



## City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Grace Kim, Chair

Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, December 08, 2016

Approved Meeting Minutes

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Commissioners Present: Michael Austin, Keiko Budech, Eileen Canola, Sandra Fried, Grace Kim, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry, Marj Press, Julio Sanchez, David Shelton, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble, Patti Wilma

Commissioners Absent: Lauren Craig, Tim Parham

Commission Staff: Katy Haima, Planning Analyst, John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Valerie Kinast, Interim Executive Director

In Attendance: Cindi Barker, David Goldberg, Doug MacDonald

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

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Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

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

#### **Chair's Report**

Chair Grace Kim called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm. She reminded the Commissioners of several upcoming meeting dates.

#### **Minutes Approval**

Commissioner Michael Austin moved to adopt the November 8, 2016 minutes. Commissioner David Shelton seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed. Commissioner Jake McKinstry abstained.

#### **Announcements**

Valerie Kinast, Seattle Planning Commission Interim Executive Director, made several announcements. She recognized the newest member of the Planning Commission, David Goldberg, who will be serving on the Land Use and Transportation Committee. The Commission's annual holiday party will be held in January. The Nominating Committee has received a list of interested candidates for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Chairs and will be meeting in January to nominate a slate of officers to be voted on at the January 12<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting. Several Commissioners have been attending the various HALA focus group meetings, Councilmember Johnson's community design workshops, and the Department of Neighborhoods' open house meetings. These Commissioners will be asked to report on their observations of these meetings at the January 12<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting.

#### **Briefing: Seattle Parks and Recreation 2017 Parks Development Plan and Gap Analysis**

Susanne Rockwell from Seattle Parks and Recreation's Planning and Development Division provided an overview of SPR's early work on the 2017 Parks Development Plan and Gap Analysis. She began her presentation by acknowledging that she is a former staff member for the Planning Commission and is grateful for the opportunity to return for this

presentation. Ms. Rockwell handed out a diagram showing the relationship between the City's Comprehensive Plan and Seattle Parks and Recreation's various plans and projects. She stated that SPR has been working on determining the best location in its various plans to include level of service and metrics to measure their progress toward citywide parks and open space goals. SPR creates a variety of master plans for both programmatic citywide planning efforts (community centers, dog parks, etc.) and site-specific projects. The department currently has \$2 million in its budget for acquisition of new parks and open space properties. They also have an asset management program which includes \$260 million of deferred maintenance to be addressed by the Seattle Parks District.

Ms. Rockwell demonstrated the latest Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping tool that SPR is using to conduct its gap analysis that will determine parks and open space acquisition priorities (Volume I). SPR has a separate GIS map for analyzing the need for recreation facilities (Volume II). Ms. Rockwell highlighted several different data layers on the Volume I GIS map that are used for the gap analysis, including the following:

- Seattle Parks: SPR manages a 6,410-acre park system with 465 parks and natural areas, comprising about 11% of the City's land area.
- Access: A goal in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan is to consider access to our parks by transit, bicycle, and on foot when acquiring, siting and designing new park facilities or improving existing ones. This map shows the walking network, existing Greenways and SPR's Greenways Initiative projects in collaboration with SDOT.
- Walkability: SPR's intent is to gain a more accurate picture of access, by measuring how people walk to a park or recreation facility. The 'Walkability' map uses the street grid (or walking network) and measures the distance that a person would need to walk, or bike, from home to the park or facility entrance(s). This map shows what a 5-minute and a 10-minute walking distance looks like around park lands that are greater than 10,000 square feet in size.
- Gaps in Walkability: The gap areas identified in this map could help define SPR's priorities and needs for future acquisition and development projects. SPR is considering new distribution based mapping metrics for measuring how people access park facilities as part of our long-term acquisition strategy:
  - ✓ 5-minute walkability metric - Within Urban Villages
  - ✓ 10-minute walkability metric - Outside of Urban Villages
- Opportunity: This map shows non-SPR owned open space, such as plazas in the downtown core, Seattle Public School property and Major Universities, that provide additional recreation and open space opportunities.
- Equity: This map uses the City's "Poverty and Income" mapping to further prioritize parkland and additional facilities in areas of need, especially in high poverty areas.
- Population Density: This map uses the State's 'Small area population' estimate, which is more up-to-date than the 2010 census and more robust than the American Community Survey population data, to further prioritize parkland and additional facilities in areas of growth.

