



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Rick Mohler and Jamie Stroble, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, July 08, 2021
Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present:	Alanna Peterson, Mark Braseth, McCaela Daffern, Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson, Patience Malaba, Rick Mohler, Radhika Nair, Julio Sanchez, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble, Kelabe Tewolde
Commissioners Absent:	Roque Deherrera, David Goldberg, Matt Hutchins, Dhyana Quintanar
Commission Staff:	Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Olivia Baker, Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Commission Coordinator
Guest:	Connie Combs

Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/when-we-meet/minutes-and-agendas>

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Co-Chair Jamie Stroble called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm. She made the following land acknowledgement:

'On behalf of the Seattle Planning Commission, we would like to actively recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people who have lived on and stewarded these lands since the beginning of time and continue to do so today. We acknowledge the role that traditional western-centric planning practices have played in harming, displacing, and attempting to erase Native communities. We commit to identifying racist practices and strive to center restorative land stewardship rather than unsustainable and extractive use of the land.'

Co-Chair Stroble asked fellow Commissioners to review the Color Brave Space norms and asked for any additions or amendments to those norms before stating the expectation that everyone practice those norms. She requested a moment of silence to remember community members Steven and Eموke who were recently killed by a light rail train in Columbia City. She stated that this tragedy is an unfortunate reminder that we are planning and making policy decisions within an inequitable context. We are building upon a landscape and history of land use that was not shaped equitably. Our decisions have an impact on people and their daily lives.

ACTION: Commissioner Patience Malaba moved to approve the June 24, 2021 meeting minutes. Commissioner McCaella Daffern seconded the motion. Co-Chairs Rick Mohler and Jamie Stroble and Commissioner Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson abstained. The draft minutes did not pass due to a lack of quorum voting yes and will be re-introduced for approval at the July 22 meeting.

Announcements

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, provided a brief review of the format for the online meeting, and noted that due to the online format, public comment must be submitted in writing at least 8 hours before the start of the Commission meeting. Ms. Murdock introduced new staff member Olivia Baker. Ms. Baker provided a brief overview of her background and stated that she is excited to work with the Commission.

Briefing: 2020-2021 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Recommendations

Michael Hubner and Jim Holmes, Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)

Mr. Holmes provided an overview of the 2020-2021 annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process. In September 2020, the City Council adopted a docketing resolution with eight proposed amendments. OPCD analyzed four docketed amendments and did not analyze the remaining four amendments. Three of the analyzed amendments are recommended for adoption and one is not recommended for adoption. The City Council will consider the following recommended amendments for adoption in September 2021.

University District Future Land Use Map (FLUM) change. This amendment would expand the University District Urban Center to provide increased density for future redevelopment. Mr. Holmes stated that this amendment meets the goals for an Urban Center of promoting dense, mixed-use, walkable communities. This amendment is also recommended for adoption due to the proximity of the proposed expansion area to high-frequency transit. OPCD does not anticipate a zoning change for this area, but the applicants have indicated an interest in applying for a contract rezone to a zoning designation with a Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) suffix to provide affordable housing benefits.

130th Street Station Area FLUM change. OPCD is currently engaged in a long-range planning effort around the 130th/145th Street station area. This amendment would serve as an initial implementation of the station area plan by making land use and policy changes to allow multi-family and mixed uses on 8.4 acres of land adjacent to the proposed 130th Street light rail station. This amendment demonstrates the City's commitment to transit-oriented development. It is expected that there will be additional recommendations coming from this station area planning process in the future.

Industrial Maritime Strategy. Mayor Durkan recently announced the final Industrial and Maritime Strategy recommendations. The eleven recommendations address land use, workforce development, transportation, the environment, and public safety. A new land use framework that implements the recommended land use strategies will be studied in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) beginning with a scoping period running from July 8 to August 9. Completion of the EIS and final recommendations are expected in Spring 2022. Two Comprehensive Plan amendments related to the Industrial and Maritime Strategy are proposed for the 2021 amendment cycle. These include

amendments to 1) strengthen protections for industrial lands by limiting removal of land from Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (M/ICs) to major Comprehensive Plan updates or the result of a City-supported comprehensive study; and 2) provide guidance for future master planning at the Armory and WOSCA sites. Additional legislative action will take place in late 2021/early 2022.

