



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

David Cutler and Amalia Leighton, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MARCH 13, 2014 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Co-Chair David Cutler, Co-Chair Amalia Leighton, Catherine Benotto, Luis Borrero, Josh Brower, Keely Brown, Bradley Khouri, Grace Kim, Kevin McDonald, Tim Parham, Marj Press, Matt Roewe, Morgan Shook

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Colie Hough-Beck, Jeanne Krikawa, Maggie Wykowski

COMMISSION STAFF

Jessica Brand - Policy Analyst, Diana Canzoneri-Senior Analyst, Robin Magonegil – Administrative Assistant, Vanessa Murdock - Executive Director

GUESTS

Marshall Foster, Brennon Staley, Aditi Kambuj, David Goldberg, DPD;

IN ATTENDANCE

Charles Anderson, Laura Hurson, Vanessa Garibald, Teresa Delenora, Tommy Croch

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

Co-Chair David Cutler called the meeting to attention at 3:02 pm.

▪ **Chair's Report**

- Co-Chair David Cutler

Co-Chair Cutler reported that the announcement of the three commissioner openings has been posted to the Commission's website and distributed to news and other membership groups last week. He noted that letters of interest and resumes should be submitted to Commission staff by Friday March 28. He asked the Commissioners to please help spread the word.

Co-Chair Cutler stated that the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee has a new meeting schedule; monthly meetings are now the first Thursday of the month - same time of 7:30 – 9:00 am. He added that this would give the committee a week before the full Commission meeting to work on positions, letters, etc.

Co-Chair Cutler reported that Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa has requested and been granted a leave of absence. He added that Commissioner Krikawa will resume her Commission duties in June. Commissioner Marj Press has graciously agreed to chair the Land Use and Transportation committee solo until Commissioner Krikawa returns.

Co-Chair Cutler noted that there are several draft letters that staff has been working on that will be out to the Commission for review and comment.

Co-Chair Cutler reviewed the upcoming meetings and events.

- **Update: Planning Director**
 - Marshall Foster, DPD

Co-Chair Cutler welcomed Marshall Foster.

Mr. Foster reported on some of the current projects that DPD is working on.

He noted that DPD is currently in the process of hiring a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Manager who will expand their ability to work with communities around TOD. He added that the TOD manager would be working with community organizations, developers and City departments to deliver projects. Mr. Foster noted that the TOD manager would have more real estate background than is typical of DPD staff and should have great relationships within the City departments as well.

Mr. Foster stated that the position that Susan McLain previously held, Area Planning Supervisor, should be filled within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Foster talked about the Ballard Urban Design Framework (UDF) noting that preliminary work is underway and the existing conditions report is finalized. Mr. Foster mentioned the Industrial Areas and the Stadium District proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan noting that City Council will take action on proposed amendments for the 2013-2014 cycle in April but it looks like Council are going to defer actions on these proposed amendments. He added that DPD is going to be looking at all areas within identified industrial areas (Georgetown, BINMIC and Ballard neighborhood) to identify whether all employees, residents and employers had a chance to voice their respective opinions on proposed changes to Industrial Lands Policy. Mr. Foster stated that City Council wanted to make sure that they were not inadvertently precluding the opportunity for development in these areas, specifically in areas zoned Industrial Commercial around the city.

Mr. Foster stated that the major Comprehensive Plan Update EIS scoping meeting is scheduled for March 24th when the growth alternatives for environmental study will be discussed by staff and the public.

In regards to incentive zoning, Mr. Foster reported that the affordable housing committee, which Commissioner Shook chairs, is currently reviewing the draft recommendations report. He added that the committee is also starting the work on the incentive zoning program's non-housing related issues.

Mr. Foster noted that DPD is exploring impact fees primarily for open space and transportation. He added that DPD is considering impact fees as a potential mechanism to address the impact of new development. Mr. Foster noted that this will be a significant and multi-year effort, and the Commission's input as it moves forward would be greatly appreciated.

Commissioner Khouri asked if Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is being included regarding the conversation about impact fees. Mr. Foster replied that Utilities are governed separately by the State in this regard and as such have a separate program. Commissioner Kim asked if there were opportunities to ask about impact fees for schools as well. Mr. Foster agreed that benchmarking Seattle against other cities with school related impact fees could be a good place to begin some research in the near term.

Mr. Foster reported on the Waterfront noting that there was a successful round of public engagement last week with over 1,000 people participating. He added that the project is currently at 30% design. Mr. Foster continued that the Mayor has created an Office of the Waterfront and that DPD will continue to play a major role in this new office.

Commissioner Roewe wondered about the Comprehensive Plan growth alternatives for environmental study and neighborhoods meeting/exceeding their growth targets and how this will be handled in the future. Mr. Foster responded that the city is required to have a growth estimate for the entire city and urban centers but not specific estimates by neighborhood. He added that in the past, growth estimates have been assigned to urban villages in addition to urban centers. Mr. Foster noted that these growth 'targets' are actually not targets but growth estimates or thresholds. He added that DPD is looking at this issue and trying to better articulate these estimates and how they are determined as it has been confusing for some.

Mr. Foster finished with a brief overview of minimum density legislation noting that the proposal is on its way and environmental review (SEPA) will be done in the next two months.

Co-Chair Cutler thanked Mr. Foster for his time.

▪ **Update: Lowrise**

Commissioner Press reported on the Commission's current thinking on large lot development in lowrise 1 and 2 zones.

Slideshow

Commissioner Benotto asked about the scale of potential development on a 2 acre parcel, and suggested 65 + units warrants review for fit and scale, noting design review could be part of the process. She added that design review would be appropriate on large lots in L1 and L2 zones.

