



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Tony To, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION JULY 26, 2007 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners in Attendance

Vice-Chair Linda Amato, Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Kay Knapton, Amalia Leighton, M. Michelle Mattox, Kevin McDonald, Steve Sheehy

Commissioners Absent

Mahlon Clements, Chris Fiori, Martin Kaplan, Kirsten Pennington, Tony To

Commission Staff

Barbara Wilson-Director, Casey Mills-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative Specialist, Andrea Clinkscales-Intern

In Attendance

Bob Morgan, Rebecca Herzfeld, Council Central Staff; Nathan Torgelson, Mayor's Office; Mike Podowski, DPD; Mark Griffin, Port of Seattle; Don Wilcox, Dan Young, Nathan Barfield, Sam Yohanges

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 7:34 am by Vice-Chair Linda Amato.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Vice-Chair Amato reported that the July 12, 2007 minutes were not completed yet and thus approval would be moved to the next Commission meeting.

▪ **Chairs Report**

Vice-Chair Amato noted the upcoming meetings and events. She called attention to the cancellation of all Full Commission and Executive Committee meetings in August. Vice-Chair stated that they LUT and HNUC meetings would still occur. Vice-Chair Amato called attention the next Full Commission meeting. She added that it will take place September 13th from 3-5:30 pm and that Adrienne Quinn, the Director of the Office of Housing, will brief the Commission on the Housing Inventory and gap analysis and there will be an update on the 2007 Comp Plan amendments.

▪ **Update on release of Commission report “*The Future of Industrial Lands*”**

Vice-chair Amato recapped the Commission’s actions regarding their ‘Future of Industrial Lands’ report. She stated that the Commission held a press conference on July 17, with 40 attendees and 4-5 members of the press. Vice-Chair Amato reported that the event went well and there were a lot of members of the audience who thanked the Commission for their recommendations. Vice-chair Amato stated that on August 9, the Commission will be attending the Urban Development and Planning Committee to discuss the report with Council.

Executive Director Barbara Wilson stated that she and Casey Mills had attended a Manufacturing and Industrial Council (MIC) meeting and had presented the report there. She added that the MIC was very supportive of the recommendations and gave extensive thanks to the Commission for their work.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

▪ **Discussion: Interbay Overlay Proposal**

Recusals & Disclosures:

Commissioner Colie Hough Beck, Hough Beck & Baird, disclosed that the Port is one of her clients.

Commissioner M. Michelle Mattox disclosed that her firm, Chiles & Company, also has the Port as a client.

Commissioner Tom Eanes, Hewitt Architects, disclosed that he was the project manager on two project in industrial areas, one of which could compete for tenants with some of the buildings that could be created at the Interbay site. He added that he is waiting for an Ethics opinion on the issue from Wayne Barnett.

Ms. Wilson reviewed the documents in the Commission’s folders, including the Port’s responses to Commission questions regarding the overlay and the Commission’s draft issue paper. She discussed the timeline for providing Commission recommendations. Ms. Wilson noted that the Executive has requested that the recommendations make it to Council by August 1. She added that staff will prepare a draft of the Commission’s recommendations to Council after today’s meeting and send it to Commissioners via email. Ms. Wilson noted that the Executive Committee will then review their recommendations again at their meeting next week and the Full Commission will vote on a final draft of the recommendations over e-mail. Ms. Wilson stated that the recommendations will hopefully be done by August 4 but could take until August 6 to be completed.

Ms. Wilson discussed the draft issue paper. She went over the background of the Commission’s involvement and noted the Commissions general comments concerning the site, primarily referring to the recognition of the importance of Korry Electronics to the city’s economy.

Mr. Mills discussed the Commission’s analysis of the Overlay through the lens of the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that the Appendix to the document includes a listing of all the Comprehensive Plan language relevant to the proposal. Mr. Mills noted that the Comprehensive Plan language that seemed most relevant to the Overlay is found in the main portion of the document. He went over the examples of relevant language and discussed the Commission’s analysis of how well this language matched up to the Overlay proposal.

Ms. Wilson noted that the next portion of the document listed a variety of recommendations from the Commission's recent 'Future of Seattle's Industrial Lands' report that were the most relevant to the Overlay proposal. She noted the listing of the Commission's suggested mitigations for the site should the proposal move forward.

Vice-Chair Amato opened the meeting up to general discussion.

Commissioner Tom Eanes asked about the details of the neighborhood agreement with the Port regarding limitations on the site.

Mark Griffin, Port of Seattle, responded that the limitations are not specific. He noted that they were developed when the Port was considering placing container operations on Terminal 91 and the neighborhoods filed suit against the Port. Mr. Griffin stated that the agreement essentially states that no uses will be accepted there that are noisy, have a lot of light, and operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. He added that once the Port gets finality on how they will be able to move forward on the Interbay site, they must begin negotiations with the neighborhoods about their proposal.

Commissioner Mark Johnson asked what the threshold was for the amount of new employees it would take to require the building of a new bridge to the site. He stated he was concerned that the proposal could present a circular argument – funds are needed for new infrastructure, so high density uses are necessary, but the infrastructure is only necessary due to the high density uses being brought to the area. Mr. Griffin replied that the number was 2,500 employees and that much of the infrastructure necessary is very basic, including relocating and updating utilities and developing a street grid. He added that there are also demolition, remediation, and off-site mitigation costs and that the Port is trying to make the best overall use of the site by accommodating both industrial and other uses.