Mr. Holmes described other proposed amendments that were docketed for further study in 2020. Proposed amendments to protect tree canopy were analyzed but not recommended for adoption. Councilmember Strauss asked OPCD to review these amendments. OPCD staff met with staff from the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections and Office of Sustainability and Environment to learn more about the Urban Forestry Master Plan process. OPCD will commit to working with those departments to review potential changes to the Comprehensive Plan in the 2024 Major Update. Proposed amendments that were docketed but not analyzed by OPCD are as follows:

- Fossil fuels and public health. OPCD determined that this amendment was more appropriate for the Major Update.
- South Park Urban Village designation. OPCD opted to defer discussion on this amendment until the Major Update.
- Alternative name for Single-Family zones. OPCD declined to review this amendment.
- Amendments to support transportation impact fees. These amendments were proposed by City Council. SEPA review has been completed and these amendments may move forward with other recommended amendments in September.

Ms. Murdock reminded the Commissioners that the purpose of this briefing is to review the 2020-2021 Comprehensive Plan amendment recommendations from OPCD. Planning Commission staff will provide a draft letter for review at the July 22 meeting and the Commission will discuss and take action on the final recommendations letter at the August 12 meeting.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners congratulated OPCD staff on completion of the Industrial and Maritime Strategy and expressed support for the recommendation to eliminate the potential for removal of land from M/ICs through the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process. Commissioners commended OPCD on the 130th/145th Street station area planning process and noted the future potential of those areas. Commissioners expressed enthusiasm for the process to rename Single-Family zones.
- Commissioners asked how the proposed upzone in the 130th station area relates to the broader station area planning process. Mr. Holmes stated that this action was determined necessary to inform Sound Transit that the City is serious about supporting transit-oriented planning. Mr. Hubner stated that the proposed amendment would only change the FLUM. A rezone would be considered in 2022 with broader zoning changes in the station area. Minor text changes to accompany the FLUM change would provide flexibility for this change and other future changes. The proposed upzone is consistent with input received during community engagement.
- Commissioners requested clarification on why proposed amendments would be docketed but not analyzed. Mr. Holmes stated that proposed amendments are docketed for further study if they meet the established docketing criteria. OPCD determines if the proposed amendments are more appropriate for the Major Update. OPCD may decline to review proposed amendments if it does not have the resources to conduct sufficient analysis. Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD did not recommend docketing four proposed amendments in 2020 based on various rationale. City Council

viewed these proposed amendments differently and docketed them. OPCD did not analyze these amendments for the same reasons that they were not recommended for docketing.

- Commissioners requested more information on the background and context of the proposed South Park Urban Village designation amendment. Mr. Hubner stated that this proposed amendment is not an amendment to change the Comprehensive Plan per se, but to analyze whether South Park meets the criteria for an urban village. This request originally appeared in the MHA resolution as several questions had been raised about growth and density in South Park, potential MHA upzoning and displacement, and the needs of the community. OPCD determined that looking at one urban village was not appropriate at this time, as the intent is to analyze all urban villages as part of the Major Update.
- Commissioners asked for additional details on the process for renaming Single-Family zones. Mr. Hubner stated that the renaming legislation is led by City Council and as such questions are best directed to Council staff. Commissioners inquired about the relationship between Council staff and OPCD staff. Mr. Holmes stated that OPCD staff work for the Executive at the Mayor's direction. City Council Central Staff supports the Council. OPCD and Council Central Staff work closely together but are ultimately responsive to their individual branches of city government. Mr. Hubner stated that Council Central Staff is responsible for environmental review and analysis of any land use amendments introduced by individual City Council members.
- Commissioners noted that the Executive and City Council appear to have different positions on an alternative name for Single-Family zones and asked what is needed to bring their positions into alignment. Mr. Hubner stated that the annual amendments will be transmitted for consideration in September. In this case regarding land use and residential zoning, there are issues and questions within the scope of the Major Update on how the city will accommodate continuing growth and the housing affordability crisis. OPCD is very aware of the legacy of racist impacts of past land use decisions and is looking at a full range of alternatives including different housing types in Single-Family areas. OPCD will be developing the Major Update. The Mayor's proposed plan will be submitted to the City Council for consideration. Commissioners reiterated the need for alignment and the importance of the Executive and City Council working together moving forward as the request for renaming Single-Family zones has been made several times over the past few years.
- Commissioners thanked Mr. Holmes and Mr. Hubner for their briefing and stated that their explanations were very helpful and illuminating.

