



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

David Cutler, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION SEPTEMBER 12, 2013 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Catherine Benotto, Luis Borrero, Josh Brower, Keely Brown, Colie Hough-Beck, Bradley Khouri, Grace Kim, , Amalia Leighton, Kevin McDonald, Tim Parham, Marj Press, Matt Roewe, Morgan Shook

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

David Cutler, Jeanne Krikawa, Maggie Wykowski

COMMISSION STAFF

Barbara Wilson-Executive Director, Diana Canzoneri-Senior Analyst, Jesseca Brand - Policy Analyst

GUESTS

Marshall Foster, Ryan Moore, Geoff Wentlandt, DPD

IN ATTENDANCE

Eric McConaghy, Nathan Torgelson

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 Amalia Leighton called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

▪ **Approve: June 27, 2013 & July 25, 2013 Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Josh Brower moved to approve the June 27, 2013 and July 25, 2013 minutes. Commissioner Kevin McDonald seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Brower and Benotto abstained.

▪ **Report from City Planning**

- Marshall Foster, DPD City Planning Director

Vice-Chair Leighton welcomed Marshall Foster.

Mr. Foster gave an update of the planning work that the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has been engaged in, noting the stadium district and the industrial lands work. He stated that they would begin the public process in the later part of the year. Mr. Foster mentioned that City Council adopted minimum density legislation last Monday. He explained that this was adopted as emergency legislation and that DPD would now work to draft permanent legislation to submit for Council review

Commissioner McDonald asked if the project or projects that had prompted Council to act had already vested under the previous code. Mr. Foster responded that they had vested but that this legislation was still very important and that the work would continue.

Mr. Foster reported that DPD would be hosting a series of public meetings as part of the urban center planning process. He added that the Lake to Bay planning effort continues to be on the work plan and people from the community are getting together to form separate initiatives.

Mr. Foster continued that DPD has several pieces of draft legislation in front of Council including Mt. Baker, SLU and Northgate. There was a question from the staff regarding some of the buildings on 8th Ave in the South Lake Union area that have been vested under the old regulations that would allow for more than just housing. They wondered if design review might be able to help knit the neighborhood back together. Commissioner Hough Beck asked if the Denny Street concept was approved. Mr. Foster replied that it was.

Chair Leighton thanked Mr. Foster for his time.

- **Chair's Report & Updates**
 - Vice-Chair Amalia Leighton

Commissioner Leighton reviewed the upcoming Commission meetings and the Executive Director search timeline.

- **Briefing: Transit Oriented Development Implementation**
 - Ryan Moore, DPD Senior Planner

Vice-Chair Leighton called for any disclosures and/or recusals.

DISCLOSURES & RECUSALS:

- Commissioner Marj Press disclosed that, until recently, she owned a home in the Northgate area.
- Commissioner Catherine Benotto disclosed that her employer, Weber Thompson, works on projects throughout the city that may be impacted and that she represents the Seattle Planning Commission on the Light Rail Review Panel.
- Commissioner Tim Parham disclosed that when he was employed at PSRC, he worked on the Growing Transit Communities project.
- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, has contracts with providers of transit and the Port of Seattle, and that they work on projects in the city that may be impacted.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her employer, SVR, works on projects in and around TOD that may be impacted.
- Commissioner Morgan Shook disclosed that his employer, Berk, has assisted the City of Seattle on TOD related work.

- Commissioner Bradley Khouri disclosed that his firm, b9 Architects, works on projects throughout the city of Seattle that may be impacted. He added that he is involved with the Light Rail Review Panel.
- Commissioner Grace Kim disclosed that her firm, Schemata Workshop, works on multifamily projects throughout the city has been involved personally and professionally with the TOD plans at the Capitol Hill Station.
- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that the firm, for which he works, Via Architecture, has consulting clients that might be affected.
- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that from 2009 to 2011, when at his former law firm, Tupper Mack Brower, he did work on the Capitol Hill station for Sound Transit.
- Commissioner Kevin McDonald disclosed that he is a member of the Light Rail Review Panel.