Commissioner Roewe stated that the design review process in Queen Anne has helped a proposed 2+ acre development project and made it more responsive to the community. While design review has helped the Queen Anne project, the threshold of 8 units may be too low for L3 and may not work in L1 and L2 .

Co-Chair Cutler wondered if DPD could be requested to do a full review of the design review threshold for L1, L2 and L3.

Commissioner Kim stated that there are less successful elements of design review and that the Commission may be interested in reviewing the program in more detail later. Commissioner Brower urged the Commission to take a more holistic look at design review instead of just when there is a community concern regarding a specific proposal.

Co-Chair Leighton stated that single family development is occurring in the L1 zone. She added that there was concern that requiring design review for additional thresholds might move some developers to under build and avoid design review, giving an unintended and unfair advantage to single-family development in lowrise zones.

Commissioner Roewe asserted that there is a gap in what is subject to Design Review and what is not subject to Design Review. He noted the need to review the lowrise development thresholds as a whole and developing a comprehensive strategy for how lowrise is addressed in Design Review.

Commissioner Benotto stated that past changes in the acceptable height measurement technique has resulted in some buildings on sloped sites that appear much taller. Co-Chair Cutler stated that the Planning Commission needs to clearly define its scope of review and specifically the questions that are being asked of the Commission. He added that the Commission really needs to focus on issues specific to the lowrise zones. He continued that while the additional height allows more density, the bigger issue is how the buildings interface with the street and surrounding community. Co-Chair Cutler suggested that the Commission should focus on recommendations to make the additional density more livable.

- **Update: Incentive Zoning background & current review process**
 - Brennon Staley, DPD

Co-Chair Cutler welcomed Brennon Staley and called for disclosures and recusals.

Disclosures & Recusals:

- Commissioner Roewe disclosed that his employer, VIA Architecture, is currently providing design services for multiple developers in areas where incentive-zoning regulations are in place.
- Commissioner Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group, represents owners and developers of single- and multi-family housing projects throughout the City of Seattle that might be impacted by this proposal.
- Commissioner Shook disclosed that he is currently serving on the Affordable Housing Incentives Advisory Committee. He added that his firm, ECONorthwest helps cities design land use and affordable housing programs. We also assist clients that may use the city's incentive programs.

Brennon Staley gave a presentation, which can be viewed via the link below.

[Incentive Zoning Powerpoint](#)

Commissioner Brower asked if all 1,033 units have been built. Mr. Staley responded that they have been built or are in the permitting pipeline

Commissioner Shook stated that the Incentive Zoning Committee will be putting forward recommendations in the near future and that the Commission will get a chance to review them shortly and give feedback.

Co-Chair Cutler thanked Mr. Staley for the comprehensive presentation and noted the Commission's interest in forthcoming presentations and discussions on the topic.

- **Update: Ballard Urban Design Framework**
 - David Goldberg, Aditi Kambuj, DPD

Co-Chair Cutler welcomed David Goldberg and Aditi Kambuj.

Disclosures & Recusals:

- Commissioner Khouri disclosed that his firm, b9 Architects, works on projects in the neighborhood that could be impacted by the Urban Design Framework.
- Commissioner Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group, represents owners and developers of industrially zoned land and industrial and maritime-related businesses throughout the City of Seattle that might be impacted by this proposal.

David Goldberg gave an overview of the early phases of the project and Aditi Kambuj reviewed the background analysis she prepared to support the future planning effort.

[Ballard UDF Presentation](#)

[Ballard UDF Planning Schedule](#)

Some of the key questions are:

- What are the opportunities in Ballard related to integrating density?
- How do we look at diversifying the growth of housing that we are seeing?
- How do we look at economic opportunity while we work within a community? This community has many amenities and we want to know if there will be a place for residents as they grow and as the elderly get older, will they be able to stay?
- How can we have access to for communities that are not generally living there now but could?

Commissioner Borrero encouraged the team to prioritize freight movement, identify truck routes and areas of truck priority, and perhaps inform the upcoming SDOT freight mobility work rather than wait to react to the freight mobility plan.

Commissioner Kim shared her appreciation regarding the team's willingness to talk about diversity in Ballard community planning.

Co-Chair Cutler stated that the Ballard community has great access to industrial jobs within walking distance to good housing. He added that this is a benefit that needs to be balanced and encouraged.

Mr. Goldberg stated that staff assumptions have always been that the Manufacturing Industrial Center (MIC) will be active and grow into the future. He added that developers are interested in more housing and lands within the MIC will continue to have pressure on them to be converted.

Commissioner Roewe asked if staff was familiar with South Portland ETOD? (The innovation district) Mr. Goldberg responded that they were.

Co-Chair Cutler wondered if the Ballard hub urban village would have an opportunity to support jobs. He also inquired if it were to change to an urban center, would the ability to grow jobs there change. Mr. Goldberg replied that residential uses have been the driver.

Co-Chair Cutler noted that it has been a challenge to add viable and sustainable commercial uses in many neighborhood business districts.

Co-Chair Leighton asked if Ballard Swedish Hospital was built out to capacity of zoning. Mr. Goldberg replied that there is no Major Institution Overlay in place for Ballard Swedish and as such they are subject to the underlying zoning.

Co-Chair Cutler thanked Mr. Goldberg and Ms. Kumbuj.

▪ **Action: Minutes Approval**

Action: Co-Chair Cutler moved to approve the February 27, 2014 minutes. Commissioner Brower seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm.