parking near light rail stations. Mr. Staley answered that this is not currently included in the proposal, but the idea could be considered, especially in dense areas like the University District where many will access the stations via bike.
- Commissioners asked whether the child care facilities funded by the incentive zoning program offer a sliding scale of fees to accommodate a range of income levels. Mr. Staley replied that there is a requirement that 20 percent of

spaces must be set aside for low-income families and that the City's Human Services Department distributes the funds, ensuring equitable access to these facilities.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Staley for his briefing.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00am.