



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Josh Brower, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MARCH 24, 2011 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair – Josh Brower, Vice Chair – Leslie Miller, Kadie Bell, Catherine Benotto, David Cutler, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Martin Kaplan, Bradley Khouri, Kay Knapton, Amalia Leighton, Kevin McDonald, Radhika Nair, Matt Roewe

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Jeanne Krikawa, Christopher Persons

COMMISSION STAFF

Barbara Wilson-Director, Katie Sheehy-Planning Analyst, Robin Magonegil-Administrative Staff Assistant, Diana Canzoneri-Demographer

GUESTS

Marshall Foster, Tom Hauger, Kristian Kofoed, DPD; Tracy Morgenstern, OSE

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

Vice-Chair Leslie Miller called the meeting to order at 7:33 am.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

- **Approve: March 10, 2011 Minutes**

ACTION: Commissioner Kevin McDonald moved to approve the March 10, 2011 minutes. Commissioner Kay Knapton seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with Commissioner Mark Johnson abstaining.

- **Chair's Report**

Vice-Chair Leslie Miller noted the upcoming committee meetings.

WORK SESSION

▪ **Work Session: The Seattle Strategy – Winning Our Future**

- Marshall Foster, DPD; Tracy Morgenstern, OSE

Chair Brower welcomed Marshall Foster and Tracy Morgenstern and called for any disclosures or recusals.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, has contracts with the Parks Department, SDOT, SPU and works on projects in Seattle.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design, worked on the Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan.

Marshall Foster reported on the specifics of the survey; how it would be rolled out, how people would use it and etc. He noted that DPD would be working closely with Barbara Wilson and Diana Canzoneri. Mr. Foster stated that there are a set of about 12 goals which fall into four major elements and added that they want the survey to provide public feedback about those goals and targets. Mr. Foster noted that the last time the survey approach was focused more on the targets and they are making some changes to focus on the overall priorities regarding the goals.

Tracy Morgenstern went over the details of the survey. She noted that they will present the overall goal, ask that it be ranked regarding its importance, then an explanation of the target and question if the target is appropriately aggressive. She continued that they will ask for the top goals at the end. Ms. Morgenstern stated that they have a few issues that they are trying to solve. She noted that one is whether or not they have the right indicator. She added that the sense of safety varied a lot by neighborhood and people's perception of safety. Commissioner Kaplan asked if there could be one sentence that gives the user an idea of why the crime rate has gone down. He added that this might put it in perspective.

Ms. Morgenstern stated that the other outstanding issue was regarding discrimination and noted that the city does not have a target at this time. She added that they are focusing on volunteerism and they would love to hear the Commission's thoughts on this.

Mr. Foster stated that they recognize the need to address active open space as well as passive open space. Ms. Morgenstern added that the urban form does not really resonate with the typical resident and that infrastructure target had some issues as well. She added that they have added a green infrastructure target.

Commissioner Leighton wondered if the green infrastructure target was a bit narrow and if broader health and water quality improvements could be made which would allow for an easier target to meet state/Puget sound watershed goals. Mr. Foster asked if they should link it with a more tangible goal for the public.

Commissioner Leighton replied yes and stated that this is very politically sensitive and added that some GSI projects have trouble being affordable. Ms. Leighton continued that, storm water management is an important component of reaching goals for Puget Sound water quality. Commissioner Johnson stated that it should be a caution when our goal is just to be a leader. Ms. Morgenstern stated that they were challenged by the measurement.

Mr. Foster noted that those are the major changes and wondered how the Commission felt about the approach. Diana Canzoneri stated that regarding the housing measures, they are considering proposing a different target to look just at rental households to decrease the percentage that are paying 50% or more. She added that there is some debate because the goal could be met just by having those people leave Seattle. Mr.

Foster responded that was a really good point – how do we make our growth targets /urban village strategy. He added that he would like to use this to build support and frame the discussion around the update to the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Brower questioned if it were too late to fundamentally change the approach. He stated that the goals and policy statements are good but what they are asking people to rate does not do anything to inform policy decisions.

Commissioner Hough Beck stated that they need to get the schools involved. Mr. Foster replied that they are very aware of the need to partner with the schools but added that it is a question of who.

