



**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
JANUARY 22, 2004
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioners in Attendance

John Owen, Chair; George Blomberg, Vice Chair; Angela Brooks, Ray Connell, Matthew Kitchen, Joe Quintana, Steve Sheehy, Mimi Sheridan, Paul Tomita.

Commissioners Absent

Anjali Bhagat, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Tony To.

Commission Staff

Marty Curry, Executive Director; Barbara Wilson, Commission Analyst.

Guests

Jerry Finrow, Planning Commission Nominee; Tom Eanes, Planning Commission Nominee; Tom Hauger, DPD City Planning; Lish Whitson, DPD City Planning; Jim Holmes, DPD City Planning.

Call to Order

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 7:35AM

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Steve Sheehy made a motion, seconded by Commissioner George Blomberg, to approve the January 8, 2004 minutes as written. Motion was unanimously approved.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Chair's Report

Downtown DEIS: Chair Owen reported that DPD has extended the comment period to February 15, with a second public hearing being scheduled for the end of January. He noted that Commission Staff are making revisions to a first draft generated from a working session with four Commissioners.

ACTION: SPC staff will continue to work with the Planning Commission subcommittee and will bring this to the Full Commission at the next meeting for approval.

Upcoming Meetings

Chair Owen reminded Commissioners to review the list of upcoming meetings on the Agenda and February Calendar then he highlighted the following meetings:

Waterfront Charrette, February 27 – 28

Chair Owen made special note of the Waterfront Planning charrette and asked if there are Commissioners who may be interested in helping provide some help in greeting and directing people who are not part of charrette teams and want to share ideas and suggestions as part of this process. Commission Analyst Barbara Wilson explained the role proposed by the joint SDC/SPC Subcommittee and staff. She also invited Commissioners to attend the January 29th Charette Orientation and afternoon boat tour. Ms. Wilson also reported that the SPC/SDC Joint Commission report on Forums #1 & #2 will be released at the orientation.

Commissioner Sheridan noted that she is currently finishing an inventory of historic buildings on the waterfront for the Viaduct EIS. She may be able to compile a summary of her work as additional background for the charrette.

Chair Owen encouraged Commissioners participate in the charette either as part of a team or in helping staff the “drop in center”.

ACTION: The Planning Commission and the Design Commission will release a report on January 29th, 2004, that summarizes the Waterfront Planning public events and identifies major themes that emerged. This document will help inform the upcoming charette as well as the overall planning effort. The Planning Commission will commit to roles at the February charette with some Commissioners participating on teams and some helping as charette ambassadors.

Commission 2004 Retreat

Chair Owen asked for two more volunteers to work with staff and George Blomberg in planning the retreat. He noted that the Executive Committee would like to include an assessment of what we consider success for each of our work plan items so that we can better focus our energy and efforts. Ms. Curry noted that she would like to explore a keynote speaker or panel or other activities for this event. Chair Owen asked Commissioners to consider and respond to the proposed dates and times for the retreat that were sent last week.

2004 Work Plan

Chair Owen directed Commissioners to the draft work plan in their folders. He initiated discussion about the work plan, asking for additions, clarification about tasks and roles, and confirmation of assignments to projects/tasks. Ms Wilson briefly described the key work plan areas, major projects and committee assignments. She also reviewed the current committee structure.

Commissioner Kitchen stated that the Executive Committee has been considering the committee structure and how to make it work most effectively. He noted that the Commission currently has a number of ad-hoc committees for project work. He asked how Commissioners felt this process was working and how we might improve on or more intentionally use the committee structure to minimize meeting times and work on individual projects while looking holistically at the big picture. He also asked for suggestions on how we handle big projects that overflow like Northgate.

Chair Owen noted his concern about the amount of work the Commission, Commission staff and other City staff are involved in on very large and time consuming planning projects. He stated that these efforts don't seem to have adequate resources to complete the work in the expected timeframe. He proposed that the Commission consider drafting a letter to the Mayor and Council. Commissioner Quintana stated

that he thought the Commission should not be so intimately involved with the details of the Northgate efforts. Ms. Curry noted that the Planning Commission was given formal roles through the Council Northgate Resolution. Many Commissioners expressed that these specifically defined roles constitute a clear mandate and formal responsibility by the Commission to fulfill the tasks that have been laid out for the Commission.

