



# City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Tony To, Chair  
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

## SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION JULY 12, 2007 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

### Commissioners in Attendance

Tony To-Chair, Linda Amato, Mahlon Clements, Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Chris Fiori, Marshall Foster, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Martin Kaplan, Kay Knapton, Amalia Leighton, M. Michelle Mattox, Kirsten Pennington

### Commissioners Absent

Kevin McDonald, Steve Sheehy

### Commission Staff

Barbara Wilson-Director, Andrea Clinkscales, Intern

### Guests

Diane Sugimura, Mike Podowski, DPD; Marc Griffin, Port of Seattle; Karen Kiest, Darryl Vange, Guillermo Romano, Seattle Design Commission

### In Attendance

Lise Kenworthy, SMBC; Mark Johnston, Magnolia Chamber of Commerce; John Kane, BINMIC; Phillip Webb, Greater Queen Anne Chamber of Commerce; John Coney, Uptown Alliance; Mike Merritt, Port of Seattle

*Please Note: Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript but instead represent key points and the basis of the discussion.*

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Chair Tony To.

### COMMISSION BUSINESS

- Approve June 14, 2007 Minutes
- Approve June 28, 2007 Minutes

### **ACTION:**

**Commissioner Martin Kaplan moved to approve the June 14 minutes. Commissioner M. Michelle Mattox Fiori seconded the motion. The June 14, 2007 minutes were approved unanimously.**

**Commissioner Mahlon Clements moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Chris Fiori seconded the motion. The June 14 and June 28, 2007 minutes were approved unanimously.**

▪ **Chairs Report**

Chair Tony To noted the upcoming Planning Commission meetings and events. He called special attention to the press conference on July 18 where the Commission will release the Industrial Lands Strategy report. The press conference will be held from 12:00 - 12:45 pm in the City Hall Boards and Commission's room.

Chair To noted that the Commission will once again take a break from Full Commission meetings during the month of August. He added that the standing committee meetings will still occur.

**COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

▪ **HNUC presentation of Commission's Affordable Housing Action Agenda**  
- **HNUC Chair Jerry Finrow & Seattle Planning Commission Staff**

Commissioner Finrow stated that the HNUC been working on a draft document that is ready for comment, review, and improvement. He added that the Action Agenda, in addition to other actions, includes a list of potential Comprehensive Plan language changes that the HNUC committee has identified relative to housing affordability. Commissioner Finrow noted that the Commission has been concerned with this topic for some time. He noted that we held a roundtable discussion earlier this year which generated series ideas for of strategies that the Commission will recommend for affordable housing and will offer recommendations to create a more favorable housing environment.

Commissioner Finrow went over the document, which gives a general overview and then goes into more detail and specifically lists priorities, proposed strategies, current Comprehensive Plan language, recommendations, and comments. He stated that Commission hasn't played an active role in the past in advocating Comprehensive Plan language changes but has taken a more reactive role. He added that the committee is considering that the Commission potentially becomes a proponent of Comprehensive Plan language changes. He further noted that the HNUC prioritized the issues that came from discussions. He asked that the Commission please review the document and send any suggestions or changes via email. He added that the HNUC will continue moving forward with this at their next meeting.

Chair To stated that current Comprehensive Plan language primarily addresses very low-income housing, and that the Commission is proposing looking at a broader range of affordability.

Executive Director Wilson stated that the Comprehensive Plan amendment process is one action item in the Commission Affordable Housing Action Agenda. She noted that Incentive Zoning and Multi-family Tax Exemption are two other examples of Commission efforts and that a product near the end of the year will likely be a comprehensive document for an Affordable Housing Action Agenda.

Commissioner Chris Fiori asked for additional time to review the document. Commissioner Finrow noted that Commissioners should take time to digest the document outside the meeting and then send comments to Ms. Wilson.

Ms. Wilson reiterated that being a proponent of Comprehensive Plan amendments would be a change for the Commission and that historically, the Commission has taken more of a reviewer role. She added that Commissioners could also consider working with Councilmembers or housing groups to move forward with amendments. Ms. Wilson asked if any strategies were missing and if those included are heading in the right direction. She also asked Commissioners to consider and discuss the possibility of the Commission as proponents of particular amendments.

