



**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APRIL 8, 2004  
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

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**Commissioners in Attendance**

John Owen, Chair; George Blomberg, Vice Chair; Anjali Bhagat, Angela Brooks, Ray Connell, Jerry Finrow, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Joe Quintana, Mimi Sheridan, Tony To.

**Commissioners Absent**

Tom Eanes, Steve Sheehy, Paul Tomita.

**Commission Staff**

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

**Guests**

Mahlon Clements: Planning Commissioner-Designee, Anthony Scafaro, Barbara Gray; SDOT, John Rahaim; DPD City Planning, Lish Whitson; DPD Planning

**Call to Order**

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

**Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa, to approve the March 25, 2004 Commission minutes. The motion to accept March 25 minutes.

**COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**Commissioner Spotlight – Tony To**

This month's spotlight focused on Commissioner Tony To. Commissioner To shared information about himself that included his professional and personal background.

**Chairs Report**

**SPC Letters**

**REPORT BACK ON ACTION TAKEN:** Chair Owen shared that two letters from the Planning Commission have been sent recently: The first to City Council highlighting the Commission's comments on the Northlink SEIS and, the second to Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis and thank you and follow up to the Retreat session with him.

## Upcoming Meetings

Chair Owen reminded Commissioners of the following upcoming meetings and activities

- **Joint Commission work session and review on the Alaskan Way Viaduct DEIS Friday, 11:30 – 1:30 pm**

**ACTION & FOLLOW-UP:** A joint committee of the Planning Commission and the Design Commission will meet to outline scope and approach to the review of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, then members of the Viaduct team will walk the joint committee through the DEIS. Planning Commissioners Owen, Blomberg, Krikawa, Kitchen and Tomita and Commissioner-designee Clements will participate in the joint review and will attend the 4/9 meeting.

- **Neighborhood Business District Open House Tues, April 13, 7- 9 pm**

**ACTION & FOLLOW-UP:** At the request of DPD City Planning Staff for Planning Commission involvement, several Commissioners will attend the Neighborhood Business District Strategy Open House and Forum: Commissioners Brooks, Connell, and Krizanich. Commissioner Quintana will also attend as a member of the Advisory Committee. These Commissioners will offer a report and the next SPC meeting and offer advice on the next steps and/or feedback to City Planning staff.

- **Comp Plan Open House and Overview Tues, April 20, 7–9 pm**

Ms. Wilson noted that a sign up that is being circulated for attending and participating in the upcoming Comprehensive Plan Open House and Topical meetings. We have been invited to have a Commissioner give welcoming remarks at the April 20 Open House and have a Commissioner be overall moderator for each of the following 3 topical meetings.

- **Meeting with CM Steinbrueck**

Chair Owen noted that the Commission has been trying to schedule a meeting with Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck in response to his expressed interest in meeting with us. He asked how many Commissioners could attend an extended Executive Committee meeting for that purpose on Tuesday, April 20, at 9:00 a.m. Based on Commissioner response, Chair Owen concluded that this meeting should be held, though he will not be able to attend.

**ACTION:** Staff was directed to confirm the tentative meeting with Councilmember Steinbrueck on Tuesday, April 20, 9 – 9:30 a.m. immediately following the Executive Committee meeting. The following Commissioners agreed to attend this meeting; Commissioners Blomberg, Kitchen, Krikawa, Krizanich, Brooks, Bhagat, Sheridan and Commissioner-designee Clements.

- **Nominating Committee**

Chair Owen thanked Commissioners Krizanich, Krikawa, Sheehy, and Commissioner-designee Clements for agreeing to serve on the Nominating Committee. Ms. Curry explained the process and assignment to Commissioners. Commissioners will submit nominations before the Committee meets on 4/15/2004.

## **Project Updates**

### **Northgate**

Chair Owen thanked the Commissioners who helped with planning and carrying out the March 25<sup>th</sup> **Pedestrian Connections Public Workshop**. He stated it was a great success, noting that over 75 people attended, most them community members and included 11 of the newly formed Northgate Stakeholders group. He offered praise to the Commission's Northgate subcommittee, staff and volunteer interns for doing a great job in preparing materials and presentations and in facilitating the working sessions.

