



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

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

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION OCTOBER 9, 2014 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Austin, Catherine Benotto, Luis Borrero, David Cutler, Brad Khouri, Grace Kim, Jeanne Krikawa, Amalia Leighton, Kara Martin, Tim Parham, Marj Press, David Shelton, Lauren Squires, Patti Wilma

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Keely Brown, Matt Roewe

COMMISSION STAFF

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

GUESTS

Lyle Bicknell, Patrice Carroll, Tom Hauger, Jim Holmes, DPD

IN ATTENDANCE

Lauren Craig, Lloyd Douglas, Michael James, Katherine Mackinnon, Eric McConaghy, Miriam Roskin, Kayla Schott-Bresler, Nathan Torgelson, Alex Zimmerman

Please Note: The Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes represent key points and the basis of the discussion.

CALL TO ORDER

- **Chair's Report**
 - Co-Chair Amalia Leighton

Co-Chair Leighton called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

- **Minutes Approval**

Action: Commissioner David Cutler moved to approve the September 25, 2014 meeting minutes. Commissioner Catherine Benotto seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with Commissioner Marj Press abstaining.

- **Leadership Nominations**

Nomination Slate: Commissioner Chair - Amalia Leighton; Vice-Chair - Marj Press; Housing & Neighborhoods Co-Chair - Tim Parham; Land Use & Transportation Co-Chair - Luis Borrero.

Action: Commissioner Brad Khouri moved to approve the slate of nominations. Commissioner Catherine Benotto seconded the motion. The slate of nominations was approved with vacant Co-Chair positions to be revisited in January 2015.

- **Briefing: Uptown UDF**

- Lyle Bicknell & Jim Holmes, DPD

For details on the Uptown UDF presentation, please see the corresponding documents on our website (will be posted when minutes are approved)

Commission discussion and questions

The Commissioners discussed opportunity sites on the edge of the Seattle Center; the existing “canyon effect” and how it might be addressed in future development; as well as the need for existing development along the Seattle Center to be more welcoming to pedestrians.

There was interest in better understanding the connections via bike, pedestrian and car to South Lake Union and the potential for how these connections would reshape this neighborhood, particularly the southeast triangle of the neighborhood known as the Uptown Triangle.

Commissioners questioned whether this process will conclude in a preferred station location for any future light rail. DPD staff offered that there will be guiding principles for a future station location once potential alignment options and alternatives are identified by Sound Transit.

There was some discussion on the access to open space and how the Seattle Center was serving the surrounding neighborhood/community. DPD staff responded that the community is interested in more places for small children to play and families to congregate. There are also parts of the neighborhood that could be connected to additional open space, i.e. the sculpture park, with streetscape changes that could result from this UDF.

There were several questions about economic vitality, the types of jobs present and how business community needs are being incorporated with the UDF process. DPD staff noted that the Office of Economic Development is part of the UDF team, and that there are early conversations with the community about an application for an “Only in Seattle” grant that will support a more cohesive business community.

The geographic scope of the UDF and Urban Center were discussed as well as whether there are areas outside the UDF that still may benefit from planning efforts.

There was also discussion about neighborhood plans and the role of the UDF process. Staff confirmed that UDFs are used to focus on specific neighborhood needs when an update to a neighborhood plan is not scheduled or budgeted.

- **Briefing: Comprehensive Plan**
 - Patrice Carroll, Tom Hauger, DPD

Commissioner discussion and questions

Commissioners suggested that the vision statement in the draft introduction to the Plan be more aspirational. The conversation included equity and how the new Equitable Development Initiative will likely play a role in redrafting the vision.

Commissioners discussed the role of indicators and metrics in the Comprehensive Plan update. They requested an easy to read document that included the Comprehensive Plan Elements and what implementing plans correspond with each of the Elements.

Other discussion concerned density minimums for Urban Centers and Urban Villages with general agreement that these should be aspirational and not set as a minimum. DPD staff responded that these criteria are set Countywide and that some transportation funding for Urban Centers could be impacted if these are set as aspirational only. Commissioners noted the ramifications of a minimum and aspirational goal being part of the Plan, as the Urban Center minimum densities are tied to some regional funding.

Commissioners asked for clarification of the contents of the current Urban Design Element that would be included in the "Growing Seattle" (working title) section of the Comprehensive Plan. DPD staff responded that the current draft maintains broad citywide design concepts.

Commissioners commented on the newly developed Urban Village/Center Matrix and Access. Noting that it is transit focused at present and according to adopted Transit Communities Policy should also include walksheds as part of the Access section.

- **Discussion and Possible Action: Linkage Fee Resolution Letter**

Chair Leighton called for any disclosures or recusals.

Disclosures & Recusals:

- Commissioner Luis Borrero disclosed that his firm DRiVE works with clients that may be affected by a linkage fee.
- Commissioner Catherine Benotto disclosed that the firm, which she works for, Weber Thompson, designs multifamily housing and mixed use projects throughout the city and some of the firm's clients may be impacted by a linkage fee.
- Commissioner Grace Kim disclosed that her firm, Schemata Workshop, designs multifamily housing projects throughout the city and some of her clients may be impacted by a linkage fee.
- Commissioner Bradley Khouri disclosed that his firm, bg architects, works on multifamily housing projects throughout the city and some of his clients may be impacted by a linkage fee. Commissioner Khouri also disclosed that he develops small projects that may be impacted by a linkage fee.

- Commissioner David Cutler disclosed that the firm, which he works for, GGLO, designs multifamily housing and mixed use projects throughout the city and some of the firm's may be impacted by a linkage fee.

Commissioners discussed when the linkage fee might be applied, at permit or at occupancy. As well as whether the linkage fee should be implemented or phased in over the three years suggested.

Concern was raised that the linkage fee would be passed on to renters and make an already expensive rental market more expensive. The discussion included that developers are charging rents that are market viable and will not likely charge more based on what market will allow.

Commissioners expressed caution over the speed of the process as well as the numbers included in the resolution. Commissioners clarified that this is a resolution, which upon adoption starts additional study and conversation and that there is real need for affordable housing now so adoption of this resolution should not be delayed.

Action: Commissioner Grace Kim moved to approve the letter with the suggested edits. Commissioner Brad Khouri seconded the motion. The letter was approved as edited.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lloyd Douglas – Introduced himself as a Cascade resident. Mr. Douglas requested higher heights in Uptown to better relate to the newly up zoned South Lake Union neighborhood. The neighborhood will attract the same types of employers as South Lake Union and the zoning should reflect this. Mr. Douglas reminded the Commission of the hard fought battles for incentive zoning in the South Lake Union neighborhood and cautioned the Commission to remove this type of development fee would be very bad for his community.

Alex Zimmerman- Mr. Zimmerman's comments did not directly address any of the topics that were discussed at the meeting. Mr. Zimmerman used coarse and hostile language directed at the Commissioners. (Mr. Zimmerman was disruptive during the meeting prior to public comment portion of the meeting and was asked repeatedly, by staff, to lower his voice and refrain from shouting remarks and making noise.) Staff enlisted the assistance of building security.

ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chair Leighton adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.