Commissioner Mark Johnson stated that he wasn't sure at what level the Commission should involve themselves in proposing Comprehensive Plan amendments. He added that he was curious if there has been a concern regarding any negative consequences to being proactive. Commissioner Johnson stated that while he believes it is in the Commission purview that we should also consider the Commission's objectivity as reviewer in deciding how to proceed. Commissioner Linda Amato noted that she would like the Commission to be proactive but is unsure of the cons to this. She added that the Commission has taken a strong stance before. Commissioner Kirsten Pennington mentioned that, if the Commission is more proactive, then things could get political and lobbyists may pursue the Commission. She added that she ultimately agrees that the Commission should be more proactive. Commissioner Fiori stated that if people defer to the Commission's judgment, being proactive could be problematic. He added that it is good to get the conversation started, but that it maybe better to let others handle the amendments.

Commissioner Martin Kaplan stated that he hadn't considered the issue to this extent but affirmed that the Commission has made strong comments in the past. He added that he was not sure that the Comprehensive Plan changes would be that big of a step to take. Commissioner Johnson stated that the changes could be an opportunity to take a stance and review an issue ahead of time. Commissioner Kaplan stated that, when it comes to Comprehensive Plan amendments, the Commission is like one leg of a three-legged chair – with the Executive and Legislative branches still making the ultimate decision. Chair To said that, in regard to issues like DADU's and cottage housing, the Commission spent 10 years working on them and ran demonstration projects. He added that the Commission has worked with DPD on DADU's and the Adult Cabaret issue to perform extensive studies and make substantive recommendations. Chair To noted that these are both good examples of how the Commission has taken a strong stance on issues.

Commissioner Finrow suggested attacking important issues, like maybe one or two strategies instead of 12. He urged everyone to look through the document and determine the most important strategies. He proposed going forward with two issues to really make an impact. He added that the other issue is that the Affordable Housing Action Agenda has more pieces than just the Comprehensive Plan component as it also encompasses Incentive Zoning, Multi-family Tax Exemption, DADU's, and the Cottage Housing issues. Commissioner Finrow affirmed that the HNUC has been pursuing a whole range of issues relative to affordable housing and that the Commission has made some real contributions but that doing something with the Comprehensive Plan is best.

Chair To referred to the document's end sheet and its work plan so Commissioners are aware of when items are due. He noted that the final document should be out by next October and will go through the HNUC and then to the Full Commission. Chair To invited everyone to the HNUC meetings.

Ms. Wilson stated that a section about metrics is needed in this document. She noted that Housing policy #30 and #31 refer to affordable housing metrics and that it has come to our attention that the City has no formal mechanism to monitor these metrics. Ms. Wilson stated that the HNUC decided that a work group is needed to tackle the metrics issue and should include a representative from the SPC, DPD, Council Central Staff, the Office of Housing, and Councilmember Rasmussen's office. She added that this will help spell out how to improve the City's affordable housing metrics. Ms Wilson requested that the Commissioners contact Casey Mills if they want to participate in the July or August meetings.

Commissioner Foster stated that it makes sense to link this document and its recommendations to recently completed housing inventories. He recommended better definition of the problem and how the Commission will respond.

- **Design Commission Report**

- **Karen Kiest, Chair; Darryl Vange, Vice-Chair; Guillermo Romano, Executive Director**

Chair To welcomed the Design Commission Chair, Vice chair and Director. He noted that the Design Commission and the Seattle Planning Commission have had a history of collaboration with issues such as light rail, the viaduct, and the waterfront. He noted that the Chairs of the two Commissions meet periodically to check in and that we agreed it would be nice to invite the Chairs to our meeting so we can better understand the Design Commission and keep communications open about how we can best collaborate and communicate on issues where we both have a role..