#### **Comments from Commissioners**

Commissioner Finrow observed that some community members felt that these workshops are redundant. He suggested that follow-up to this workshop focus on taking 1 – 2 specific actions and trying to make them happen. Chair Owen stated that there have been in the past a number of public events that did not seem to contribute to progress in Northgate, but that we are in a different place now with the Northgate Resolution. He agreed that the Commission needs to get something concrete back to the workshop participants to react to. Commissioner Blomberg also noted the importance of setting the context for these workshops. Commissioners identified several highlights of the working sessions including the connecting North Seattle Community College with the Transit Center and to Northgate Way, connections to neighborhood serving businesses (Northgate Way east and west of I-5), connecting the library and community center into the community, and pedestrian access to the mall from residential areas. Chair Owen concluded with the important role that this pedestrian connections workshop should play in providing a clear framework and strong case for pedestrian mobility in the Comprehensive Transportation Investment Plan.

Staff report that they will be preparing a summary of the results of the workshop and will work with the Northgate Subcommittee to develop the Commission's final product and recommendations.

**ACTIONS: #1. The Northgate Subcommittee will meet in the next two weeks to analyze the results of the workshop and the survey & mapping exercise and begin planning to prepare a report. The draft report will be sent to workshop participants for review and input before it is submitted to the City.**

**#2. The Commission will schedule a briefing on the Comprehensive Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP) for late April/early May. The Commission will provide input on the scope of this important transportation study.**

**#3. The Commission will brief the Stakeholders Group in May on the results of the Workshop.**

## **DPD Planning Director Report**

Chair Owen welcomed Planning Director, John Rahaim and invited him to share with Commissioners key issues and activities from City Planning. He noted the Commission's keen interest in the Waterfront Planning process and the Center City Strategy.

Mr. Rahaim reported that approximately 600 people attended the report out event last night of the Waterfront Charrette including the City officials and staff, media, charette participants and members of the public. He also noted that at least 35 members from the labor unions attended and voiced their concerns about what will happen on Pier 46. Mr. Rahaim stated that the City may not address this part of the plan in Phase 1.

Commissioner Sheridan noted that the Alaskan Way Viaduct preferred alternative will be important in figuring out what's next. She also noted that nailing down the Washington State Ferry plan is another important piece that is still a moving target.

Mr. Rahaim noted that staff hopes to have a recommended concept by fall 2004 and that staff can start by putting its ideas out and reflecting differences in areas of conflict. Ms. Curry suggested that for the Concept Plan a strong Vision statement will be important for anchoring the project.

Mr. Rahaim stated that they are currently working to set up an advisory group to help staff pull out the best ideas. Commissioner Owen suggested that the Joint Planning Commission & Design Commission Waterfront subcommittee will act as a good sounding board and will offer ideas for next steps and options for next phase of public input and can also offer suggestions for taking information to the advisory committee.

Commissioner Quintana asked at what point the Vision gets plugged into fiscal reality. Mr. Rahaim responded that next year in the drafting of the master plan they will begin looking at this level of detail. Commissioner Quintana asked what the likely funding sources are for the project. Mr. Rahaim stated that there will likely be a major portion of improvements will come through the Viaduct Project negotiation and mitigation. Some of the plan will involve things like code changes. Mr. Quintana then asked where funding for the Waterfront Planning will come from. Mr. Rahaim stated that they are looking at cooperative development options for planning including access to philanthropic organizations and the University of Washington. He noted there may be interest groups who would be interested in partnering on pieces of the planning as well as the public institutions such as the City, the State and the Port.

Chair Owen asked Mr. Rahaim to address the issue of the Center City Strategy and to think more about the role that Planning Commission can play in helping define what the Center City strategy is. Chair Owen stated the Commission goal is to be out front and proactively leading as was suggested by Deputy Mayor Ceis at the Planning Commissions recent annual retreat.

Mr. Rahaim stated that Center City strategy is a conceptually exciting project that looks at pairing increased density and a 24 hour environment with high quality neighborhoods. It puts a new emphasis on four main components; housing, transportation within the Center City, public space, including open space and parks, all with a sustainability overlay. The City needs to develop a mission statement that helps clarify the project, the vision and goals. Mr. Rahaim made it clear that the intent is not to write a new Center City Plan but to build on neighborhood plans and find comment themes.