Public Comment: 2021-2022 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Docketing Letter

Ms. Murdock read the following public comment, which was submitted by email:

Re: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application - King County Parcel Nos. 2325039045, 2325039108

Dear Director Murdock and Planning Commissioners:

We write on behalf of Mr. Jeffrey Hummel, related to his proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment that would allow for King County Parcel Nos. 2325039045 and 2325039108 (the "Property") to be placed in their proper land use designations – "Commercial/Mixed Use." We respectfully request that the Planning Commission recommend moving the amendment proposal forward to the docket for further analysis.

The proposed amendment would change the Property from "Ballard-Interbay-Northend Manufacturing/Industrial Center" ("BINMIC") to "Commercial/Mixed Use." The Property is located in

Interbay, a neighborhood slated for a light rail line and no longer predominately in industrial use. More specifically, the Property itself is not in industrial use, nor has it been for over 10 years. It is also immediately adjacent to "Commercial / Mixed Use Areas" on the current FLUM. We therefore respectfully request that the Commission recommend moving the amendment proposal forward to the docket.

More importantly, in response to the ongoing and worsening housing crisis in Seattle, the property owner intends to redevelop the Property into workforce housing, featuring a mix of 20 percent market rate housing and workforce housing serving 80-120 percent area median income. The property owner would agree to a covenant guaranteeing those affordability levels for the life of the affordable housing project.

It is disheartening that year after year the City of Seattle continues to ignore opportunities such as these to redesignate properties that are not industrial. Seattle's homelessness and affordability crisis is a supply crisis. The City grew by 19% in the last decade and its housing supply has not kept up with this massive demand. Every single expert who has studied this crisis agrees: the City needs more housing. This proposal is a unique opportunity that the Planning Commission should seriously weigh and docket. To recommend once again that the amendment should wait for Maritime and Industrial policies that have been in the works for 14 years would be a major missed opportunity to create guaranteed middle-income/affordable housing.

The time is now to study the amendment for Council consideration. We respectfully request that the Planning Commission recommend moving the amendment proposal forward to the docket for further analysis. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

*Sincerely,
Jessica M. Clawson*

Action: 2021/2022 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Docketing Letter

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff, provided an overview of the Planning Commission's final draft 2021-2022 Comprehensive Plan Amendments docketing recommendations letter. He reminded the Commissioners that the annual amendments are reviewed against a set of criteria established in City Council Resolution 31807. The proposed amendments are not evaluated at this point in the process on the merits of their substance. Proposed amendments that meet all the docketing criteria are recommended for further study.

The City Council received seven applications for the 2020-2021 Comprehensive Plan amendment process, including two proposed amendments to the FLUM and five proposed text amendments. Mr. Hoey reviewed the final draft recommendations for which of these proposed amendments should be docketed.

The Planning Commission recommends moving forward the following amendment proposal to the docket for further analysis:

#1: Florentia Street

- The Commission recommends this proposal for the docket. The proposal meets the criteria and as such warrants further study.

The Planning Commission recommends the following amendment proposals not move forward to the docket for further analysis:

#2: 9201-9215 3rd Avenue SW (FLUM)

- The Commission does not recommend this proposal for the docket, citing criterion G. A FLUM amendment is not necessary when it would affect an area less than a full block in size and adjacent land is the same or compatible.

#3: 1511-1551 W Armory Way (FLUM)

- The Commission does not recommend this proposal for the docket, citing criterion B5. This proposal would be better addressed through another process.

