

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

JANUARY 23, 2003

MINUTES

Approved February 13, 2003

Commissioners in Attendance: John Owen, Chair, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Steve Sheehy, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Paul Tomita, George Blomberg, Grace Chien.

Commissioners Absent: Anjali Bhagat, Angela Brooks, Gregory Davis, Denise Lathrop

Staff: Marty Curry, Executive Director; Barbara Wilson, Staff

Visitors: Jackie Kirn, OPM; Bob Morgan, and John Taylor, City Council Central staff

Call to Order

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the January 9, 2003 Full Commission meeting were approved unanimously as written.

PRESENTATION

Northgate Briefing Update

Jackie Kirn, Office of Policy Management, briefed the Commission on the Mayor's Northgate Package. The Mayor plans to announce his proposals at a public meeting in February followed by an open house where people will get more information and have opportunity to comment. The proposals will be part of a legislative package that will include a series of resolutions, ordinances, and code revisions. They will focus on changes to the GDP, development agreements, open space requirements, actions to implement the 5th Avenue Streetscape Plan, the library and community center implementation, storm water drainage, a P-Patch and design guidelines.

OPM is making rounds to the community councils to gauge community responses to these proposals. In addition a meeting is scheduled February 6 with the citizens group that worked with DCLU staff on the Northgate design guidelines and major property owners to add more specific language on treatment of super blocks.

In response to Chair John Owen's question about the Planning Commissions role in the process, Jackie Kirn stated she would like the Planning Commission to play a role in the presentation and community process. She would also like a subcommittee of the Planning Commission to meet with OPM to discuss code revisions and the public process. She noted that the Executive does not have a clear idea yet as to the expected level of public participation for the public forum and open house.

Commissioner Paul Tomita asked if the Mayor's proposal would address transportation issues identified in the 5th Avenue Streetscape Plan. Jackie Kirn responded that the package will include a 5th Avenue Streetscape resolution. She stated that King County has received a \$1.5 million grant for transportation improvements on 5th Avenue will also provide a match to this grant. Ms. Kirn also noted that the City has hired the firm Huckell/Weinman to examine options for a coordinated a transportation analysis which is part of the proposed package.

Commissioner George Blomberg asked what the ordinances/package says about private players. Jackie Kirn responded that this package is really focused on public actions. Commissioner Blomberg urged some commitment to public-private cooperation in this package, stating that this is an opportunity for making such a policy statement and memorializing it through the legislative package. Ms. Kirn noted that there is agreement to coordinate on the 5th Avenue streetscape improvements at the Bon Mall entrance and the library facility. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen stated that he assumed that this type of coordination and commitment is what the Development Agreement covers.

John Owen voiced concern that the Planning Commission is seeing package at the same time as the public and would not have time to review the plan before the public meeting. He stated that he likes the transportation focus and thinks that the analysis should guide the agreement with Simon. Jackie responded that the timing is not perfect for the transportation analysis to be ready to use in the development agreement, but that the results of the transportation analysis could lead to additional and slightly different agreements. She also noted that she hopes to have more discussions with the Planning Commission subcommittee.

Finally Jackie mentioned they had made progress with Simon Properties and Security Properties on the South lot. She ended by reiterating OPM's invitation to work with the Commission on this challenging set of issues and opportunities.

Chair John Owen stated that the Commission would identify a small group of Commissioners who would participate in a subcommittee with OPM. Jackie Kirn stated she would like to give the Commission a more in depth presentation about the plan.

Chair Owen thanked Jackie Kirn for the timely update.

Chair's Report

Chair John Owen reported on several issues and upcoming events. He introduced and welcomed Barbara Wilson, the Commission's new Planning Analyst who will begin work on January 29. The Commissioners each introduced themselves and welcomed Barbara.

Monorail/SPMA: Chair Owen reminded the Commission of the Monorail/SPMA EIS Scoping community workshops from January 21 – 30. Commissioners who attended the first few meetings reported they were well run and had high attendance. They noted that

there might be confusion about the fact that this was part of the EIS Scoping and not just another community forum.

