



**City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission**

David Cutler, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 14, 2013
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair David Cutler, Luis Borrero, Josh Brower, Colie Hough-Beck, Bradley Khouri, Jeanne Krikawa, Kevin McDonald, Leslie Miller, Chris Persons, Matt Roewe, Morgan Shook, Sarah Snider

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Kadie Bell, Catherine Benotto, Mark Johnson, Amalia Leighton

COMMISSION STAFF

Barbara Wilson-Executive Director, Diana Canzoneri-Senior Analyst, Katie Sheehy-Planning Analyst

IN ATTENDANCE

Kevin O'Neill and Sara Zora, SDOT; Dennis Meier, DPD

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

▪ **Chair's Report**

- Chair David Cutler

Chair David Cutler called the meeting to attention at 3:05 pm. He briefly noted the upcoming Commission meetings found on the back of the agenda.

Commissioner Krikawa mentioned the affordability of housing and getting families to live downtown in the Seattle Transit blog.

Chair Cutler noted that the Commission will be losing several Commissioners this year and updated the Commissioners on the recruitment efforts.

Chair Cutler thanked Commissioner Miller for hosting the Commission Holiday Party.

Executive Director Barbara Wilson points out the materials related to the Seattle Transit Communities report noting that Katie Sheehy is focused on the first two sections. Ms. Sheehy summarized the report plan. Ms. Wilson summarized the outreach and engagement noting the history of the many meetings and posed the question of how this fits into shaping the proposed strategy.

▪ **Approve: January 10 and January 24, 2013 Meeting Minutes**

ACTION: Commissioner Leslie Miller moved to approve the January 10 & January 24, 2013 minutes. Commissioner Kevin McDonald seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

▪ **Briefing: Bicycle Master Plan Update**

- Kevin O’Neill & Sara Zora, SDOT

Chair Cutler called for any disclosures and/or recusals.

DISCLOSURES & RECUSALS:

- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group PLLC, represents single and multifamily developers throughout the city and represents industrial businesses near the Burke Gillman Trail to Ballard.
- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture, works on municipal planning and private development projects that could be affected by the Bicycle Master Plan.
- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, works on commercial, multifamily, and public infrastructure projects throughout the city that might could be affected by the Bicycle Master Plan.

Kevin and Sara gave a powerpoint presentation that can be accessed via the link below.

http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/2013BMPUpdate_14febcommission.pdf

Commissioner Shook wondered about implementation. Mr. O’Neill stated that is a great but big question. He noted that the bulk of the system in Vancouver is on residential streets and that another focus could be downtown with most of the population. He added that there are challenges with crossing barriers like hills, bridges and bodies of water.

Commissioner Roewe asked how they could be sure that they are not inconveniencing transit users by making bike improvements. Mr. O’Neill stated that they are looking at the planned transit system in addition to the existing transit. He added that, in thinking about a good bike corridor through downtown, they will try to stay off of third and first. Mr. O’Neill continued that a good facility will be on Alaskan Way and they need to improve the facilities on second and fourth. Ms. Zora noted that they would try to avoid any delay of the bus service.

Commissioner Khouri noted that this is exciting but wondered if they had looked at the time of day and the change in seasons to see how it affects riders. Mr. O’Neill answered that it is not factored in explicitly but gets into facility design and location. Ms. Zora noted that there is a new bicycle counter on the Fremont Bridge that will give data that are more seasonable and that will help them to understand ridership.

Commissioner Snider mentioned the greenways in Vancouver noting how individualized the neighborhood areas are and the signage. She wondered how difficult it would be for Seattle to have that sort of system. Ms. Zora stated that SDOT has not done the best job of education and they want to improve that. She added that on their website they do have some maps based on different types of riders but that creating an app is beyond their ability.

Commissioner McDonald shared his appreciation that they are pushing the envelope. He added that there are several uncomfortable facilities currently and that the pavement management and maintenance is not consistent with the intent of the space for cyclists. Commissioner McDonald continued that people have expressed their frustration with intersections and suggested in-pavement sensors to alert the signal that a bicyclist is there. Ms. Zora stated that they have put in the embedded sensors and that they want technology to count the riders as well.