In the past, SPR used **both population and distribution metrics** in determining parks need. However, these metrics were often in conflict with each in certain geographic areas. To address this, SPR is now using only walkability as a metric for measuring the need for parks and open space. The department is in the process of deciding whether to use walkability or distribution as a metric for determining the need for recreation facilities.

The Commissioners commended Ms. Rockwell on the GIS mapping, specifically acknowledging its accessibility to the public on the SPR website. They asked whether **physical condition of individual parks is one of the criteria** to be evaluated in the gap analysis. Ms. Rockwell replied by saying that physical condition of the individual parks is documented and managed by a new asset management tracking system. The Seattle Parks District's emphasis since its creation has been on major maintenance of parks properties. This is a significant reason the budget for property acquisition has been limited and will continue to be for the next 6 years.

The Commissioners encouraged SPR to **be aspirational in setting goals for the citywide parks and open space system**, and to **think creatively about open space needs, especially in dense neighborhoods**. Ms. Rockwell responded by saying that the state's Growth Management law requires that all parks system goals need to be met within 6 years. There are

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also limits on certain regulatory tools, such as impact fees, that can be applied to meet parks system goals. SPR is considering new approaches, such as putting a dollar value on parkland and setting a population-based goal for the overall value of Seattle parks. She acknowledged that SPR wants to be aspirational, but must set goals within their legal limits.

The Commissioners recognized the **importance of partnerships and incentives for the city to work with a variety of community partners** in achieving its parks system goals. They encouraged SPR to **utilize a health data layer in the GIS gap analysis** to emphasize the importance of green space and air quality to mental and physical health. The Commissioners also encouraged SPR to **recognize the differences between different typologies of parks and open space** in its analysis. They encouraged SPR to work with King County and other groups on **incorporating climate resiliency and sea level rise** into their analysis. The Commissioners suggested that the gap analysis methodology and data should **include topography as well as condition of the walkable network**, emphasizing that access to parks should be safe and manageable for all. They recommended that SPR **work with SDOT to share data** that was incorporated into the methodology for the Pedestrian Master Plan. The Commissioners asked whether accessibility can be increased easily by creating new access points to parks. Ms. Rockwell stated that this could often require acquisition of new land. Acquisition is very often driven by opportunity to acquire land and SPR has a very limited budget for acquisitions. Some acquisitions can take 20-30 years to complete.

The Commissioners inquired about **SPR's community outreach approach** to getting input for the Parks Development Plan. Ms. Rockwell stated that they have been participating in 5 community open house events coordinated by the Department of Neighborhoods, a new approach to community outreach that has been mandated by the Mayor. The Commissioners expressed their **concern that the outreach locations do not include under-represented communities**. They also asked if SPR has done any **outreach to collect input from kids or youth groups**. Ms. Rockwell answered that they have tried, but have been unsuccessful so far.

#### **Briefing: Seattle Department of Transportation Policy and Planning Division**

Tracy Krawczyk, Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation's Policy and Planning Division provided an overview of the department's current transportation planning initiatives. Her division's role is to:

- Develop policies to guide mobility, access and placemaking uses with city street rights of way
- Deliver plans to make it easier to walk, bike, take transit and move goods
- Transform streets into inviting public places
- Inform local and regional transportation investments decisions

Ms. Krawczyk listed some of the division's 2016 accomplishments, including the Transportation element of the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan; updates to the Pedestrian Master Plan, Freight Master Plan, and Transit Master Plan, and kicking off the One Center City project, which will coordinate mobility plans and guidelines for the public realm in the Downtown and other central city neighborhoods. She also described some of the division's urban design efforts, including the Complete Streets program, streetscape concept plans, tactical urbanism, the Pavement to Parks Program, and the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual update. She provided a diagram that demonstrated how the Department's various plans and projects are related to the City's Comprehensive Plan's growth strategy.

