



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair

Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present:	Michael Austin, Eileen Canola, David Goldberg, Tim Parham, Julio Sanchez, Jamie Stroble, David Shelton, Lauren Squires
Commissioners Absent:	Keiko Budech, Sandra Fried, Grace Kim, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Marj Press, Patti Wilma
Commission Staff:	Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; Katy Haima, Planning Analyst; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Administrative Assistant
Guests:	Nathan Torgelson and Roberta Baker, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections; Yifan Zhang

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

Vice Chair Tim Parham called the meeting to order at 7:33 am. He provided an overview of the meeting agenda and upcoming Commission meetings.

Announcements

Executive Director Vanessa Murdock reminded the Commissioners about upcoming community events.

Discussion: Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) Recommendations

Executive Director Vanessa Murdock provided an overview of the outcome of the MHA Recommendations discussion at the April 13 Commission meeting. Ms. Murdock then walked the Commission through the remaining items that were not discussed at the previous meeting.

If you would like to view the MHA Recommendations presentation, it is included in the supporting documents found in the minutes' section of our website.

Commission Discussion

- Recommendation #7: Include language on leveraging MHA funds generated by the payment-in-lieu option to incentivize production of affordable and market-rate family-sized housing.
- Recommendation #9: Consider adding language that suggests bold innovations in new building types and housing choices; there are examples around the country and the world that can be referenced.

- Recommendation #10: The Office of Housing is already monitoring progress in achieving equitable development outcomes. This recommendation emphasizes the need for ongoing monitoring.
- Recommendation #11: This recommendation should be more explicit about distributing growth across the city to address areas that have been segregated and have experienced disinvestment for decades.
- Maintain recommendation #2 and revise it to make a more direct recommendation, rather than an observation.
- Organize the letter to highlight priority recommendations according to phase of implementation.
- Close the letter with an offer to provide additional ideas as the process moves forward.

Briefing: Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

Nathan Torgelson, Director, and Roberta Baker, Land Use Division Director, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI)

Mr. Torgelson provided an overview of SDCI's current work items, including review of the following projects:

- Proposed expansion of the Washington State Convention Center
- Expedia Campus Master Use Permit
- University of Washington Campus Master Plan
- Major Public Project Noise Variance for the SR 520 project
- Homeless encampments, shelters, and the proposed Navigation Center
- Innovative structures, similar to detached accessory dwelling units, to house the homeless in single-family zones

Mr. Torgelson described progress on developing a new permit tracking system, as well as inter-departmental discussions related to revising the building code to allow for higher wood-frame construction. Mr. Torgelson introduced Robert Baker, director of SDCI's Land Use Division, to discuss the department's work on affordable housing issues. Ms. Baker provided an overview of a new streamlined review and permitting process for publicly-funded affordable housing projects. This process includes inter-departmental pre-submittal conferences and early design guidance. Facilitators have been appointed within the department to move these projects through the process faster.

Mr. Torgelson mentioned an effort to develop policy recommendations for unreinforced masonry buildings. Retrofitting these buildings is expensive, but demolition could result in significant displacement issues. The state has allocated funding for a statewide inventory of these buildings, which could lead to statewide policy recommendations. The City Council recently passed legislation to raise the SEPA thresholds for review of projects. The thresholds have been restored to previously adopted levels, except for projects in light rail station areas. The Mayor recently sent legislation to the City Council to address problematic vacant buildings. The legislation would make it easier to demolish these structures. SDCI sponsored a South Seattle Home Fair in February to offer free resources to renters, landlords and homeowners. The event was very successful and the department hopes to sponsor similar events annually.

Commission Discussion

- Streamlining of SDCI's processes for affordable housing projects is helpful. However, there is a disconnect with field inspectors from Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle City Light, and the Seattle Department of Transportation during construction of these projects.
- Similar streamlining approaches should be considered for MHA "performance" projects that choose to build on-site affordable housing. SDCI could help incentivize performance through streamlined permitting and/or design review.
- The Commissioners asked about the status of the short-term rental legislation. SDCI recently issued a SEPA Determination of Non-Significance for this legislation. Slight tweaks will be required in the land use code, but short-term rental licensing will be the responsibility of the City's Finance and Administrative Services Department.
- The Commissioners asked if SDCI is considering amending the building code to incorporate considerations related to climate change, such as sea level rise, heat, and extreme weather events.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Minutes Approval

Vice Chair Parham asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes from the April 13th meeting.

Commissioner Michael Austin moved to adopt the April 13, 2017 minutes. Commissioner Julio Sanchez seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00am.