



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MARCH 10, 2016 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Austin, Sandra Fried, Grace Kim, Amalia Leighton, Kara Martin, Marj Press, Patti Wilma

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Lauren Craig, Molly Esteve, Yolanda Ho, Jake McKinstry, Tim Parham, David Shelton, Spencer Williams

COMMISSION STAFF

John Hoey, Policy Analyst; Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

GUESTS

Kristian Kofoed, Office of Planning & Community Development; Gabriela Vega, Seattle Department of Transportation

IN ATTENDANCE

Ryan Moore, Office of Planning & Community Development; Kevin O'Neill, Seattle Department of Transportation; Nick Welch, Office of Planning & Community Development; Bonnie Williams

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 Kim called the meeting to order at 3:20pm and noted that there was not a quorum of Commissioners present. She provided an overview of upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

Public Comment on Backyard Cottage Letter

Bonnie Williams commented that neighborhood groups are committed to preserving livability and want their concerns to be heard. She stated that the 2010 legislation that enabled the development of detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs), or backyard cottages, was well written. She expressed concern with the Planning Commission's recent recommendations to remove regulatory barriers to permitting and construction of DADUs, stating that other cities have taken a more balanced approach. She commented that the Commission's recommendations on DADUs would lead to dramatic changes in the neighborhoods, including exacerbating existing parking problems citywide. She encouraged the Commission to further review these issues.

Action on Backyard Cottage Letter

The Commissioners suggested one minor edit to the draft letter and asked a question to clarify the relationship between the recommendation to increase the rear yard coverage and the overall lot coverage requirements. Nick Welch from the Office of Planning and Community Development clarified this issue by saying that the rear yard coverage requirement could be increased to allow for a larger DADU as long as the overall lot coverage requirement is not exceeded by all of the structures on a lot.

The Commission did not take action on the letter due to the lack of a quorum.

2015/16 Comprehensive Plan Amendments

- Kristian Kofoed, Office of Planning & Community Development

If you would like to view the PowerPoint presentation on the 2015/16 Comprehensive Plan Amendments, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes' section of our website.

Kristian Kofoed from the Office of Planning and Community Development provided an overview of the four 2015/2016 Comprehensive Plan Amendments that were placed on the docket for additional review. OPCD staff has analyzed these four docketed amendments, which include one each in the Roosevelt, Wedgwood, Northgate, and Laurelhurst neighborhoods. Of these four, OPCD is only recommending the Wedgwood amendment to the City Council for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan update later this year.

Briefing: Freight Master Plan

- Gabriela Vega, Seattle Department of Transportation

If you would like to view the PowerPoint presentation on the Freight Master Plan, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes' section of our website.

Gabriela Vega from the Seattle Department of Transportation provided an overview and update on the Freight Master Plan. Highlights of her presentation included:

- Project accomplishments in 2014-2015, and goals for 2016, including ongoing public outreach
- Draft freight network designations that recognize different levels of freight movement and needs
- An expanded citywide freight network map with four designations based on purpose, land use, and volumes
- Truck design guidelines (type, size, volume) and new freight project concepts to improve safety and mobility
- Project prioritization based on quantitative and qualitative factors
- Strategies to achieve plan goals and specific implementation actions
- Status and next steps

The Commissioners asked Ms. Vega to provide specific examples of the different freight network designations and how the new freight network relates to the various land uses that the network serves. Ms. Vega stated that a goal of the Freight Master Plan is to create clear freight connections to distinct land use categories. The Commissioners asked if the freight network is designed to be prescriptive or the basis for future policy decisions. Ms. Vega and Kevin O'Neill from SDOT explained that the new freight network is intended to guide future planning efforts and focus investment projects. The Commissioners asked how resiliency is incorporated into the Freight Master Plan. Ms. Vega replied that alternative truck routes for flooding and earthquake hazards have been considered in the plan.

Introduce Housing Levy letter

John Hoey introduced the draft Housing Levy letter for discussion with the Commissioners. The letter is intended to provide the City Council with comments on the Mayor's proposed 2016 Housing Levy. The draft letter included four significant recommendations:

- Focus Majority of Levy Assistance at Extremely Low Income Levels

- Provide Assistance to Low-Income Homeowners and First-Time Home Buyers
- Prioritize Investments to Integrate with Transportation and Community Planning Goals
- Assist Those with Imminent Risk of Potential Homelessness

The Commissioners asked how the current funding levels for each of the programs in the Mayor's proposal compare to those in the 2009 Housing Levy, and what percent of the Office of Housing's budget comes from the Housing Levy. The Commission expressed their disappointment that \$3 million in the Mayor's original proposal for one-time mortgage loans was removed, stating that this funding is necessary to prevent current low-income homeowners from falling into homelessness, especially in case we experience another housing crisis in the next several years. Commissioners expressed concern that funding in the Mayor's proposal for homelessness prevention was only for low-income renters. Planning Commission staff will research whether there are any funding sources other than emergency home repair grants to prevent low-income homeowners from losing their homes in the case of an unexpected financial crisis. Commissioners commented on the need to provide additional annual funding at higher levels to address homelessness, but agreed that the housing levy may not be the appropriate vehicle for this funding. Staff volunteered to research what other funding sources/programs are going to preventing homelessness vs. addressing homelessness. The draft letter will be revised for further review and action at the next Planning Commission meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kim adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.