Commissioners then discussed the EIS scoping, offering some of their suggestions of what the Commission should include in their letter. Mimi Sheridan flagged her concern that SPMA did not address electricity demand issues in much detail in the programmatic EIS and should be called upon to do so in this project level EIS. Steve Sheehy stated that now that the voters have spoken he wants to be sure that the project happens, but is done well. Therefore he urged that the Commission's comments be directed to producing an EIS that addresses all of the issues that will inform final decisions about the project. Commissioner Grace Chien asked whether the Commission was making recommendations to SPMA or the City and where SPC fits into the process within DCLU. Marty Curry stated that SPC would give recommendation to both the City and SPMA depending on the issues. She also noted that the Commission comments on both the scoping and the Draft EIS for major projects and plans such as this. Chair John Owen thanked Commissioners for their comments; Marty Curry committed to getting a draft letter out to the Monorail subcommittee by early next week for their review. Then all Commissioners will review the final letter before it is submitted February 7, 2003.

Meeting with DCLU Director: John reported on his lunch with Diane Sugimura, DCLU's new director. Ms. Sugimura is interested in the Commission being involved in the commercial land use code update that is a high priority for DCLU and the Executive in addition to its work on Comp Plan update and other major projects. Steve Sheehy asked Commissioners to consider what type of deliverable product the Commission could offer. After several questions about what role the Commission could or should play, Chair John Owen suggested a small group meet with Diane for further discussion and clarification. John Owen volunteered as did Mimi Sheridan. John noted that Val Thomas, recently retired Commissioner has agreed to work on this issue also.

PROJECT UPDATES

South Wallingford Plan

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan reported on the review by four commissioners of the South Wallingford Plan Amendment. They have drafted a letter and want Commission input on it. In the letter, they have asked for the plan to draw a more explicit connection to the Wallingford neighborhood plan. They also have identified concerns about the impacts of downzone proposals on the future viability of the maritime industry. In response to a question from Chair John Owen, Mimi Sheridan stated that Wallingford met its growth targets several years ago and has no job targets. In fact South Wallingford is outside of the official Wallingford urban village boundaries but has experienced growth near the Lake Union shoreline.

The plan amendment also identifies recommendations to down zone several sites for open space and to develop as much open space as possible. Mimi Sheridan noted that the Commission letter recommends prioritizing the open space requests. In response to

question of process from George Bloomberg, Marty Curry outlined the timeline. City Council plans to recognize the plan amendment and adopt the matrix later this spring, but the actual DCLU analysis of proposed land use code changes will not be completed until late 2003 at the earliest. Commissioners approved the draft letter with revisions suggested in the discussion. Staff will make these changes and submit the letter to Councilmember Licata prior to the presentation to Council in late February.

Housing Choices

Marty Curry reported that Commissioners Denise Lathrop, John Owen and Val Thomas will brief the City Council next Monday on the proposed public process for “housing choices” – cottage housing and detached ADU’s. She also reported that staff is moving forward with logistics for the focus groups and public forum.

2003 Work Plan and Commission Retreat

Chair Owen passed out a sign up sheet to determine the best days for the Commission retreat where a work plan and priorities for the Commission will be determined. The Retreat will consist of two half day sessions in February or March. SPC staff will follow up and help the Commission find a date. Chairman Owen apologized that the agenda did not allow for more discussion of each the initial list of projects and activities and how these fit the Commission’s criteria and said we would find additional time for this discussion before the retreat.

Monorail/Seattle Popular Monorail Authority (SPMA)

Darryl Smith pointed out that the Commission and the public has scant time to prepare scoping comments and asked if the Commission should request more time for the EIS scoping to allow it and the public adequate time to respond. Mathew Kitchen suggested that the Commission stick to the schedule set by SPMA and provide as detailed comments as possible. Others noted that the SPMA has stated in their workshops that they will continue listening to the public’s concerns and incorporating them into the EIS analysis as they go along. There was consensus for Matthew Kitchen’s proposal and John Owen reminded Commissioners to get their comments to staff immediately in order to meet the February 7th deadline.

Northgate Follow-up

Chair John Owen asked for volunteers to work with staff and Jackie Kirn on the Northgate issue. Commissioners George Blomberg, Jeanne Krikawa, Mimi Sheridan and John Owen volunteered for this task. Commissioners agreed with Commissioner Matthew Kitchen who noted that the Commission needed to be comfortable with both the content and the process to actively participate in this process as an advocate and/or facilitator. Jeanne Krikawa stated her concern with an open house format for the public event. She commented that the input at an open house is often “noise,” not a message as would result from a more structured process.

ADJOURN: Chair John Owen adjourned the meeting at 9:25 a.m.