Commissioner Johnson stated that, regarding homelessness, that it would be a good idea to decrease the number of people who are unsheltered. He added that completely ending homelessness is probably unrealistic but eliminating those that are unsheltered is a realistic goal.

Commissioner Kaplan stated that he was concerned about what would happen with the results and asked if in phase 2 there would be public dialogue as well. Mr. Foster answered that it is not a major public phase but more of an internal one. Mr. Kaplan asked Mr. Foster to consider opening up the dialogue as there might be some good strategies that come up. Mr. Foster replied that maybe that is a way to do it. He added that the 2nd phase will be more focused and that they want to have this discussion first before they start addressing the strategies. Mr. Foster stated that they could try to do it all at once but it would be a very involved discussion. He added that making it sequential around a public mandate will help them get enough momentum to keep it going.

Commissioner Leighton asked if she could give Barbara Wilson any questions or comments for them. Ms. Morgenstern stated that they could be sent to Barbara or directly to her.

Commissioner McDonald wanted to make sure that the questions lead people to responds in a useful, meaningful way. He added that in relation to watershed health, people are asked to respond to a scientific target that may not be familiar to them or may not be a quantified biological indicator.

Commissioner Khouri stated that 2035 seems pretty far out. He suggested that there be more mid-term targets, maybe 5 years out.

Commissioner Knapton stated that, as she read through it, she took the social/cultural connections very personally. She asked if they intended that they want more people to participate or more provision of opportunities to participate. She added that she wondered if it were the City's right to tell people to participate more. Mr. Foster responded that it is not meant to say that people should participate more but that it's community service, social groups, things that indicate social cohesion. He added that events only thrive if people attend. Commissioner Johnson wondered if it was more a feeling of well being relating to community contribution.

Chair Brower thanked Marshall and Tracy for their time.

- **Work Session: Updating the Comprehensive Plan**
 - Tom Hauger, Kristian Kofoed DPD

Chair Brower welcomed Tom Hauger and Kristian Kofoed.

Tom Hauger stated that the Seattle Strategy is becoming the framework for the update and noted that the goals being articulated in the Seattle Strategy can help inform the update to the Comp Plan.

Mr. Hauger noted the general schedule and stated that they are currently doing the internal scoping and that they are doing this before going out to the general public. He added that the initial public outreach will be in June/July, in September the City Council resolution will set the scope. Mr. Hauger noted that they may go element by element with the first review draft in the first quarter of next year, provide a few months for people to review, do the environmental review in the third quarter and submit to Council in the fourth.

Mr. Hauger stated that they are Looking at urban design element, based on suggestion from AIA and that they have had some large workshops. He added that they are identifying key categories – natural environment, built environment, public realm, and variety/diversity/multi-factored. He added that they have four firms working on each of these. Kristian Kofoed explained further about the first working on these and the process and noted that it would be great to have the Commission’s involvement.

Mr. Hauger stated that they are working with City departments and that they had formed an IDT. He added that they would like to work with the Commission to identify the kinds of changes we want to make in the Comp Plan. He added that they would like to start setting up meetings about the update and start some working conversations around topics that the Commission thinks are important.

Mr. Hauger mentioned that at City Council there was a discussion regarding VMT targets and that having numbers in the Comp Plan has been a conversation from the beginning. He added that a few high level targets can be good but if there are too many they all get lost.

Commissioner Leighton asked how this update ties into the regular Comp Plan cycle. Mr. Hauger answered that they are going to suspend the annual cycle for one year but there are some things that will still need to move forward.

Commissioner Roewe stated that economics always rises to the top so it’s great that there are teams looking at this but he wondered why there is not an economist involved to offer a reality check. He added that the recommendations are not very useful unless they can be implemented. Mr. Hauger replied that was good advice and that the Capitol departments are very aware of the costs of the improvements.

Commissioner Kaplan noted that it might be helpful if the Seattle Strategy outreach and the Comp Plan outreach be tied together as many of the questions are similar or could be. Mr. Hauger stated that they are working on common outreach and that the Seattle Strategy will be a multi-pronged approach. Chair Brower noted that they are forming a special sub-committee just for this.

Chair Brower thanked Tom and Kristian for their time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Brower adjourned the meeting at 9:00 am.