Design Chair Karen Kiest thanked the Commission for the opportunity to come and have conversation. She stated that she met with the Planning Commission Chairs in January to talk about our work plans. She also noted that the two Commissions will work together more formally beginning in August on the University Link light rail review.

Executive Director Guillermo Romano provided a Design Review handout that explains the Design Review process. He noted that the purpose of the handout is to explain to the community the process, types of projects, numbers of membership, leadership, etc. Mr. Romano provided annual reports and maps to show projects and hours invested. He stated that the Design Commission has 10 volunteer design professional members that are responsible for reviewing all the Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) in the city; including any project using City money or City. Mr. Romano noted that proponents of projects come to Design Commission meetings and the Design Commission plays an advisory role to City Council and the Mayor to ensure that the City's interests are met.

Ms. Kiest spoke about future collaboration with the Planning Commission. She noted that the Design Commission looks at private and public planning and design issues. She suggested that current overlaps include the University District redesign, light rail, and Northbay and there are opportunities to collaborate and to make sure we communicate effectively. She noted that the Design Commission reviews a lot of capital improvement projects, but also now reviews a lot of street and alley vacations, sky bridges, and subterranean easements, which caused opportunity to also work with Design Review Boards. Ms. Kiest wants to have a clear message so the public knows what the differences are in the review role of each commission. The Design Commission would like more collaboration with the Planning Commission on right-of-way and transportation projects.

Design Commission Vice-Chair Darryl Vange stated that there is a clear distinction between the Design Commission and the Design Review Board. He noted that the Design Commission looks at the public realm and publicly funded projects whereas the DRB's review private development. Mr. Vange noted that both their work and that of the DRB compliments and is complimented by the work of the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Finrow stated that he would like the Design Commission to identify Comprehensive Plan issues as they might identify in their work especially if there are inconsistencies or need for clarification about overarching policy. Mr. Finrow requested a list of the Design Commission's projects so that the Planning Commission can know which are relevant to SPC work.

Ms. Kiest stated that the Center City open space, South Lake Union, South Downtown, and Seattle Center are all projects that both Commissions have a role in. She added that the King Street Station workshops and inter-modal transportation issues there are good opportunities to coordinate. Commissioner Finrow suggested that the Commissions meet on quarterly basis to talk about what projects need collaboration.

Chair To thanked the Design Commission representatives for coming to the meeting and noted that we look forward to continued collaboration.

- **Presentation and Discussion: Interbay Overlay Proposal**
  - **Diane Sugimura & Mike Podowski, DPD & Mark Griffin, Port of Seattle**

Chair To called for recusal and disclosure on the matter of providing comment and advice to the Seattle City Council on the Mayor's proposed Interbay Overlay Proposal.

**Recusal & Disclosure:**

- **Commissioner M. Michelle Mattox disclosed that her firm, Chiles & Company, has clients in industrial areas.**
- **Commissioner Colie Hough Beck, Hough Beck & Baird, disclosed that the Port is one of her clients.**

Chair To reported that the SPC received an initial briefing from the Mayors' office, DPD, John Creighton from the Port of Seattle, and a SPC commissioner regarding the Interbay Overlay Proposal. Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck has asked the SPC to review this proposal and provide comment as soon as possible, hopefully by the end July.

Diane Sugimura gave an overview of the proposal. She noted that DPD has met with the BINMIC twice. She noted that they were in general agreement with the Interbay Overlay proposal. Ms. Sugimura stated they gave a presentation to the MIC and that there were some concerns regarding the map and the company City Ice.