#4: Setbacks and Trees

- The Commission does not recommend this proposal for the docket, citing criterion D. This proposal has been previously submitted and rejected.

#5: Skybridges, Trams and Tunnels

- The Commission does not recommend this proposal for the docket, citing criterion D. This proposal has been previously submitted and rejected.

#6: Open and Democratic Government

- The Commission does not recommend this proposal for the docket, citing criterion D. This proposal has been previously submitted and rejected.

#7: Heavy Vehicles

- The Commission does not recommend this proposal for the docket, citing criterion D. This proposal has been previously submitted and rejected.

Of the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments that were docketed by the City Council in Resolution 31970 for further analysis, the following five were not analyzed as part of the 2020-2021 annual amendment cycle:

- Amendments related to the West Seattle Bridge
- Impact fee amendments
- A new name for Single-Family Residential Areas
- Designation of the South Park Urban Village
- Amendments related to fossil fuels and public health

The Planning Commission recommends moving the effort to rename Single-Family Residential forward sooner than the Major Update. This change could serve to inform the policy process considering additional residential uses in areas zoned Single-Family.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners requested clarification on the timing overlap of these proposed amendments and the amendments recommended for adoption by OPCD presented earlier in the meeting. Mr. Hoey stated that it is important that the Planning Commission take action on its final 2021-2022 Comprehensive Plan amendments recommendations at this meeting in order that the letter be sent to the City Council in advance of the Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee public hearing and discussion on July 14. That committee will hold a vote on whether to docket these amendments at its July 28 meeting. The 2020-2021 Comprehensive Plan amendments recommended for adoption by OPCD will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration in September.

ACTION: Co-Chair Rick Mohler moved to approve the 2021-2022 Comprehensive Plan Amendments docketing letter. Commissioner Patience Malaba seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed unanimously.

Public Comment: Industrial Maritime Strategy Recommendations Letter

Ms. Murdock read the following public comments, which were submitted by email:

Seattle Planning Commission Members:

As a note to the record, for more than a year I have followed your meetings – in person then virtually – most recently interested in your review of Seattle’s industrial lands presentations, recommendations, advice and pending consensus. I attended your June 24th meeting where you further reviewed the staff prepared Industrial and Maritime Strategy Recommendations.

I respect the dialog and suggestions made along the way and most recently those voiced on the 24th concerning walk sheds around station locations, density considerations and housing, furtherance of the investment being made in high-capacity transit, and the importance of embracing modern commercial and residential activities – all recognizing the City’s evolving economic base.

During that June 24th meeting the committee determined lack of consensus with the language presented – land use restrictions in the staff recommendations regarding density and housing appeared too limiting. The letter was tabled and sent back to staff with a request the language provide more flexibility in station area planning and housing in zones expecting high density – station locations.

I and others in SODO value the request for broader opportunities around the 6th and Lander station and look forward to language that help promote job creating opportunities for the SODO station neighborhood – embracing the goals promoted by the City and region for transit oriented development around and along transit corridors – to increase economic opportunity, equity and reduce the need for single occupant vehicles.

Thank you in advance. I will be listening on Thursday.

Mark A Weed

SODO Station Area Advocate

Thank you for the thoughtful review of the proposed Industrial and Maritime Strategy Recommendations at your June 24 Planning Commission meeting. The recommendations you reviewed were created by committees where the Port Unions and Mic had more representation than the business community. City staff simply proclaimed there would be no residential uses not only near transit stations but anywhere in the so called industrial areas. Our community made and continues to make huge investments in mass transit. This investment should be maximized with transit oriented development which includes housing and higher density commercial development. SODO was but no longer is an industrial area, it's a commercial area. Most of the building stock dates from the 1920s and 30s. Yes SODO borders the Port. SODO station lies approximately a mile from the Port. The argument that a resident living near SODO station would complain about noise emanating from the Port makes no sense. People live across the street from the Port in West Seattle. In SODO we're speaking of residents living a mile away. The argument that residents would create traffic congestion also makes no sense. One moves to SODO station to eliminate auto ownership. We believe Sodo should be a diverse community of makers, biotech and tech. Employers want nearby residential opportunities to reduce employee costs and commute times. It's time to look to the future and not let the largest close in undeveloped area be held hostage to irrational fears.