Commissioner Finrow asked what areas constitute Center City and what the demographics look like. Mr. Rahaim stated the demographics are listed out in the back of the Urban Village element of the Comprehensive Plan and include growth targets. He described the boundaries of Center City as Elliott Bay to Broadway, Safeco and the Ballpark areas to Lake Union.

Commissioner Finrow stated that it will be important to define what kinds of growth the City wants and in what proportions and where and to define the projected future character that is being sought. Commissioner Quintana asked what other cities in the region are meeting their growth targets. Commissioner Kitchen noted that the results are mixed, with more than half of the cities meeting their growth targets (e.g. Bellevue, Redmond, and Kirkland) and other not. Mr. Rahaim noted that Seattle is meeting its growth targets citywide but not in each urban center and village.

Commissioner Owen suggested that this issue needs to be viewed in the context of what it means for the region. It should help the City of Seattle build a case for infrastructure improvements with State and regional decision makers. For issues of vital economic importance to the region such as the Viaduct and questions surrounding RTID and other regional transportation and infrastructure policy making. Mr. Rahaim agreed that this would be an important approach to consider in crafting a vision for Center City.

Mr. Rahaim closed by offering a big congratulations to the Planning Commission for an excellent Northgate Pedestrian Connections Workshop, noting he has heard a lot of very positive feedback. He stated that he thinks the Planning Commission's work will help put the pedestrian system at the center of the plan and made it the primary piece as it should be.

**ACTION: Planning Commissioners committed to continued discussion and exploration of a role in further defining the Center City concept, working with City Planning in the coming months to do so.**

## **PRESENTATION/BRIEFING**

### **Comprehensive Plan Amendment Package**

Chair Owen welcomed Lish Whitson from DPD City Planning. He noted that Mr. Whitson is here to talk about the schedule and process for consideration of the Comp Plan Amendment Package and to walk the Commission through the package. He also reminded Commissioners that they received the Council Resolution and the summary Comp Plan Amendment document electronically. Mr. Whitson handed out printed copies of the City's amendments and noted they are revisions to several elements of the Plan.

Ms. Wilson stated that the Commission will be reviewing the City sponsored amendments over the next six weeks and will provide formal comments to DPD by the end of May. She reminded the Commission they will also review and comment on the City's further analysis of community sponsored amendments that are moving forward per the Council's resolution.

Mr. Whitson provided an overview of the Comprehensive Plan Ten Year Update, noting that an important goal in the amendment process this year is to clarify and streamline some of the Plan's key elements. He stated that work has also taken place to increase the coordination between the Comprehensive Plan and functional plan, with the latter providing implementation tools.

Mr. Whitson briefly went through each of the elements, describing what has been done to revise them. Commissioner Finrow asked what type of upzones would be required in making South Lake Union an urban center. Whitson responded that the proposed goals could be accommodated with existing zoning; the City would look at whether some changes would help to guide development to meet other neighborhood plan goals.

Mr. Whitson announced that the City will hold four meetings on the Comprehensive Plan; the first will be an overview and open house, followed by three topical meetings. These will focus on the Environment and ECA, Land Use and Transportation. He also noted that Council and community amendments are still being worked on so are not part of this current review process. They hope to have these ready for public review soon.

In response to Marty Curry's request for direction, Mr. Whitson recommended that all Commissioners review the Urban Village element and have several Commissioners review each of the elements being revised. He also asked that the Commissioners sign up to both attend and help as moderators at the public forums.

**ACTION & FOLLOW-UP:** At the request of DPD City Planning staff the following Commissioners will participate and assist in the upcoming Comp Plan Public Involvement meetings;

**4/20 Kick Off Meeting:** Commissioner TBD may offer welcoming remarks on behalf of the Planning Commission, Commissioners Connell and Krizanich and Commissioner-designee Clements will attend on behalf of the Planning Commission.

**4/26 Topical Meeting on the Environmental Element:** Commissioners Blomberg and Finrow will attend; one will moderate the working session.

**5/4 Topical Meeting on the Land Use Element:** Commissioners Connell, Krizanich and Owen and Commissioner-designee Clements will attend on behalf of the Planning Commission. Commissioners Finrow, Sheridan and To will attend and one will moderate the working session.

**5/12 Topical Meeting on the Transportation Element:** Commissioners Owen and Bhagat and Commissioner-designee Clements will attend on behalf of the Planning Commission.

## **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **Adjournment**

Chair Owen adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm