



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Tony To, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION JANUARY 24, 2008 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners in Attendance

Tony To - Chair; Linda Amato, Chris Fiori, Colie Hough-Beck, Martin Kaplan, Kay Knapton, Chelsea Levy, M. Michelle Mattox, Kevin McDonald, Leslie Miller, Kirsten Pennington

Commission Staff

Barbara Wilson-Director, Casey Mills-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative Specialist

Commissioners Absent

Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Mark Johnson

In Attendance

Rebecca Herzfeld, Council Central Staff; Debera Harrell, Seattle Post Intelligencer

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 am.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

▪ Minutes Approval

ACTION: Commissioner Linda Amato moved to approve the January 10, 2008 minutes. Commissioner Leslie Miller seconded the motion. Commissioners Colie Hough Beck and Kevin McDonald made some friendly amendments. The minutes passed unanimously with the friendly amendments.

▪ Chairs Report

Chair Tony To noted upcoming meetings and events. He mentioned that that the Mayor's office had to delay the meeting to make a decision about the new Commissioner appointments. Chair To noted that this decision will be made in February, so the Commission will be a little short handed for a while.

Chair To stated that an at large Commission committee will meet with DPD regarding the update of the multifamily code on Monday, January 28th at 4 pm and that the main focus of the meeting will be to look more specifically about application of the Green Factor on Multifamily projects.

Chair To thanked the Commissioners who have agreed to meet with various Councilmembers, including Councilmembers Clark, Burgess and Harrell.

Chair To stated that Commissioner Mark Johnson accompanied Commission staff to Olympia to give the House Local Government Committee and the Housing Committee a sneak preview of our Affordable Housing Action Agenda. Executive Director Barbara Wilson stated that staff and Commissioner Johnson received a lot of positive feedback from legislators, as well as a lot of questions. She added that Legislators state that they look forward to the full release of the action agenda.

Chair To called attention to several of the Commission's upcoming meetings including; the February 5, 2008 Executive Committee meeting which will feature Sara Nikolic from FutureWise who will present their new initiative on Transit Oriented Development.

Chair To noted that the next Full Commission meeting will be Thursday February 14th from 3-5:30 pm He added that the Commission will have both of the newly elected Councilmembers here to meet the Commission, there will be a presentation of the 2008 comp plan amendments, and the Commission will take action on the review of the process for updating neighborhood plans.

Chair To noted two important save the date items: On Thursday, February 28th the Commission will release their Affordable Housing Action Agenda and host a panel discussion. The event will take place at City Hall in the Bertha Landes Room, 6:00-7:30 pm. On Thursday, April 24, 2008 the Commission will hold an all day retreat

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

▪ South Downtown (Discussion & Possible Vote)

Chair To stated that the Commission's goal for this discussion is to approve the letter with their comments regarding the South Downtown DEIS.

Recusal & Disclosures: There were no recusals or disclosures.

Ms. Wilson provided some background for the discussion. She stated that rather than weigh in on the DEIS and the sufficiency of this document, the Commission had decided to examine the proposed alternatives for South Downtown from the perspective of major policy areas. She noted that these areas included industrial lands, physical environment, open space and public amenities, housing and transportation. Ms. Wilson stated that the Committees reviewed portions of the DEIS from these perspectives, and after discussing the committee recommendations at both the last Full Commission meeting and Executive Committee meeting, a letter was drafted based on Commission input. Ms. Wilson reviewed this letter, stating that most portions of the document were similar to the content reviewed at the previous Full Commission meeting.

ACTION: Commissioner Kay Knapton moved to approve the letter. Commissioner Leslie Miller seconded the motion.

Commissioner Hough-Beck offered some spelling corrections. Commissioner Amato offered some editorial edits. She pointed out that one of her suggested edits concerning industrial lands would strengthen the language of the letter a bit. Commission Martin Kaplan then offered two suggested changes, both of which strengthened the language in the letter regarding affordable housing and the sufficiency of the data used to determine housing demand. Commissioners Knapton and Commissioner McDonald also offered editorial changes that did not significantly change the meaning of the document.

ACTION: Commissioner Kirsten Pennington called the question regarding the motion to approve the letter. The motion passed unanimously.

▪ **Updating Neighborhood Plans (Discussion)**

- *Outreach & Process*: Briefing and report from HNUC review (Commission Kay Knapton)
- *Purpose & Logistics*: Briefing and report form LUT review (Commissioner Chris Fiori)

Chair To called for disclosures or recusals.