Henry Liebman

Seattle Planning Commissioners,

Thank you very much for requesting a revised plan from the City regarding their industrial lands proposal. I am fully supportive of protecting our industrial lands but question the City's reluctance to look at true TOD zoning in and around Light Rail Stations. The City is promoting an "Industrial Innovation Zone" around the SODO Lander Street Station but has not been able to point to a single example of this zoning being effective. In fact, every other major City in the world building light rail infrastructure adds as much housing, commercial, retail, and public spaces in and around these transit stations. The very idea behind transit is to get people living next to their jobs and getting out of cars to improve the environment, ease traffic congestion, and improve everyone's quality of life. Furthermore, a ¼ mile or ½ mile TOD walkshed around the Lander Station is a tiny percentage of the total industrial lands, over a mile away from any Port activities, and overwhelming being used by non-industrial tenants today. Please use your influence in this process to demand this vision is included in any EIS study without arbitrary housing restrictions or mandatory industrial FAR's. Let's let the results of an expanded EIS process inform our decisions going forward. Everyone in Seattle has invested a lot of tax payer dollars for Light Rail and to not even consider maximizing our investment is a colossal mistake.

Regards,

Ted Lehmann

Dear Commissioners,

As advisors to the Seattle City government on broad goals and plans for the physical development of the City you play a critical role in shaping land use policy; and not to simply enshrine historic uses but to

address our pressing current needs and to anticipate where the city is headed. In particular, the position you take now on the Industrial and Maritime Strategy recommendations will influence the future development and use of some of the last remaining underutilized areas left in the city for years to come.

In their current form, the recommendations fail to respond to significant changes in population density, employment trends, transportation/logistics technologies, development economics, and market demand. There are still close to 5,000 acres spread across the Duwamish and Ballard/Interbay Manufacturing Industrial Centers (MICs) whose zoning restricts uses to general and heavy manufacturing; transportation and utility services; and salvage and recycling. Other commercial uses, such as retail sales, entertainment, and office are allowed only by limited exception (up to 10K to 25K square feet per lot) and residential uses are forbidden outright. While this zoning may have made sense given the state of the city in 1930, it clearly does not today.

There are still areas within the MICs that host sustainable maritime and manufacturing operations, particularly along the waterfront and adjacent to the rail lines, and there is broad support for continuing to protect these limited areas; but with the steady migration of many of these businesses to areas further south with lower land prices, fewer regulatory hurdles, and better access to major transportation arteries the percentage of land devoted to legacy industrial uses has shrunk significantly, particularly as one moves eastward away from the waterways.

All one needs to do is stroll along the major commercial corridors in the industrial areas to appreciate the change, with most of the buildings occupied by retail (restaurants, bars, apparel, cannabis, etc.), wholesale suppliers (tiling and carpet, bath and kitchen accessories, lighting, etc.), entertainment/athletic venues (music, gentlemen's club, indoor gym/tennis court) and, notably, office buildings, interspersed with some small makerspaces and empty lots and warehouses. It is worth noting that the largest employers in SODO are Starbucks and Seattle Public Schools, whose employees are housed in two very large office buildings. Outside of these two exceptions, the combination of limited total floor area, shrinking demand, and restricted use has led to very low employment density and no housing in a city that urgently needs affordable housing and commercial space.

So, the first problem with the proposed recommendations is that they would FURTHER downzone these parts of the MICs to permit even less non-industrial activity in the unfounded expectation that the current spaces would be filled with traditional maritime and industrial businesses. The second problem is that the cosmetic changes they propose to the zoning in a very limited area around light rail stations and in transitional areas would tie any additional FAR to new dedicated industrial space with penalties for non-compliance. The third, and perhaps most significant problem, is that they would permit housing in only the non-industrial, transition areas, and then only at very low densities and with a host of conditions attached.

