



**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 26, 2004
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioners in Attendance

John Owen, Chair; George Blomberg, Vice Chair; Angela Brooks, Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Matthew Kitchen, Lyn Krizanich, Steve Sheehy, Mimi Sheridan, Tony To.

Commissioners Absent

Anjali Bhagat, Ray Connell, Jeanne Krikawa, Joe Quintana, Paul Tomita,.

Commission Staff

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

Guests

Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Cheryl Sizov, DPD City Planning; Vanessa Murdock, DPD City Planning; David Graves, DPD City Planning; Scott Dvorak, DPD City Planning; Rachel Ben Schmucl, Seattle Monorail Project; Bill Bascus, Seattle Monorail Project,

Call to Order

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Steve Sheehy made a motion; seconded by Commissioner Tom Eanes to approve the February 12, 2004 Commission minutes. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan noted one small error in the spelling of her name. The motion to accept February 12th minutes with correction of Commissioner Sheridan's name as noted was unanimously approved.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Chair's Report

Chair Owen highlighted upcoming meetings of interest to Commissioners:

- SPC Transportation Committee will meet today following this meeting, with presentations on the Center City Circulation Study by Ann Sutphin and on the Transportation Element of the Comp Plan and Transportation Strategic Plan by Barbara Gray.
- Waterfront Charrette is this weekend, February 27th and 28th. Chair Owen noted that he and several other Commissioners will participate on charette teams, Commissioner George Blomberg would be helping staff the Drop in Center and SPC staff will also be working at the event. Commission Analyst Barbara Wilson informed the Commission that the Joint Commission report will be delivered to the Mayor and City Councilmembers with a cover letter and invitation to drop

in to the Charrette. She also noted that there were about 300 people participating on 22 teams and that people were flying in from other states and countries to participate on these teams.

- SPC Commercial Policies Focus Group will be held March 9, 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. Ms. Wilson reminded the Commissioners that they committed to DPD staff to participating in this focus group, which requires 8 – 10 Commissioners. She emphasized that this is an opportunity for the Planning Commission to shape both the message and the proposed process for taking the Executive's proposal out to the public.
- SPC Retreat is scheduled for March 11 in lieu of our regular full Commission meeting, but will be extended till 7:30 p.m. The retreat will be held in the Port Headquarters at Pier 69. Chair Owen asked Commissioners to make sure they have this on their calendar for the full amount of time. He also noted that Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis and DPD Director Diane Sugimura will join us for a discussion of Mayor's priorities and the Commission's work this year. He asked Commissioners to contact with any specific topics they'd like to discuss with them. Ms. Wilson noted that staff will be sending out a draft agenda after the Executive Committee meeting next week and asked Commissioners to carefully review it noting it will contain background materials and a "homework" assignment!

Commission Housekeeping Items

Ms. Wilson noted that the Planning Commission Time Log has been reformatted and that 2004 parking passes have been reissued with changes.

2004 Comp Plan Amendments

Chair Owen noted that all Commissioners received an email from staff asking for input on the proposed 2004 Comp Plan Amendments. Commission Director Marty Curry gave an overview of the materials and asked that Commissioners review them and provide comments to staff. She noted that electronic copies of the Amendments will follow and that the Commission will provide preliminary comments to DPD staff and the Council. The Executive Committee will be discussing the amendments and draft Council resolution next week.

Council Briefing on Housing Choices

Chair Owen reported on the Planning Commission's briefing to the City Council Urban Development and Planning Committee on the proposal for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units. He noted that he along with Commissioner Tony To and Tom Eanes briefed the Committee on the results of the Commission's 2003 public process and report. They and strongly recommended that the City move forward with legislation to enable Detached ADU's in all single family zones throughout the city. Commissioner To reported that his presentation focused on some of the specific finding that the Planning Commission made as a result of the Public Involvement Process and noted that DPD staff had, in draft version of the ordinance, attempted to effectively deal with the important Commission recommendation. Commissioner Eanes noted that DPD staff had done an effective job at dealing with the differences in specific lot configuration challenges. He also noted that the Councilmembers on the Committee were very interested in the Plan Book concept put forth by the Planning Commission. Commissioner Eanes also stated that he was impressed with the knowledge of the Councilmembers and the thoughtfulness of their questions.

ACTION: The Commission will review the Executive's proposed legislation when it is submitted to Council, and will provide written input to the Council Urban Development and Planning Committee as requested by Committee Chair Peter Steinbrueck, and may meet with the Committee if there are any significant concerns about the final legislation.

