



SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION July 22, 2004 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners in Attendance

George Blomberg, Chair; Mahlon Clements, Tom Eanes, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, John Owen, Joe Quintana, Mimi Sheridan,

Commissioners Absent

Angali Bhagat, Angela Brooks, Ray Connell, Jerry Finrow, Steve Sheehy, Tony To, Paul Tomita.

Commission Staff

Barbara Wilson, Analyst

Guests

Don Blakeney, DPD; Scott Dvorak, DPD; David Graves, DPD

Call to Order

Chair George Blomberg called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Sheehy moved and Commissioner Owen seconded to approve the July 8, 2004 Commission minutes as written. The motion to accept the minutes were approved unanimously.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Chair's Report

- **Upcoming and Recent Activities**

Alaskan Way Viaduct Preferred Alternative

Chair Blomberg thanked Commissioners for helping to finalize the Alaskan Way Viaduct Preferred Alternative Letter, and noted that there is a copy in everyone's folders. Chair Blomberg and Commissioner Owen gave a brief update on the joint Planning Commission and Design Commission with Deputy Mayor Ceis noting that the Mayor's office appears to be a good track with regards to the project looking broadly and taking into consideration many of the same concerns that the Planning Commission has outlined. Chair Blomberg reminded commissioners about Monday's COW on the Viaduct noting that he and Commissioner Tomita, along with staff analyst Barbara Wilson will be briefing the Council jointly with the Design Commission.

Farewell Party for Marty Curry

Chair Blomberg reminded Commissioners of this evening's City party for Marty Curry. He noted that the Mayor, Councilmembers and others will be on hand to speak to Marty's 25 years of service at the City of Seattle.

Executive Director Hiring

Chair Blomberg gave an update on the Executive Director Hiring Process noting that two additional candidates were being interviewed by the full Commission on Tuesday, July 13. The Commissioners present at the interview recommended a final candidate and Chair Blomberg and John Rahaim will speak with the candidate to make an offer soon. Chair Blomberg noted that Ms. Wilson will continue to work "out-of-class" for the next month or so as interim 'acting director' until a new Director is in place noting that Ms. Wilson will attend meetings with the Executive team at City Planning, staff the Commission at Council and Mayor briefings and will represent the Commission at the executive and higher level City meetings.

Commission Discussions

- **Station Area Planning Update and Discussion**

Scott Dvorak and David Graves of the City's Monorail Station Area Planning staff briefed the Commission on current planning activities and presented station area action plans to commissioners for feedback and review.

Mr. Graves began by running through some of the recent council actions and gave a brief update on the City's June station area planning workshops. He noted that a total of 300 people attended the five station area planning workshops and that the results would be posted in more detail on the City's *Implementing the Monorail* website the following day. He noted that some of the biggest issues of controversy included neighborhood parking and traffic circulation and metro service both in terms of service at the stations and more generally concerns about service levels.

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich asked what the impact of the possible delay of acquiring the Federal Reserve building would have on the Madison Street station. Mr. Dvorak noted that SMP is in negotiations with the Feds over the site and they have stated that they feel confident that they will be able to come to terms before 2009. Mr. Dvorak stated that there is obviously a pretty big impact to the system because it would be a heavily used station. SMP says that they feel confident they will have a station at Madison on time. The City, on the other hand, feels confident that there will be a station but is not completely sure it will be there in 2009. If so, this could have an effect on impacts such as traffic that may have to be mitigated.

Commissioner Krizanich offered a word of caution regarding the downtown workshop that she attended. She cautioned that the City planners should understand that there was a constituency base, namely office workers, that was not well represented but that has some good issues that should be addressed and many of these people would be interested in a Madison street station.

Mr. Dvorak and Mr. Graves then handed out draft station area action plans. Mr. Graves walked through some of the common elements and where elements may differ. He noted that the concept plans will suggest actions that may be taken to integrate the monorail station and guide way into the neighborhood through which the system passes and serves. Each concept plan addresses two areas of the system: the corridor beneath the guide way and the vicinity around the stations, or Station Areas. The corridor is further divided into three elements: Corridor Operations; Land Use Policy; and Streetscape Design. Similarly, the Station Areas section is divided into five elements: Access; Parking; Land Use Policy; Public Realm; and Strategic Development Sites.

Mr. Graves suggested that there are differences that need to be considered in different segments. For instance, in residential versus urban villages, the City may want to consider different scenarios or strategies.

Commissioner Owen suggested that Local Improvement Districts may be a good strategy for funding some of the needed improvements. Commissioner Sheridan suggested that the City focus first on what the transit way agreement will pay for.

Commissioner Quintana asked if we ought to slow the station area planning down until the City knows whether or not there will be a recall of the Monorail in order to be sure this effort is worthwhile. Mr. Dvorak noted that although the Station Area Planning team works for the City, SMP actually provides the funding for the efforts. He also noted that if the City stops its efforts and the project goes forward they will be extremely far behind in the planning effort. Mr. Graves added that much of the Station Area Planning analysis and work will be advantageous to the City either way. Much of it needed to be done for other planning work as well, so the City has already derived some good benefits from the Station Area Planning efforts.

Action: Commissioners commended City Planning staff for their good efforts and recommended they continue on the current path. The Commission advised the staff to include the addition of planning level costs in the Station Area Action Plans. SPC also recommends troubleshooting Implementation plans early in the process

The Planning Commission proposes that Station Area Planning staff provide the Commission with a summary of their direction and return to the Commission in September after the internal Charrette for further Commissioner review of the action plans

- **Center City – Planning for SPC Briefing**

Chair Blomberg welcomed Planning Director John Rahaim to the Commission noting that the Commissioners are interested in his thoughts about the Center City strategy and the Commissions roundtable scheduled for August 26th.

Mr. Rahaim stated that he was happy to have the support of the Commission in developing the Center City strategy. He noted that the Commission would add value in offering advise on downtown height and density issues for the downtown core, and specifically think through opportunities for housing in the Center City.

Commissioner Sheehy asked for more detail about where current residential uses are and some general guidance on where the City wants to be. Mr. Rahaim stated he would work on getting some specific numbers but noted that there seems to be a focus and concentration on housing in the northern section of the study area. Commissioner Quintana stated it is useful to know who really lives in the Center City and questions whether it is possible to get families into the area even if schools and other amenities are provided.

Commissioner Clements asked what issues should the Commission and the City be thinking about other then housing and zoning. Mr. Rahaim stated that there are numerous issues on the table; parks and open space, services, transportation issues and many more. A valuable place to put some thinking would be on narrowing the issues and helping the City to develop a work plan.

Commissioner Owen noted it will be important for the Commission to have a longer term view and to get clarity on how Center City connects with the Waterfront plan, the Downtown height and density study and the Comp Plan.

Commissioner Clements added that the impacts to the neighborhoods should be considered in the equation.

Action: Commissioner Owen will lead the SPC in a series of internal discussions to think broadly about where the City of Seattle should focus its efforts. Commission staff will assist the Commission work group in preparing a position paper reflecting the key points raised today and in subsequent discussions. SPC staff will also begin drafting a short list of invitees and agenda for the Commission sponsored Center City roundtable

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comments

Adjournment

Chair Blomberg adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.