I urge the commissioners to ask the mayor's office to reconsider the scope of any proposed changes and the accompanying EIS to consider the impact – positive and negative – of permitting true mixed-use development, including a higher ratio of non-industrial to industrial uses and affordable housing, within at least ½ mile of the light rail stations and along 1st Avenue South to Lander Street. To implement the current recommendations would not materially increase our industrial base while leading to continuing stagnation, and a further exacerbation of the environmental, public safety, and decaying infrastructure challenges that our industrial lands face.

Thank you for your consideration.

Peter A. Nitze
Nitze-Stagen

Having experienced the benefits of transit-oriented development in half a dozen cities in the United States and Canada, I can tell you that these are more than just vibrant places to visit (and to score a great Airbnb room.) These centers are absolute necessities for a growing work population.

Since the city recognizes the enormous need for workforce housing in this city, the SPC review should amend some of the Maritime Strategy recommendations; let's look at the potential for the housing around the Sound Transit SODO station. Again, we are hearing from the Port of Seattle... "housing and port activities can't co-exist; housing creates too much congestion." This is the same, tired, argument the agency has used to oppose most development projects in the SODO district, whether it be sports stadiums, housing in Pioneer Square, hotels or offices. We don't buy those claims, at 5th and Lander, more than a mile away from the Port! Everything within the suggested TOD walkshed around the SODO station has no impact on the Port.

Equally as important in your discussions is recognition of the fact that SODO is not an industrial district, outside of container facilities. Chainsaw manufacturers, steel fabricators, boiler repair facilities, crane companies, copper pipe manufacturers, winch and hoist companies are gone. In their place are commercial uses such as restaurants, coffee shops, tool sales, barbecue joints, safety equipment sales, cannabis growers, office uses, outdoor equipment sales, trapeze instruction, car dealerships and unauthorized residential uses. Redefine the word industrial to mean software development and incubator office uses. Better yet, call SODO a commercial district.

The collective property ownership around the station has land that begs for a mix of uses - retail on the ground floor, office on the next floors and residential above. Work/life environments can function just as well at Lander as they will in West Seattle, Ballard or North Seattle. Let's drop the old fashioned notion of industrial and look to the future.

*Thank you for your consideration.
Bob Gillespie, Managing Partner, Lander Street Partners LLC*

In support of Bob Gillespie's comments, I ask SPC to consider the public investment in Sodo Station which is due to become a major transit hub for the traveling public. Sound Transit's plans, as far as they know right now, are an example of doing it "cheap" and not "right". Public input has been blatantly ignored, and the DEIS will conveniently support their need to save money with early design principles being compromised to shave dollars. Be that as it may, our 6 plus acres of assembled parcels touching Sodo Station and the surrounding parcels should be viewed as prime opportunity for Transportation Oriented Development. It will never go back to traditional industrial use just based on today's economics.

The Port and labor's contention that industrial jobs are at stake is pure folly at this time in history. Most Port revenue comes from the Airport. Subtract Shilshole and Magnolia recreational marinas, Fisherman's Terminal, Cruise Terminals,and the revenue from cargo terminals is a fraction of total income. We were once landlord to steel distributors, a heat treating plant, metal plating shop.....but those uses disappeared decades ago and infilled with service, light distribution tenants, a car club, restaurant, private tennis courts and there's a nearby Trapeze School. Fact is, industrial uses need acreage and cheap rent.

You won't find economical rent with land values in the \$120-\$140/SF range and the dirt may be contaminated at that.

Higher and better use of Sodo land is appropriate given billions of \$\$ invested in Light Rail and the obvious transition of business uses in our neighborhood. Let's start with a look toward denser zoning around Sodo Station as a prelude toward creating modern space for today's jobs with potential for affordable housing. Thank you.