Downtown DEIS Comment Letter

Commissioner Krizanich recused herself from the discussion due to a conflict of interest in this issue. Chair Owen stated that the Planning Commission letter on the Downtown Height and Density Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is due to DPD by Friday, so asked for Commission approval of the letter today. He noted that the Commissioners were sent this final revised letter Tuesday to review for today's meeting. He also thanked Commissioners who provided additional comments after the February 12 meeting noting that staff has incorporated these into the letter. Chair Owen asked for final comments, revisions or discussion. Commissioner Sheehy made a motion to approve the letter as written, seconded by Commissioner Eanes. Commissioner Kitchen made a friendly amendment to add a sentence to the letter explaining why the Commission did not take a position on a preferred alternative. Commissioner Sheehy accepted the friendly amendment

ACTION – The Commission unanimously approved the motion to approve the Commission letter on the Downtown Height and Density Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and directed Seattle Planning Commission staff to submit it to the City by the February 27, 2004 deadline.

Downtown DEIS – City Center Forum

Commissioner Krizanich reported on this forum that was held Tuesday evening, to provide time for additional comment on the DEIS and to begin the discussion of the Mayor's Center City. She and Executive Director Curry noted that there was an information discussion about the larger concept of the Center City, with many different speakers expressing their ideas on this concept.

PRESENTATION

Introduction of Councilmember Tom Rasmussen

Chair Owen welcome Councilmember Tom Rasmussen and asked Commissioners and SPC staff to briefly introduce themselves. He explained that this is an initial opportunity for the Commissioners and Councilmember Rasmussen to be introduced to and learn a bit about one another. He asked Councilmember Rasmussen to talk about his areas of interest as a Councilmember; and to ask questions he might have about the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Rasmussen asked about the Commission's goals are for the next year and for background on how the Planning Commission decides when to engage in projects. Chair Owen stated that the Planning Commission is advisory to the Mayor and Council and does not have any decision-making authority. The Commission is often asked by the Mayor, the City Council and city departments to advise them on many city planning issues. He noted that the Commission looks at big picture holistic planning issues and impacts and overall effects on the Comprehensive Plan policies and goals. He noted that currently the Commission is involved in several major projects; as the stewards of the Comprehensive Plan the Planning Commission is intricately involved in review and advising on the public involvement process for the 10 year update of the Comprehensive Plan. He also noted the Commission's involvement reviewing and advising on the Monorail, especially the review of the EIS and the City's Station Area Planning efforts, Light Rail, Viaduct, the Waterfront, Northgate and other projects. He also stated that our engagement in projects is based on a set of criteria established by the Commission but that the Commission seeks to be of service to the Mayor

and Council. He mentioned the Commission's review of the Mayors Northgate proposal for the Council, and noted that the Commission was able to advise both the Executive and the Council on this complex set of issues.

Commissioner To stated that as a newer member of the Planning Commission he is continually struck by the value that the Planning Commission can bring to City issues especially things like the continuity brought by the Commission's institutional memory on issues like Northgate and neighborhood planning. He also stated that the Commission brings a balanced approach because of the diversity of opinion and expertise of the members, which makes the Planning Commission valuable asset to the City on so many projects.

Councilmember Rasmussen asked if the Commission communicates directly to Council. Commissioner Sheehy noted that the request from Councilmember Steinbrueck last year was a very good example of a specific communication that had a very positive result. He noted that Councilmember Steinbrueck sent a formal letter of request and outlined very specific questions that gave the Commission clear jurisdiction for involvement and clear guidance of where to focus Commission effort.

Councilmember Rasmussen noted he had recently toured the North Bay / Interbay area and asked if the Commission had any thoughts about the City's approach to the site. Commissioner Sheridan noted that the Planning Commission would look at this site in the context of the Comprehensive Plan and in particular it's industrial Policies. She noted that this area should be considered in the broader context of regional industrial lands. Councilmember Rasmussen stated his appreciation for this insight and noted how the Commission's perspective would certainly help the City in looking at specific sites in a broader context.