Mike Podowski showed a draft of the overlay map and explained the handouts. He noted that the main idea is to preserve industrial zoned land for industrial development. Mr. Podowski stated that the site is zoned IG1 which is one of the most intensive industrial zones. He added that this zoning designation currently allows for industrial uses and non-industrial uses such as office, retail, and research and

development laboratories. He noted the overlay district is being proposed on a 99 acre site. Mr. Podowski noted that the overlay limits office use over the total lot as opposed to lot-by lot. Research and Development would be limited in the new overlay as well. He added that the overlay clusters different types of developments in certain portions of the site, then places maximum caps on their size. This would allow the accumulation of non-industrial uses in one area and industrial uses in another. The industrial use area is referred to as a “set-aside” area and includes approximately 1/3 of site. A sequencing provision has been developed as well which would require a certain amount of the industrial build out before the commercial build out is allowed. He noted that, in regards to sequencing, the industrial use must be developed and completed before a permit is issued for office, research & development, and retail. He added that once the set-aside area’s guaranteed minimums are met, other uses may be then developed. Mr. Podowski asserts that these provisions go beyond the standard methods for protecting a guaranteed minimum of industrial development

Ms. Sugimura stated that Interbay is a large unique site that is currently not well used, and that the Port has had a variety of ideas of how to develop the land in the past. She stated that the City was not supportive of the Port’s idea a few years ago to include residential on the site.

Mr. Griffin noted that representatives from BINMIC and the MICs will express their views during today’s public comment. He added that representatives from Magnolia, Queen Anne, Ballard, the Queen Anne Chamber of Commerce, and the Uptown Alliance are all generally supportive.

Commissioner Kaplan asked whether the proposal allows for big box retail. Mr. Podowski responded that big box retail requires more space than what is allowed in Interbay. Mr. Podowski stated that there is a need to allow for some flexibility to serve people working in the area (i.e. lunch spots and the like), without opening the door for big box retail, which would need more land than what is available there. Mr. Griffin noted that the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods do not want to see retail competing with industrial.

Commissioner Kaplan asked about transportation plans for the area. Mr. Griffin stated that the key objective was to separate the heavy truck traffic from the car traffic by keeping separate the industrial and non-industrial. He added that a new truck surface road will be built just to the west of the City Ice Cold Storage and Trident facilities. Mr. Griffin noted that this gives the ability to centralize utilities as the utilities are now scattered.

Mr. Griffin noted a new road along the greenbelt will integrate bicycle / pedestrian paths and sustainable storm water run-off systems. The road will act as a primary means of access to the site to accommodate non-industrial traffic from the ramp of the Magnolia Bridge. He added that there will also be a new right-of-way along 15<sup>th</sup> Ave W because the Magnolia Bridge won’t be able to accommodate traffic when the site reaches full build-out.

Commissioner Fiori asked Mr. Griffin what infrastructure they would like to see on the site. Mr. Griffin replied that the site needs some environment remediation and added that they would like to see a mix of uses on the site. Mr. Griffin stated that significant infrastructure needs to be built and that the Port needs to recoup those costs by creating a mix of other uses which will have different rates of return.

Commissioner Eanes stated that he was not sure how this proposal protects industrial land. He added that of the 99 acres, only 1/3 is preserved for industrial use – this doesn’t seem to be consistent with what the overlay proponents claim about the proposal preserving industrial lands.

Ms. Sugimura responded much of the site is a parking lot now and the City wants to see more use of the site. Ms. Sugimura noted that the mix of uses allows for infrastructure investment recuperation. She added that a lot of infrastructure is needed for the site to function well.

Commission Eanes expressed his concern regarding single-occupancy vehicle traffic and asked this be seriously considered.

Commissioner Foster wondered about the open space requirements and the amenities for workers. He asked how the open space requirements compare to open space requirements in other major employment centers. Commissioner Foster also shared his concern about the longevity of the industrial set-aside. He stated that there was nothing in the proposal that requires industrial tenants, per say, but rather it requires industrial uses.

Commissioner Linda Amato asked if, regarding the arterials around the site, any traffic studies have been conducted to see if roads can handle prospective loads. Mr. Griffin stated that the Port conducted an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that analyzed traffic and subsequently proposed roadway improvement and mitigation measures. He stated that they will look to those measures when conducting environmental review during the permitting phase.

Commissioner Amato wondered if they are going to work with Metro to bring bus service to area. Mr. Griffin answered that it was part of the EIS and they are reviewing this consideration.

