



**City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission**

Josh Brower, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 9, 2011
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Vice Chair – Leslie Miller, Catherine Benotto, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Kay Knapton, Amalia Leighton, Kevin McDonald, Matt Roewe

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Chair – Josh Brower, Kadie Bell, David Cutler, Martin Kaplan, Bradley Khouri, Jeanne Krikawa, Christopher Persons

COMMISSION STAFF

Katie Sheehy-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative Staff Assistant, Diana Canzoneri-Demographer

GUESTS

Marshall Foster, Maggie Glowacki, DPD; Jill Simmons, Tracy Morgenstern, OSE;

IN ATTENDANCE

Anna Chittum, American Council for Energy-Efficient Economy; Patrick McDonnell

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

Vice Chair Leslie Miller called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

- **Approve: May 12, 2011 Minutes**

ACTION: Commissioner Kay Knapton moved to approve the May 12, 2011 minutes. Commissioner Kevin McDonald seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

- **City Planning Director's Update**

- Marshall Foster, DPD

Marshall Foster updated the Commission on DPD's work in several areas. Mr. Foster mentioned the Comprehensive Plan update and stated that they were preparing for a June 29 rollout. He noted that this will be a virtual launch in lieu of a meeting in City Hall. He added that there will be an event later in the summer or early autumn.

Mr. Foster reported that DPD is taking another look at the Roosevelt Rezone and they expect to have some new thoughts in a week or so. He added that they are looking at other areas in order to compare the density of transit oriented development projects around the country.

Mr. Foster stated that they Broadway UDF will be completed this month and that the City may want to put forward an agreement with Sound Transit that would help implement the framework. He added that the request for qualifications for redevelopment of the Sound Transit property at the light rail station will most likely go out in early 2012.

Mr. Foster noted that the Mayor's office is looking at reorganizing several City departments including DPD's City Planning Division. He added that they are looking at options for where various City functions should reside in order to improve coordination of community development.

Mr. Foster finished his update by mentioning [Waterfront Seattle](#). He noted that the May event was very well attended with around 1000 people there. He added that the results of the event were very positive and that people want more detail about how they are going to use the waterfront. Mr. Foster noted that they have been mostly focused on design but are now ramping up the financial strategy and overall strategic plan for the whole series of projects. He noted that development of the civic spaces will need to be phased.

Vice-Chair Miller asked, regarding Roosevelt and Capitol Hill, if Marshall wanted some specific feedback from the Commission. Mr. Foster answered that it would be helpful.

Commissioner Roewe asked if Waterfront Seattle would include any options for new development opportunities. Mr. Foster answered that there might be a few opportunities for civic development around the ideas of [the folds](#).

Commissioner McDonald expressed concern about Sound Transit not embracing the neighborhoods in the design of the Roosevelt Station or building anything on top of the station box at Roosevelt. He wondered if it might be appropriate for an agency-to-agency dialogue about the development of the specific station and the City's interest in having a greater amount of development. Mr. Foster responded that there have been extensive discussions and that the City will continue to push Sound Transit toward designing stations that are more integrated into Seattle's neighborhoods.

Vice-Chair Miller thanked Mr. Foster for his time.

- **Chair's Report**

- Commission Vice-Chair Leslie Miller

Vice-Chair Miller reported on the upcoming events and meetings of the Seattle Planning Commission.

BRIEFINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

- **Update & Briefing: Climate Action Plan**

- Jill Simmons & Tracy Morgenstern, Office of Sustainability and Environment

Vice-Chair Miller called for disclosure and recusals.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner Mark Johnson disclosed that his firm, Environmental Science Associates, is consulting in the areas of energy and waste management and that they might be involved in some of the actions.

Jill Simmons and Tracy Morgenstern gave a powerpoint presentation that can be accessed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/planningcomm6911.pdf>

Jill Simmons noted that it will be important for the Climate Action Plan to be well integrated with the Comprehensive Plan update and would like to work with the Commission to ensure that both plans are consistent.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked if material in the landfill in Oregon gets converted to energy. Ms. Morgenstern replied that it does through incineration. Ms. Simmons added that they are flaring the methane and that City Light purchases the energy generated from the methane collection.

Commissioner Leighton asked about the assumptions made for City Light's future energy capacity. Ms. Morgenstern answered that they assume City Light will continue to be climate neutral and that the demand will not increase. She added that the biggest challenge will be in distribution and moving toward district energy. Commissioner Leighton asked if there were a source where you can look up the greenhouse gas emissions from the manufacture and distribution of consumer products. Ms. Morgenstern stated that King County is developing such a tool.

Commissioner Johnson wondered if urban trees could help sequester carbon. He also asked about assumptions made concerning lifestyle and reduced mobility. Ms. Morgenstern replied that they are looking at watershed and are looking at forest trees and not as much at urban trees. Ms. Simmons added that, concerning lifestyle, they focused solely on transportation, buildings and waste and she noted that, for the most part, VMT goes down but where people go stays the same. Ms. Simmons added that this is a technical feasibility analysis and they don't know that they can afford the really deep retrofits to buildings that would help reduce emissions in that sector.