*Robb Stack
Stack Family Properties*

Action: Industrial and Maritime Strategy Recommendations Letter

Co-Chair Stroble introduced the final draft Industrial and Maritime Strategy letter. She recognized that the Commission was scheduled to take action on the final draft letter at its June 24 meeting but was unable to do so due to last-minute suggested edits and discussion. Co-Chair Stroble acknowledged that the Commission strives to create a culture of collaboration and constructive and open dialogue, and Commissioners should also respect the work and time of Planning Commission staff and existing Commission processes. During this time of virtual meetings, it is important to build connections, especially with new Commissioners, and engage in healthy and compassionate discourse. She thanked Commissioners in advance for respecting the recognized Color Brave Space norms.

Co-Chair Stroble stated that the purpose of this letter is to comment on the Mayor's Industrial and Maritime Strategy. She reminded the Commissioners that this letter is structured to respond point by point to the recommendations that were recently approved by the Citywide Advisory Group. Industrial lands policy has been an issue across many mayoral administrations. The Planning Commission congratulates this administration for developing a series of recommendations that have been adopted by consensus of a diverse stakeholder advisory group. The Commission strives for consensus, and there appears to be agreement among Commissioners on most points in the final draft letter. This discussion will focus only on areas of the draft letter where there were any conflicting comments from Commissioners. Co-Chair Stroble stated that this is not the Commission's last opportunity to provide input on the Industrial and Maritime Strategy. The Commission will comment during the EIS scoping process and on the draft EIS content as it is developed. This letter is focused on the high-level themes of the proposed strategies and should represent the common views of all Commissioners.

ACTION: Commissioner Lauren Squires moved to approve the Industrial and Maritime Strategy recommendations letter. Co-Chair Rick Mohler seconded the motion.

Commission Discussion

Ms. Murdock introduced individual sections of text where there were conflicting comments from Commissioners. She facilitated discussion and a vote on each proposed edit as stated below.

Unique and Challenging Characteristics of Seattle's Industrial Lands

"Several of Sound Transit's West Seattle and Ballard Link Extension light rail stations are proposed to be built in or adjacent to industrially zoned areas. This creates a challenging tension between the potentially competing demands of protecting industrial lands while ensuring that the city leverages the

region's light rail transit investment by ensuring robust ridership at all station locations. This tension has yielded lively discussions within the Commission, the summary of which is outlined below."

- Commissioners expressed appreciation for the addition of the underlined text.
- Commissioners stated that a key tension that is not explicitly mentioned is equitable housing for all residents. Our nation has a history of developing housing in areas with contaminated soil and poor air quality.
- Commissioners suggested moving this paragraph to the No New Residential Uses section.
- Commissioners noted that the draft letter explicitly states the Planning Commission strongly recommends that affordable housing and family-sized housing should not be located in industrial areas.
- Commissioners suggested the following edit to replace the underlined text: "This calls for careful equitable policy consideration that strikes a balance between the potentially competing demands of protecting industrial lands while ensuring that the city leverages the region's light rail transit investment by promoting robust ridership at all station locations."
- All Commissioners supported the proposed substitute text edit. The new text will remain in the Unique and Challenging Characteristics of Seattle's Industrial Lands section.

Stronger Protections for Industrially Zoned Land

~~"Industrial lands near high-capacity transit are at the highest risk for development pressure to convert to non-industrial and maritime uses. Even piecemeal changes could result in incremental adverse impacts to the industrial sector."~~

- Commissioners asked for more information on why these sentences were suggested to be removed. Ms. Murdock stated that the Commissioner who suggested this edit was not present, but it was her understanding that the intent was to remove language that might be construed as overly protective of industrial areas. This comment was made at the very end of the June 24 meeting and there was not time to discuss this edit further during that meeting.
- Commissioners asked if the recommended 2020-2021 Comprehensive Plan amendment that was presented earlier in the meeting to remove the potential for piecemeal changes to industrial lands would make these sentences redundant or unnecessary. Ms. Murdock stated that OPCD has recommended adoption of the proposed amendment that would strengthen protections for industrial lands by limiting removal of land from M/ICs to major Comprehensive Plan updates or the result of a City-supported comprehensive study. However, this amendment has not yet been adopted and therefore the comment in the letter is not redundant.
- Commissioners stated the deleted text is aligned with the policy direction demonstrated by the Commission in the final draft letter and is consistent with the Mayor's strategy and proposed amendments.
- Commissioners stated that the deleted text does not depart from the Commission's support for leveraging high-capacity transit. This issue can be addressed further during the EIS scoping process.
- All Commissioners supported keeping the original text and rejecting the proposed deletion.