Commissioner Jerry Finrow stated that from the Commission's perspective, Korry Electronics can be unbundled from the proposal, because Korry can locate on the site without the overlay. Mr. Griffin agreed that this was true.

Commissioner Finrow stated that the Commission had recently released a report stating that the City should preserve industrial land and that the proposal puts the Commission in the position of entertaining a request to rezone some industrial land right after putting that report out. He asked what the difference was between real industrial and 'emerging industrial', a term the Port uses in its proposal. Mr. Griffin answered that there was no real bright line between the two and that the Port was trying to provide some flexibility so that a mix of uses could locate on the site. Mr. Griffin stated that they were trying to anticipate the next wave of industry that, like Korry, is cleaner and quieter than traditional industrial businesses. Mr. Griffin added that, in terms of how the Commission addresses the proposal in relation to their recent industrial lands report, the specifics of the site make it a unique situation where the desires of the stakeholders and the quality of the site must be balanced with the desire to protect all industrial land.

ACTION: Commissioner Steve Sheehy moved to direct staff to produce recommendations after today's discussion and send these recommendations out for an e-mail vote later in the week. Commissioner Jerry Finrow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Colie Hough-Beck asked if, all the businesses that located to the site were similar to Korry, – that is, cleaner and quieter than traditional industrial businesses – would the neighborhoods support this? Mr. Griffin stated he was not sure if they would or not, but that he does believe that most of the neighborhoods are in support of Korry Electronics.

Commissioner Eanes asked how the 95' height limit was developed. Mr. Griffin responded that it was developed to limit the obstruction of views from the top of Magnolia Bluff.

Vice-Chair Amato asked the Commissioners for their individual input on the proposal.

Commissioner Eanes stated that his understanding of the proposal includes the realization that it does not preserve any industrial lands. He noted that it would amend the current zoning to allow something that is not allowed now and that it is also unrealistic to think that because industrial uses are allowed throughout the site, they will be able to compete with the other uses allowed on the site, which can pay more for operating costs. Commissioner Eanes noted that he had problems with the design guidelines, as they depict a development that would look like a suburban office park. He added that improvements to the design need to happen. Commissioner Eanes noted that, in regards to transportation planning, there needs to be some sort of requirement put on the development to be proactive with Metro in order to figure out how to adequately serve the area with transit. He continued that this should be a condition of the project's approval.

Commissioner Finrow stated that he understands that the Port was trying to be flexible by allowing for 'emerging industrial' uses. He added that he believes that the set-aside for industrial uses should be greater, possibly extending the set-aside to the Northern border of the site. Commissioner Finrow noted that the Commission has recommended creating industrial sanctuaries in its report on industrial lands and creating a large set-aside would help achieve this.

Commissioner Mark Johnson stated that he understands that, even with all industrial uses on the site, it could be necessary to build a new bridge to access the site. He added that this means the site does have unique transportation infrastructure needs. Commissioner Johnson stated that only setting aside 1/3 of the site for industrial uses seems limited and that it is important to note that the current zoning is working to prevent large-scale office from locating there because these uses are not flocking to the site.

Commissioner Steve Sheehy stated that he concurs with what is written in the draft issue paper. He stated that he would like to add a sentence acknowledging that Korry Electronics can be located in the site without the overlay. Commissioner Sheehy noted that the relationship between the industrial lands report and the site does present a real world opportunity to use the Commission's recommendations to assess a site. He requested that the analysis of how the Comprehensive Plan compares to the overlay should make sure to reflect the analysis found in the Port's EIS.

Commissioner Hough-Beck asked if there was any Comprehensive Plan language that supported the proposal. Mr. Mills responded that there was, and that language could be found at the end of Appendix One. Commissioner Hough-Beck stated she wanted to ensure that views were maintained after the site had been developed.

Commissioner Kay Knapton noted that the site's close proximity to rail should be considered. She added that the issue is not just transportation to the site but within the site as well. Commissioner Knapton continued that, it should be noted, that the Greenbelt blocks transportation options in that direction.

Commissioner Kevin McDonald noted that there should be mitigation measures taken regarding parking on the site. He added that a much lower number of parking stalls could be provided than the number of stalls assumed in the EIS. Commissioner McDonald reiterated that the Port's HOV goals would be extremely hard to reach without working with Metro, as the site is currently a fair distance from a transit route.

Commissioner Amalia Leighton stated that she was also concerned about the traffic impacts of the new cruise ship terminal to be located nearby and noted this should be considered as well.

Vice-Chair Amato noted that the draft issue paper discusses Korry but perhaps this discussion could be placed higher in the document and addressed separately from all the other issues addressed in the document.

Commissioner Eanes noted that there was a difference between what was allowed and what was practical. He added that Korry could locate to the Interbay site under current zoning but it would not be commercial practical.

Vice-Chair Amato noted that she agreed with other Commissioners that recommending increasing the square footage of the industrial set-aside would be a good idea.

Commissioner Johnson noted that the Port's EIS relies heavily on carpooling and vanpooling.

Commissioner Finrow noted that he thinks the mitigation recommendation of creating a Development Review Board is an important element of the Commission's draft issue paper. He stated that the Design Commission is already very interested in the project. Commissioner Finrow noted that a project of this scope should have a more comprehensive development review than is currently being considered and that the Development Review Board could offer solutions to the issue of trying to create a development that did not look like a suburban office park.

Commissioner Eanes noted that the Port's development proposal is likely delicately balanced between providing enough industrial set-aside area and allowing enough higher-revenue producing uses to locate there. He added that the Commission should be sensitive to this balance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Linda Amato adjourned the meeting at 8:55 am.