Mr. Moore presented on Transit Oriented Development. That presentation can be found via the following link.

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/TOD-Planning-com-Present.pptx>

Commissioner Parham asked if there was any indication that the City would attach additional resources to this program or if there was additional outside resources that might be put toward development around transit. Mr. Moore responded that the initial scope of work included outlining the target areas and building collaborative relationships with the major transportation operators in the region. He added that there are some discussions about the future of TOD and what funding tools might be necessary but they are not yet identified.

Commissioner Brower asked if goal #1 in the handout – Equitable TOD that is consistent with neighborhood plans – was difficult because not all neighborhood plans are consistent with TOD goals. Mr. Moore responded that discussions were happening to better understand this problem and identify next steps. He added that the initial four station areas are consistent.

Commissioner Roewe asked a follow up question about additional resources to accomplish the work before them. Mr. Moore responded that the focus of the current work would be on the four station areas and getting short-term goals accomplished at each site. He added that this will allow for real examples that will hopefully serve as catalyst projects for future development at the sites.

Commissioner Hough-Beck asked if Mr. Moore was familiar with Seattle Transit Communities Report where we outlined Essential Components for Livability. She urged that this work be folded into the larger work on TOD so that projects would remember the importance of the public realm.

Commissioner Kim asked if Mr. Moore had investigated Incentive Zoning as a tool for increased development of family sized housing specifically around light rail stations. She added that if the goal is quality development for TOD that Incentive Zoning would be a beneficial tool. Mr. Moore responded that Roosevelt has put this to use but unfortunately, the Othello Station still lacks the market demand. He added that the project team continues to look for additional models that will be beneficial in all neighborhoods.

Commissioner McDonald recommended that an investment in Essential Livability Components as outlined in Seattle Transit Communities could be a good tool to catalyze new development.

Staff followed up that LU59 and LU60 make it difficult to rezone any single-family neighborhoods and those places adjacent to single-family zones even if they are within a short distance from light rail stations. Commissioner Brower recommended rewriting goal #1 – Equitable TOD that is consistent with Transit Oriented Communities policy in the Comprehensive Plan.

Vice-Chair Leighton asked if there were any examples of parcels that are being developed and what is currently working within these station areas? Mr. Moore responded that Othello Station is particularly worthwhile because there are businesses currently there that might benefit from business improvements that could attract more business. He added that the new commercial in Othello is not performing well and therefore may be stifling new private investments. Mr. Moore is studying additional programs that would be focused on the economics of neighborhood business districts.

Commissioner Kim recommended further study of Master lease to attract smaller start-up companies. Adding that Othello’s diverse community is an asset that is often overlooked. She also recommended recruitment of developers outside the area through incentives. Mr. Moore responded that they were looking at Master Lease and has had several meetings with funders as well as developers to get at the issues. He agreed there was additional work to be done on this effort.

Commissioner Roewe recommended looking at other neighborhoods that have utilized Master Lease concepts including Interbay and the ActiveSpace building.

Commissioner Borrero suggested that DPD also consider the quality of schools as an attracter of business and development. Mr. Moore responded that they have included schools in their review and understand the importance of this point.

Commissioner Leighton thanked Moore for his presentation.

- **Briefing & Discussion: Stadium Overlay Study Area**
 - Geoff Wentlandt, DPD Senior Planner

Vice-Chair Leighton called for any disclosures and/or recusals.

DISCLOSURES & RECUSALS:

- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his law firm, Veris Law Group, works on multifamily and single-family matters on behalf of clients that could be impacted.
- Commissioner Morgan shook disclosed that the firm, for which he works, Berk, consults on land use projects that could be impacted.
- Commissioner Bradley Khouri disclosed that his firm, b9 architects, works on housing projects throughout the city of Seattle that could be impacted.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design, provides engineering and landscape architecture services to public and private clients that could be impacted.
- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, works on public and private projects that could be impacted.
- Commissioner Catherine Benotto disclosed that her firm, Weber Thompson, advises housing developers and designs multifamily projects that could be impacted.