Commissioner Borrero noted that bicycle traffic lights are very useful and wondered if there were any in this plan. Mr. O'Neill responded that there are and that they are updating their intersection tool kit and looking at treatments like that. Ms. Zora stated that they would mix it in.

Chair Cutler stated that he was pleased that this is moving forward and thanked Mr. O'Neill and Ms. Zora for their time.

- **Briefing: Downtown Zoning Around the Central Waterfront**
 - Dennis Meier, DPD

Chair Cutler called for any disclosures and/or recusals.

DISCLOSURES & RECUSALS:

- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture, works on municipal planning and private development projects that could be affected by zoning changes.
- Commissioner Sarah Snider disclosed that her firm, LMN, works on projects throughout the city that could be affected by zoning changes.
- Commissioner David Cutler disclosed that his firm, GGLO, designs projects and advises clients that could be affected by zoning changes.
- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group PLLC, represents single and multifamily developers throughout the city that might be affected by zoning changes.
- Commissioner Morgan Shook disclosed that his firm, Berk, supported the City in the design of the SLU rezone proposal.
- Commissioner Bradley Khouri disclosed that his firm, b9 Architects, works on projects throughout the city that could be affected by zoning changes.

Dennis Meier noted that this is a very small part of a much larger effort and as this giant project moves forward and transforms the edge of downtown, they want to make sure that they are paying attention to how development along the edge would occur in the near term. He added that the way that the current zoning works assumes that the Viaduct would always be there and there is potential for a significant amount of change.

Commissioner Brower asked about the parking. Mr. Meier replied that there is no minimum requirement but there is a max on commercial. Commissioner Brower suggested a maximum on residential and then provide incentives to developers. Mr. Meier responded that losing the viaduct also means that a lot of short-term parking is going away.

Chair Cutler stated that the next phase to deal with is the edge along Alaskan Way. He noted that without incentives no one would provide those good edges. Mr. Meier replied that as they get more direction in terms of what we want they could work that into the next phase. Chair Cutler asked if, in regards to parking, there was a way to think about residential differently. He suggested pushing the parking out of the bottom of the building. Commissioner Roewe suggested introducing FAR in residential. Chair Cutler added that it be at a maximum level so that they have to make a conscious decision to choose parking over residential. Commissioner Brower noted that you might need parking today but with a huge amount of mass transit improvements you would not need it in the future. Mr. Meier noted that projects like the Harbor Steps have underutilized parking.

Commissioner Snider wondered how they could really incentivize residential, as it is not just important for the neighborhood but also the waterfront. She asked if there were any way to encourage residential uses at the street on Western.

Commissioner Roewe stated that he loved the idea of replicating the Pearl District and Yale Town. He added that he is in favor of street reclassification and a taller height increase but is not a fan of exempting parking from FAR for hotels as it just rewards parking. He wondered where they get the 208 instead of 240. Mr. Meier answered that 30% is the working number. Commissioner Roewe stated that scale is huge and that it is a lot of deep units. He expressed his thought that at 150' feet the form is a little suspect and wondered if they would be better with something taller and less bulky. Mr. Meier responded that, in 2006, when height increases were considered there was a bit of debate and both the Mayor and City Council retreated.

Commissioner Shook stated that there is no broader up-zone of change in the areas in the current planning. Mr. Meier replied that this is tweaking it in the most critical area. Commissioner Shook noted that this is a critical piece of the project going forward and wondered what the value of the incentives really were especially along the waterfront. Mr. Meier answered that it is an interesting area with lots of landmark structures.

Commissioner Khouri asked if they have been looking at the space between Alaskan Way and the water for more active uses. Mr. Meier answered that the design team is looking at a variety of programmatic actions to activate that area. He added that there is agreement about the need for activation and zoning would be directly related to the design. Mr. Meier continued that the State is trying to provide partnerships to provide parking but at this stage they are not being too bold in terms of altering the parking dynamic. Chair Cutler encourage him to be bolder.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 5:32 pm.