No New Residential Uses

"This strategy recommends no new residential uses on industrial and maritime lands with limited adjustments to existing allowances in transitional zones to support industry and arts entrepreneurship opportunities. The Planning Commission has significant concerns around allowing residential uses

outright in industrial areas and agrees with the intent of this strategy. We understand that this strategy's current proposal only includes expansion of residential uses such as caretaker units where workers can live onsite. Residential uses would need to be part of an industrial facility and would have to be consistent with the industrial nature of the area.”

- Some Commissioners supported adding the word “outright” and others did not.
- Commissioners who did not support adding the word did not think it was necessary
- Commissioners stated that while the edit is not a major change, it highlights at least some of the nuance of allowing residential uses in industrial areas.
- Commissioners stated that opening industrial areas to housing is not a good idea but perhaps limited residential uses could be allowed under specific conditions. This potential should be studied.
- Commissioners suggested that an environmental impact assessment should be conducted before any residential uses are considered to determine appropriate mitigation measures and programs.
- Ms. Murdock stated that four Commissioners supported including the word “outright” and seven Commissioners either did not support this edit or were ambivalent. The proposed edit will not be included.

No New Residential Uses

“Seattle is experiencing an ongoing housing affordability crisis that has skewed the city’s jobs/housing balance. Many industrial workers will continue to commute long distances while housing affordability challenges in Seattle are so difficult to address. However, we are concerned that allowing even minimal residential uses into industrial areas at this time could further increase pressure on these lands and increase the likelihood of more encroachment into the industrial zones. The Commission has reviewed several Comprehensive Plan amendment applications in recent years requesting changes to industrial designations to allow other uses including housing. We have consistently expressed our support for maintaining the M/IC boundaries and opposition to encroachment by other uses.”

- Commissioners did not support adding the words “at this time” and did not think it was necessary.
- Ms. Murdock stated that the proposed edit will not be included.

No New Residential Uses

~~“Should any residential uses in industrial areas be allowed, raise concerns of environmental justice and possible disenfranchisement will need to be addressed. Industrial areas may not be suitable for residential uses, considering both current and future conditions. There are environmental and public health impacts associated with allowing residential uses in or adjacent to industrial areas, as people could be living very close to freight traffic, noxious fumes, contaminants, and noise. Portions of SODO, South Park, Ballard and Interbay will experience sea level rise. Additional housing should not be built in these locations based on future impacts. Environmental review of this strategy should study and document these impacts.”~~

- Some Commissioners stated that they did not support adding “Should any” as that edit indicates potential support for allowing residential uses in industrial areas. Environmental concerns related to housing in industrial areas would need to be considered.
- Commissioners stated that planners have an obligation to ensure access to high opportunity areas. Issues such as pollution and lack of tree canopy raise significant concerns.

- Commissioners suggested substituting “considered” for “allowed” to encourage further study of residential uses in industrial areas on a case-by-case basis. This would allow this potential change to be studied, but not dismissed altogether.
- Commissioners supported restoring the first sentence to the original text. Commissioners stated that this original text represented the consensus of the Commission.
- Commissioners suggested adding “serious” before the word “concerns” to emphasize the significance of the Commission’s comments on this issue.
- Commissioners stated that they could support removing “Additional housing should not be built in these locations based on future impacts.”
- Commissioners suggested revising the final sentence of this paragraph to “Environmental review of this strategy should provide detailed analyses of these environmental impacts.”
- Ms. Murdock stated that the proposed edits to the first sentence will not be included. The word “serious” will be added before the word “concerns”; the “Additional housing...” sentence will be deleted; and the “Environmental review...” sentence will be revised as suggested above.

ACTION: Commissioner Patience Malaba moved to approve the Industrial and Maritime Strategy recommendations letter as amended. Co-Chair Rick Mohler seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed.

Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 pm.