Commissioner McDonald noted that, regarding land use, there is only anecdotal information about how mixed use can lead to lower carbon emissions per capita – the metrics are not well established yet. Ms. Morgenstern

stated that they used existing models which help identify shifts in how people travel but discreet land use changes are not captured. Ms. Simmons stated that land use changes are a necessary condition but not sufficient condition for changes in how people travel. Commissioner McDonald emphasized that land use is an important factor influencing travel behavior and that dense, mixed-use development should be given substantial credit in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Vice-Chair Miller noted that the assumptions about infrastructure investment seem significant and the assumption regarding electric vehicles was particularly high. Ms. Simmons responded that the figure of 80% electric vehicles by 2050 is aggressive. She noted that electric cars are starting to be seen on the streets and that Seattle is one of five cities in a federal demonstration project to start building charging stations. Ms. Simmons added that some of the challenges are: car turnover takes a long time and that the battery technology is not so great for longer trips. She added that they assume that by 2050 technology will be greatly improved.

Commissioner Benotto asked what the assumptions were for the source of electricity. Ms Morgenstern stated that it was for continued hydro-electric power supplemented by renewable energy such as wind and solar, and that future increased demand possible as a result of a hotter climate would be met by these climate neutral sources. Commissioner Benotto, in noting that land uses were not addressed, mentioned that there is data available linking mix of land uses to reductions in VMT. Commissioner Benotto also asked if energy and related GHG emissions for waste sewage and water treatment was taken into consideration. Ms. Morgenstern replied that this was not as they were King County systems.

Commission Staff, Diana Canzoneri, asked about the assumption that people would live closer to their work. Ms. Morgenstern noted that the City focuses growth in Urban Centers and that they are working with WSDOT regarding improving models around land use. She added that complete communities are really core to 'rethinking the American dream'.

Commissioner Roewe noted that there are not any good ways of measuring land use but you can measure the consequences of not getting land use right. Ms. Morgenstern replied that it was something that they have considered and that the modeling is a challenge. Commissioner Roewe stated that if the number of households planned for in the upzone at South Lake Union were developed in traditional single family housing, it would take 4.5 Discovery Parks. He added that regarding the carbon calculators, that the travel was pretty insignificant. Ms. Simmons replied that those calculators only look at building energy and transportation and do not show the hidden emissions of the products we consume. She added that they do have a local calculator but it is still a limited view. She noted that they are revamping it in advance of the climate action plan. Commissioner Roewe noted that cremation requires a significant amount of energy and that the future will likely include carbon neutral options for funerals.

Commissioner Knapton asked about the aging population and the impact of hospital usage and treatment being developed. Ms. Simmons responded that they didn't look at that specifically but hospitals are currently on district energy systems so there is definitely a huge opportunity to transition to low-carbon energy sources.

Vice-Chair Miller thanked Ms. Simmons and Ms. Morgenstern.

- **Update & Briefing: Shoreline Master Plan**
 - Maggie Glowacki, DPD

Vice-Chair Miller called for disclosure and recusals.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture is examining the Shoreline Master Plan on behalf of property owners in South Lake Union.
- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, works on public and private projects in shoreline areas.
- Commissioner Mark Johnson disclosed that his firm, Environmental Science Associates, is providing consulting services with some public agencies public that are now pursuing or intend to pursue shoreline permits in the City.

Maggie Glowacki gave a powerpoint presentation that can be accessed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/smppresentation09June2011.pdf>

Commissioner Johnson noted that the basic concept behind the Shoreline Master Plan is that the water belongs to everyone and the government is the trustee of the public interest. He added that in the 1960s, Washington State codified the public trust doctrine which resulted in the Shoreline Management Act. Commissioner Johnson added that an important distinction or consideration is that both Lake Washington and Puget Sound are water bodies of statewide significance.

Commissioner Roewe stated that the Lake Union perimeter has become a swath of surface parking lots and doesn't really serve the third goal on the list, especially if the lots are never improved. He wondered if we have gone far enough to motivate the parking lot land owners as the 35% view corridors and the limits on height make it more difficult to redevelop. Ms. Glowacki responded that barriers are the height restrictions. Commissioner Roewe stated that no one is improving the lots because there is no economic reason to do so. Ms. Glowacki noted that we need to protect views and taller buildings block those views. She added that they would have to explore a list of incentives. Commissioner Johnson added that it is part of the way that the shoreline rules work, they restrict the economics in favor of a limited number of uses and these uses are kind of low intensity uses.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked how aggressive DPD is on enforcement regarding people who are living on boats in shipyards and who are dumping their grey water right into the lake. Ms. Glowacki responded that the SMP is silent regarding live aboard boats and grey water. She added that the inspector works on a complaint basis and has been called for black water issues but that it is hard to measure.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked if the tribes have been participating. Ms. Glowacki stated that they were invited but have not participated; however, they submitted a letter that did not include any glaring issues.

Commissioner Benotto wondered why one of the most preferred uses in shoreline areas is single family residential. Ms. Glowacki replied that it is there along with water dependent uses and that it is written into the WAC. She added that it is preferred when it is constructed in an ecologically sound manner. Commissioner Johnson noted that there was concern, when the legislation initially was passed, regarding what you can do

other than water-dependent uses. He added the docks for single family houses are considered water dependent uses.

Vice Chair Miller asked if the industrial businesses were against limits to recreational marinas. Ms. Glowacki answered that many industrial users have marinas and see this as a bridge to use their slips based on demand.

Commissioner Leighton wondered if public access is defined by dimensions or qualities. Ms. Glowacki replied that the minimum is a 5 foot easement that leads to a 10 foot square walkway. She added that they would, ideally, like to look at areas as a whole as some are very limited in size and not very inviting.

Vice Chair Miller thanked Ms. Glowacki.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment but two attendees introduced themselves to the Commissioners.

Patrick McDonnell stated that he is a recent University of Michigan graduate and is attending the meeting to observe and to get the lay of the land in Seattle.

Anna Chittum stated that she has applied to be a Get Engaged member and that she works for the American Council for Energy Efficiency.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.