



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, May 11, 2017
Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Michael Austin, Keiko Budech, Eileen Canola, Sandra Fried, David Goldberg, Grace Kim, Jake McKinstry, Tim Parham, Julio Sanchez, David Shelton, Lauren Squires

Commissioners Absent: Kara Martin, Marj Press, Jamie Stroble, Patti Wilma

Commission Staff: Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; Katy Haima, Planning Analyst; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Administrative Assistant

Guests: Paul Inghram, Puget Sound Regional Council; Sudha Nandagopal and Sara Cubillos, Office of Sustainability and Environment; Cindi Barker

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

Chair Grace Kim called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm. She provided an overview of the meeting agenda and upcoming Commission meetings.

Minutes Approval

Chair Kim asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes from the March 23rd meeting.

ACTION: Commissioner David Shelton moved to approve the April 27th meeting minutes. Vice Chair Tim Parham seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Announcements

Executive Director Vanessa Murdock reminded the Commissioners about upcoming community events. She also reminded the Commissioners that the regularly scheduled June 8th meeting will be cancelled. The Commissioners will be attending a Race and Social Justice Initiative training that afternoon.

Briefing: Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Regional Growth Context

Paul Inghram, Puget Sound Regional Council

If you would like to view the Puget Sound Regional Council presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes' section of our website.

Mr. Inghram provided an overview of regional growth and housing trends, and how these fit into the PSRC's regional planning framework – Vision 2040.

Commission Discussion

- The Commissioners commented that housing production has not kept up with the growing number of jobs in Seattle and has become a regional problem. Mr. Inghram replied by noting that Seattle is permitting a lot of housing, with close to 20,000 units in the development pipeline, but acknowledged that the housing market cannot always keep up with a fluctuating job market.
- The Commissioners inquired whether any new urban centers have emerged as regional growth has spread over the four-county region. Mr. Inghram noted that urban centers were selected in the 1990's without the same criteria that are considered now. Some new centers throughout the region are evolving, mostly because of transit.
- The Commissioners asked how other communities throughout the region are addressing issues of growth and affordability. Mr. Inghram replied that housing supply and housing choices are key considerations for local governments. Some jurisdictions are working to create more housing near jobs and schools. The region has sufficient availability and affordability, but many prefer to live closer to job centers such as Seattle. New housing opportunities may emerge as the light rail system evolves and housing can be developed near light rail stations.
- The Commissioners commented that new development that uproots community and cultural anchors leads to displacement with ripple effects across the region. Anti-displacement strategies need to have a regional focus.

Briefing: Equity and Environment Initiative

Sudha Nandagopal and Sara Cubillos, Office of Sustainability and Environment

If you would like to view the Equity and Environment Initiative presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes' section of our website.

Ms. Nandagopal provided an overview of the Equity and Environment Initiative, including some background context on environmental impacts on communities of color in Seattle, key stakeholders involved in the Initiative, and its community-centric approach. She gave a high-level overview of the Equity and Environment Agenda and its four specific program areas – Healthy Environments for All; Jobs, Economies, & Youth Pathways; Equity in City Environmental Programs; and Environmental Narrative & Community Leadership. She described the ongoing work of the Environmental Justice Committee to identify and discuss opportunities; efforts to develop pilot projects and measure progress; and specifics on the Duwamish Valley and Fresh Bucks To Go programs.

Commission Discussion

- The Commissioners complimented the Equity and Environment Initiative on getting diverse stakeholders to the table and asked whether housing and anti-displacement efforts are priorities of the Initiative. Ms. Nandagopal replied that they have participated in efforts that are complementary to the Comprehensive Plan's focus on equitable development and the HALA recommendations. Environmental programs can be a factor in displacement. Therefore, ongoing community work can be invaluable in the efforts to prevent displacement. The Environmental Justice Committee is working to shape relevant policies.
- The Commissioners asked how much the City's Office of Housing and Office of Economic Development are collaborators. The Initiative strives for a balance between community work and working with the various City departments.
- The Commissioners asked for examples of specific outcomes that the Initiative is working to accomplish. Ms. Nandagopal mentioned the Drive Clean Seattle program as an example of the Initiative's efforts to include communities of color in policies and outcomes. Specific outcomes of the Initiative's pilot projects are yet to be determined.

Action: Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) Recommendations

Chair Kim asked the Commissioners for any disclosures related to the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) letter.

DISCLOSURES:

- Chair Kim disclosed that she is an architect and owner of Schemata Workshop, and works with both non-profit and private housing developers that may be affected by MHA.
- Vice Chair Parham disclosed that he works for Plymouth Housing Group, a non-profit affordable housing developer, but has no financial interest in the organization. Plymouth Housing Group will benefit from the MHA regulations, as they will lead to increased development of affordable housing.
- Commissioner Jake McKinstry disclosed that he is an owner and principal of Spectrum Development Solutions.
- Commissioner Michael Austin disclosed that the work of his firm, Perkins Will, will be impacted by MHA.
- Commissioner Keiko Budech disclosed that her employer, Sightline Institute, conducts research on a variety of regional growth and housing topics, including MHA.

Executive Director Vanessa Murdock introduced several suggested edits to the MHA letter based on Commissioner comments and facilitated a discussion of each of these suggested edits.

If you would like to view the MHA Recommendations presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes' section of our website.

Commission Discussion

- Objective #3: This objective specifically addresses leveraging the unique opportunity presented by MHA funds to fill needs the market will not. Objective #3 was edited to be more specific about the needs MHA funds should be able to address.
- Recommendation #2: We should be more direct than just "considering the impacts of long-term housing opportunity." Language was suggested to provide permanent affordable housing in places experiencing a high risk of displacement.
- Recommendation #4: Parks, schools and community centers (among others) should be surrounded by denser housing, not merely adjacent to denser housing.
- Recommendation #7: Make the recommendations under Objective #3 more specifically targeted toward the strategic use of MHA funds.
- Recommendation #10: Be more directive about amending the Comprehensive Plan with a new urban village designation methodology.

The Commissioners suggested additional edits to the letter and voiced their satisfaction with the final edits. Chair Kim asked for a motion to approve the MHA letter as revised incorporating the suggested edits.

ACTION: Vice Chair Parham moved to approve the final MHA letter. Commissioner David Shelton seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed.

Public Comment

Cindi Barker suggested the Commissioner should limit their MHA recommendations to items that will be considered by the City Council during their review of the citywide MHA regulations. She noted that the Commission should include mention of both for-profit and non-profit affordable housing developers in their MHA recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10pm.