Commissioner Pennington asked what the future implications of the new overlay district are for the rest of the city and what they see as the implications for other parcels of industrial land in Seattle. She wondered if this type of overlay will be requested in other areas of the city. Mr. Griffin stated that a unique site like this hasn't been developed for a long time and that the sequencing component will dissuade developers from seeking this type of overlay for other areas

Commissioner Clements stated that the proposal does not genuinely describe the reality of Interbay because of its exceptional nature and because it's unlikely that another major manufacturer will move here. Commissioner Clements added that he thinks the overlay an interesting solution, but that it leaves many issues regarding industrial land use policy unresolved.

Commissioner Foster stated that he felt it was an interesting zoning tool but wondered if there was any discussion about concurrency requirements for infrastructure – like for road improvements. Mr. Griffin replied that the infrastructure is for all the mix of uses on the site and that it will be phased in.

Commissioner Finrow asked if the Design Commission is going to be involved on this project. Commissioner Finrow suggested including design review on this project that involves the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods and the Design Commission in some way. Mr. Griffin noted that they have already prepared a preliminary set of design guidelines and they anticipate putting forth formal design and sustainability guidelines to bring integrity to the review process, which will include community dialogue.

Commissioner Eanes asked, in terms of the Port's overall development, does this development generate revenue. Mr. Griffin answered that it will and the goal is to generate revenue from the sites that are currently not generating revenue.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Coney of the Uptown Alliance encouraged the Planning Commission to move forward the Interbay overlay proposal for adoption by City Council. He noted that this is a major economic development issue for the area, which has been waiting for a good industrial development. Mr. Coney added that this will bring jobs, increase economic activity, tax revenues, and environmental-friendly development. Mr. Coney noted that the plan is flexible and yet certain enough to maintain the Port's land for a viable project. Mr. Coney asked the Commissioners to please review the transportation planning issues regarding freight mobility during peak hours after build-out occurs on the Elliot / 15<sup>th</sup> corridor. He requested that the Commission ensure that, in regards to 4<sup>th</sup> street access to Magnolia by W Armory Way, the Port supports bike / pedestrian access improvements.

Phillip Web of the Greater Queen Anne Chamber of Commerce stated that he was very comfortable with the design of this project. He added that he feels it will generate revenue and create a business and employment center.

John Kane of the BINMIC stated that this is just one parcel in the BINMIC and that support within the BINMIC is not unanimous. He added that some people want the area reserved only for maritime industrial use. He added that they see Korry moving there as a positive and that Korry could leave Seattle if this proposal does not pass. He added that this overlay is very specific for this parcel and would not work anywhere else in the city. Mr. Kane expressed his concern that some developers may see this as an opportunity to do similar development elsewhere in Seattle. In this case, the City could face potential lawsuits and / or serious push back from large developers. He added that the Port would also be criticized. Mr. Kane stated that he was comfortable with the transportation plan and that he likes the plan because it keeps City Ice and Trident on the site. He felt that the Port has to get higher rents from other uses to offset the other costs for the site, and that they would lose money if all uses on the site were industrial. Mr. Kane stated that he does not approve of any small box retail. He noted that the Port says it will not aim to create a destination area here and but rather it is committed to workers there. He wonders if a written agreement regarding these points is needed.

Mark Johnston of the Magnolia Chamber of Commerce stated that he approves of the plan and that the area is in dire need of an upgrade.

Lise Kenworthy of the Seattle Marine Business Coalition stated that she is very supportive of Korry obtaining a lease in Seattle. She noted Korry is concerned about sharing the cost of infrastructure. She noted that there is a need to look at transportation issues with the site. Ms. Kenworthy noted that she was puzzled by Mr. Griffin's response to the EIS question. She noted that the EIS merely examined the Monorail and not other modes of transportation.

Ms. Wilson noted that the Executive Committee and the Land Use and Transportation Committee will be further discussing the Interbay overlay proposal. There will be further discussion at the next Full Commission meeting as well. She added that SPC's goal is to provide comment to Councilmember Steinbrueck, per the Executive's request, by the end of July.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Tony To adjourned meeting at 5:25pm.