Vice-Chair Leighton welcomed Geoff Wentlandt, Senior Planner DPD.

Mr. Wentlandt presented on Stadium District. That presentation can be found via the following link.

http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/PlanComm_Sept2013_1.pdf

Commissioner Brower briefed the Commission on some history around the stadium district noting that in 1999 Council created the Stadium Overlay Transition Area. He added that he has been serving as the Commission Representative on both the Stadium District Advisory group and the Industrial Lands Advisory group. Commissioner Brower stated that both groups are at odds on a number of issues and it is unclear at present how the DPD staff plan to combine this work in the future. He added that the Stadium District has been on a fast timeframe because of the MOU signed by the City and County for the third arena. Commissioner Brower expressed concerns that we have not done the proper planning around freight mobility and that it may be worthwhile to wait until after SDOT has completed the Freight Master Plan and Access Study.

Commissioner Hough-Beck asked if Alaskan Way was surface directly in front of the WOSCA site. Mr. Wentlandt responded that the WOSCA site is right where the road comes out of the tunnel and becomes a surface street again. Commissioner Hough-Beck commented that the residential as shown on the WOSCA site would feel isolated and lack infill possibilities, as well as the open space next door being unusable and unfriendly based on the proximity to such large traffic flows.

Commissioner Brower commented that developing large office space on WOSCA is problematic because of the number of daily car trips created. He added that building housing creates less car trips but is problematic because of its proximity to 24-hour Port activity.

Commissioner Benotto asked if there was a plan for a better pedestrian experience on 1st Avenue beyond Pioneer Square. Mr. Wentlandt responded that DPD was doing some streetscape planning and looking at improvements for pedestrian mobility without affecting traffic throughput.

Commissioner Kim expressed concerns with WOSCA site housing and open space noting that the addition of housing and open space that close to, both large volumes of traffic and Port activities, would make it loud and unusable.

Commissioner Khouri asked if the housing and open space were a result of each other. Mr. Wentlandt responded that both housing and open space had been requested through various stakeholders and the review of the area found that the WOSCA site could include both. Commissioner Khouri echoed the concerns of Commissioner Hough-Beck and Kim on the placement of open space in this area. He recommended that the waterfront play a more prominent role in the discussion as a place for open space that would be more comfortable to users.

Commissioner Press asked if DPD had talked with BNSF about development over their right of way. In reference to the WOSCA site, she asked if Washington DOT had additional Right-of-Way requirements that might reduce the usable square footage on the WOSCA site. Commissioner Press stated that she is not supportive of housing on the WOSCA site. Mr. Wentlandt responded that DPD had been in ongoing talks with BNSF. He added that the WOSCA site does not have any additional ROW impacts and that the site is 4.3 acres in total.

Commissioner Roewe asked what if anything is happening with the large parking lot between the North Lot redevelopment and Century link field. Mr. Wentlandt responded that it is planned to remain a parking lot.

Commissioner Roewe asked Commissioner Brower if the Industrial Lands Advisory committee has seen the proposal and if they are inclined toward any uses within the Stadium District. Commissioner Brower responded that there is currently in code over 1 million square feet in office space. He added that the Industrial community is concerned by this fact but has not put forth any new ideas for review.

Commissioner Borrero commented that the current design tried to accomplish too much and he had concerns with the current renderings on height over BNSF. He added that in the past the development costs have meant 340'+ over the BNSF railway in order to make it economically viable.

Commissioner Shook asked what the timing was for release of preliminary recommendations. Mr. Wentlandt responded that the current timeline is to put a draft out in late October.

Commissioner Shook asked for more information on why the Stadium District has as a stated goal that it be a 24/7 district. Commissioner Shook expressed his specific interest in knowing what the trade-offs would be and possible benefits for making this change.

Commissioner Brower thanked Wentlandt and his colleagues at DPD for the great work on this.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Leighton adjourned the meeting at 9:00 am.