Councilmember Rasmussen noted that as the chair of the Housing and Human Services and Health Committee he was interested in hearing suggestions from the Planning Commission about options and approaches for affordable housing. He has been exploring tools such as tax increment financing, but stated he would like to call on the Commission to help him identify other tools to stimulate affordable housing development and in increasing the overall housing supply in the city. Chair Owen gave a quick outline of the Commissions history on housing including its work on the multifamily tax exemptions, ADU's and most recently its work on Housing Choices and indicated Commission support for Councilmember Rasmussen's request

Chair Owen thanked Councilmember Rasmussen for making time to meet with the Commission and noted its interest in working with him on specific issues related to his role as a member of the Council's Urban Development and Planning Committee and Chair of the Housing Committee.

ACTON: The Planning Commission will draft a brief memo to Councilmember Rasmussen outlining the Commissions history on Housing and will offer more detailed suggestions of how the Planning Commission can continue to work with Councilmember Rasmussen to explore a 4-year housing plan for the City.

Monorail Station Area Planning Report

Chair Owen welcomed Vanessa Murdock, Cheryl Sizov, David Graves and Scott Dvorak and thanked them for coming back to brief the Commission on the progress they have made on Monorail station area planning. The team briefed the Commission on their recent community workshops on

Station Area Planning that were held from December to early February. Mr. Dvorak outlined five major issues and concerns that the communities identified in the meetings. These included parking, coordination with Metro, associated development, the design of stations and access, and traffic & pedestrian circulation and access. He noted there were many questions about what is possible and who is responsible. Mr. Dvorak and Mr. Graves then outlined in more detail specific issues that arose at each of the eight Station Area Planning workshops. Ms. Murdock outlined the next steps including the formulation of alternative visions for station areas which will be taken to the community for discussion in another round of workshops in April.

Commissioner Sheehy expressed his appreciation to the City Monorail staff team for their tremendous work including all the struggles on with MRP and their work on station area planning.

Commissioner Kitchen asked how some of the major themes that were identified by the community get resolved, noting that a range of policy related questions were raised that most likely will not get resolved by SMP or the City's Station Area Planning efforts. He also asked when and if discussions on LID's and development authorities are appropriate in this process.

Ms. Sizov acknowledged that these are good questions and noted that the Station Area Planning team is a 'catcher' of issues -- that part of their role is to collect issues and then funnel them to the right place. She also noted that the action plans and vision will likely outline some longer range issues that will need to be dealt with including a recommendation of where ASMP responsibility lies and where things leave off.

Commissioner Kitchen stated that successful integration of transit development into communities from a national perspective is only successful when roles and responsibilities between the transit authority, the jurisdiction and some kind of development authority are clearly identified. He stated that City policy should define the instruments, and offer ways to organize ways to address these issues.

Commissioner To ask for staff's thoughts about parking structures and about Metro coordination, recognizing that both SMP and the City prefer not to create parking structures that serve transit stations. Ms. Murdock noted that often people jump to parking as the solution before clearly defining the problem. Part of their intent is to get people to focus on an approach that relies more on good intermodal connections. Commissioner Sheridan noted that it would be useful for Metro to describe more fully how they will make needed decisions since they have recently completed a 6 Year Plan. Mr. Graves noted that these are phased changes that will happen over time and will be included in development of Metro's next 6-year plan.

Commission Blomberg noted three items that need to be addressed further: How the City's goals for station area planning may differ from community desires; how properties built in station areas will be redeveloped; and how these issues will be addressed in the action plans.

Ms. Sizov stated that Station Area Planning was envisioned as a short term effort which has impacted the City's approach. Ms Murdock noted that next steps include community meetings to present vision scenarios which may be shown as a range of typologies for station areas. They will also provide conceptual and preliminary versions of potential action plans and their elements. They will not get to the level of detail of specific development standards. She noted that these next steps may help inform the City Council process of adopting the alignment and station locations.

Ms. Murdock asked that the Planning Commission provide feedback on scope and format of the action plans which might include an articulation of the sorts of improvements and mitigation that SMP should be responsible for; assessment of the planning work and improvements for the Station Area

action plans and the improvements that have been identified as highly desirable long term improvements to make the system go from functional to thriving.

ACTION: The Planning Commission will send a memo summarizing their suggestions and ideas from this discussion to the Station Area Planning Team. They will also provide input to the Station Area Planning team on the visions for station areas (including the typologies) and further study and assess the scope of the Station Area Action Plans in the next briefing/discussion. The Commission will meet with the SAP staff in April for further discussion of this topic.

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Adjourn Meeting

Chair Owen adjourned the meeting at 9:15 am