Ms. Krawczyk described details of the Department's 20-year modal plans – the Bicycle, Freight, Pedestrian, and Transit Master Plans – including their respective visions, goals, and policies. She also summarized how the Department prioritizes capital projects and moves them from the planning phase into project development. She provided an overview of the 9-year, \$930 million Levy to Move Seattle, including investments in Safe Routes to Schools, congestion relief, maintenance, and preservation. Lastly, she mentioned how the Department measures its performance and project progress using dashboard tools and various data sets. The Commissioners asked Ms. Krawczyk how the work of the Mayor's Capital Cabinet fits with SDOT's ongoing work to plan and deliver capital projects. She responded by saying that SDOT has provided two staff members to the Capital Cabinet process and they are working to ensure that the

Department's investments are coordinated with other City projects and processes. SDOT has its own process tool – the Project Activity Coordinating Tool (PACT) that they are highlighting as an example for the Capital Cabinet.

The Commissioners asked whether SDOT is considering the use of impact fees to pay for transportation projects. Ms. Krawczyk stated that the City Council asked the departments to look at impact fees, but that process is on hold while the HALA work is ongoing. SDOT does have an existing voluntary mitigation payment system that has been primarily used in South Lake Union. This program could be refreshed and expanded to other areas of the city. The Commissioners asked for more details of the Move Seattle Levy, specifically asking whether the levy includes money dedicated to operating expenses. She answered no, but the successful 2014 Proposition 1 ballot measure pays for the City to buy bus service from Metro for additional capacity on busy routes.

#### **Briefing: Pedestrian Master Plan Update**

Ian Macek from the Seattle Department of Transportation provided an update on the Pedestrian Master Plan. This plan is intended to serve as a blueprint to provide walking improvements citywide; assist in data-driven prioritization of funding; and focus resources to improve access to transit and schools. The draft plan was released in July and received more than 300 comments. The updated draft provides an assessment of the City's progress since 2009 toward meeting its pedestrian goals; identifies a Priority Investment Network (PIN) and performance measures; and contains updated strategies and actions. Mr. Macek summarized SDOT's public engagement efforts and the parts of the plan that either received general support or requests for additional changes. He described the plan's Priority Investment Network in detail, including the methodology and data, as well the implementing strategies and actions. He also highlighted the plan's performance measures, funding outlook, implementation plan, and next steps. The Mayor's Recommended Plan includes \$427-637 million for new sidewalks.

The Commissioners asked several questions related to the PIN methodology to identify pedestrian improvements within a 10-minute walk of schools. Mr. Macek replied that Safe Routes to Schools include potential improvements near both public and private schools, but does not include school bus routes. The Commissioners complimented SDOT for their methodology which is synergistic with the recently updated Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan, and asked questions about funding for ongoing condition assessments and continuous data collection. Mr. Macek stated that SDOT's Project Development Division will be leading the conditions assessment, while the Policy and Planning Division will be reviewing census and Puget Sound Regional Council data to monitor the need for updating the plan over time.

#### **Public Comment**

Doug MacDonald stated that he has been reviewing the Pedestrian Master Plan. He commented that the biggest problem that SDOT is facing in implementation of the plan is a lack of funding for maintaining existing sidewalks and pedestrian improvements before investing more money in building new infrastructure. He also pointed out the need to provide more pedestrian infrastructure that is accessible by people with disabilities. He encouraged SDOT to take a broader look before adopting this Pedestrian Master Plan update.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.**