Commissioner Quintana noted that he is particularly sensitive to the time commitment of Commission work. He supports any effort to streamline meetings and review items. Ms. Curry noted that the Commission developed criteria last year for selecting projects and setting priorities. She will forward this to all Commissioners for reference as we look at the 2004 work plan. She also noted that in addition to attending the 2 monthly full commission meeting that each Commissioner is assigned to one committee that meets monthly and also engages in reviews or additional project work. Commissioner-appointee Finrow suggested that the Commission develop a time budget to better assess staff and Commission resources.

Commissioner Tomita stated that the Planning Commission is most effective as a body that can provide a broad and integrated look at issues and projects and that this should be considered in the committee structure, the work plan, and Commission products.

ACTION: Commissioner Quintana made a motion that the SPC Executive Committee work with SPC staff to propose a committee structure, work plan and time budget allocation to be presented to the full Commission. Commissioner Sheehy seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION

Comprehensive Plan Update

Chair Owen welcomed Tom Hauger, Jim Holmes and Lish Whitson of DPD Planning Division and asked them to brief the Commission on the Comprehensive Plan Update and particularly the Comp Plan Amendments and process.

Mr. Hauger outlined the public outreach plan thus far and the proposed future outreach efforts for the 10-year Comprehensive Plan update. Mr. Hauger noted that the deadline for amendments was January 20th and staff is currently reviewing and analyzing amendments submitted by the public. DPD staff will forward amendments to the Growth Management Subcabinet along with an analysis of significant issues. They expect a draft recommendation to be ready for public review by early April. They hope to submit recommended amendments to the City Council in early July with expected action in August.

Mr. Whitson shared a summary of the general themes of the update including a new Urban Village strategy, and updates to the Land Use Element.

Commissioner Kitchen recommended the City strive to do a better job of explaining intent and the holistic nature of the urban village strategy. He also asked for consideration of the usefulness of the term growth “targets” and suggested that the term “estimates” might be more useful.

Mr. Holmes then discussed the Transportation element stating that the most significant changes have to do with street reclassifications, best use of streets, and mode-split goals for Urban Centers.

Commissioner Quintana complimented the staff on their work in trying to create clear policy language and stated that the goal of transforming the Comp Plan to a true policy document is remarkably good news. He also noted that getting more specific in the Level of Service section will force the City to more clearly articulate its intentions.

Mr. Hauger gave a summary of the amendment proposals submitted by the public. He noted that some amendments raise the issue of how firmly the City maintains its current and will require a more significant analysis. He stated that the Planning Commission would be a valuable resource in helping the City think about how to proceed with this question as a public policy question, in framing the public debate and in advising DPD. Chair Owen noted that Ms. Sugimura has asked the Planning Commission to think about how to design an equitable public process for the Comp Plan Update and that this information helps them do that.

ACTION: The Planning Commission is generally pleased by the approach of DPD Planning staff in their attempt to make the Comp. Plan a clearer policy document and encourages this direction. The Commission also encourages DPD to think clearly about the public process and to consider broadening its outreach effort. The Commission offers its expertise and advice in helping to design an equitable public process especially with regards to some of the major policy questions (i.e. Industrial policies) .

North Link Draft SEIS – Planning Commission/LRRP Comments

Commissioner Sheehy recused himself from the discussion noting that in his professional role as a Land Use attorney for Sound Transit he would be reviewing some of the comments to the Draft SEIS. Chair Owen excused him from the discussion. Chair Owen directed Commissioner to their folders to review the draft comment letter. Ms. Curry noted that the draft is still a little rough around the edges, but reflects input from most Commissioners who were asked to review the document. She noted that overall Commissioners, including other LRRP members involved in the SEIS review, feel that the Draft SEIS is a well written and thorough document. The comments are mostly focused on gaps in some of the analysis. Commissioners Blomberg, Kitchen and Sheridan shared general observations and opinions about the Draft SEIS and asked for any other input noting that there would be some final additions and editing before submittal.

ACTION: SPC staff will continue to work with Planning Commissioners and the Light Rail Review Panel to finalize the comments on the Northlink Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. The comments will be sent to Commissioners for final approval before sending to Sound Transit on January 30, 2004. The final comments will reflect Commissioners assessment that this is a well written and thorough document and will focus on gaps in some of the analysis and in ensuring that the Final SEIS is a strong document for decision making.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

ADJOURN MEETING

Chair Owen adjourned the meeting at 9:15 am