Recusal & Disclosures: Commissioner Leslie Miller disclosed that she is on the steering committee of an Othello based community group. Chair Tony To disclosed that he is a voting member of the Southeast District Council. Commissioner Linda Amato disclosed that she is a member of the Haller Lake Community Club. Commissioner Martin Kaplan disclosed that he is a member of the Queen Anne Community Council and their Land Use Review & Planning Committees. Commissioner M. Michelle Mattox disclosed that she is a member of the Rainier Beach Coalition for Empowerment.

Ms. Wilson stated that Councilmember Sally Clark had requested that the Commission review DPD's proposed process for updating neighborhood plans. She added that the Commission divided the review up between two committees, (HNUC and LUT) which reviewed the plan through the lenses of Outreach, Process, Logistics, and Purpose.

Commissioner Knapton briefed the Commission on the HNUC Committee's report, which dealt with Outreach and Process. She stated that the audit performed on the last round of neighborhood planning should be incorporated into the current effort. Commissioner Knapton added that concern exists about the amount of funds being devoted to the proposal, and that while the Commission is very supportive of an inclusive process, if the city truly wants to achieve this, it must devote sufficient resources. Commissioner Knapton noted that the proposed approval process appears vague, and the balance between the process being neighborhood and city driven is unclear; the initial educational component of the outreach process is an essential one, because there will be a steep learning curve for neighborhood residents, especially those not involved in the previous neighborhood planning effort. She added that the City must make every effort to ensure participants have realistic expectations about what a neighborhood plan can and cannot achieve; and that the proposed update process does not

address whether or not funds will be provided to neighborhoods to implement the visions they outline in their neighborhood plans.

Commissioner Fiori briefed the Commission on the LUT Committee's report, which dealt with Purpose and Logistics. He stated that the purpose, need and strategic goals of the update process should be outlined and clearly articulated in the City's outreach information. He added that goals for the update process should include defining new growth targets and where growth should occur, revisiting the alignment of public investment with density, and fostering greater community engagement in neighborhood planning, particularly transportation. Commissioner Fiori noted that 'Inclusiveness' and 'Sustainability' are the only key principles listed in the proposed process document, which seems like an incomplete list of key principles and that the city must ensure participants have realistic expectations about what the update process will address. Commissioner Fiori suggested that more background be provided in the proposal about the previous neighborhood planning effort and how it relates to the current proposal. He added that, while generally supported, further articulation about the sector approach should be provided.

Commissioner Hough-Beck questioned whether it would be appropriate to outline what role the Commission would play in the update process. Ms. Wilson stated that was appropriate.

Commissioner Miller cautioned about the manner in which the Commission got involved in the process. She stated that she felt that the Commission should try to retain its status as an independent body, and getting too involved in the outreach process could compromise this. Commissioner Miller continued that she thought that it was important to define how often the City would perform these updates, and set a consistent plan for the future about how updates would occur.

Commissioner Amato suggested that the Commission prepare a work plan before being requested to do so. She noted that this would be a proactive means of ensuring the Commission is involved on its own terms.

Commissioner Kaplan stated that the process will likely be a political one. He added that much of the politics could be avoided if a detailed explanation of why the updates were being performed was provided.

Chair To noted the Commission's status as stewards of the Comprehensive Plan. He encouraged the Commission to be involved in the neighborhood plan updates from that perspective, including notifying neighborhoods about how recent changes to the Comp Plan have affected their neighborhoods.

Commissioner Pennington stated that she felt that the problem the updates are trying to address should be clearly articulated. She added that this problem could be different for different neighborhoods. Commissioner Pennington stated that the pre-planning work needs to include parameters for neighborhoods, including a timeline and budget, for the process. She added that the Commission's best form of involvement might be to provide advice regarding strategy, serve on panels, and address the neighborhood plan's relationship to the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Hough-Beck stated that the first meeting in the process could be a scoping meeting, where the city asks neighborhoods what they want. Ms. Wilson stated the need for ensuring realistic parameters about what a neighborhood plan can and cannot achieve.

Commissioner McDonald stated that he was not clear about the connection between the Comprehensive Plan and the Neighborhood Plans. He noted that once he understood that, it might be clearer as to how the Commission should participate in the update process.

Commissioner Pennington asked whether updating was the correct term, or if it should be a prioritizing or implementation plan. Chair To responded that the neighborhood plans represent a planning process, not an implementation plan and that the Commission and neighborhoods do not legislate appropriations. Commissioner Chelsea Levy noted that it is often unsatisfying for neighborhoods to work on their plans, then not see the fruit of their labor in the form of implementation. Commissioner Kaplan stated he felt the implementation aspect of the plans should be what the neighborhood begins working on once their plans are complete.

Commissioner Fiori stated it would be helpful for him if he was able to understand better the relationship between CIP plans and the neighborhood plans, and how much neighborhood plans guide public investment for the city.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair To adjourned the meeting at 9:00 am.