



City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

David Cutler, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION SEPTEMBER 27, 2012 APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair David Cutler, Vice-Chair Amalia Leighton, Kadie Bell Sata, Catherine Benotto, Luis F. Borrero, Grace Cho*
Colie Hough-Beck, Bradley Khouri, Jeanne Krikawa, Kevin McDonald, Leslie Miller, Matt Roewe

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Josh Brower, Mark Johnson, Chris Persons, Morgan Shook, Sarah Snider

COMMISSION STAFF

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

Guests

Christopher Williams, Susanne Rockwell, Susan Golub, Seattle Parks Department; Brice Maryman, Seattle Parks Board

* Not yet confirmed

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 David Cutler called the meeting to attention 7:30 am.

- **Approve: September 13, 2012 Meeting Minutes**

ACTION: Commissioner Leslie Miller moved to approve the September 13, 2012 minutes. Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Krikawa, Miller and Leighton abstained.

▪ **Chair's Report**

- Chair David Cutler

Executive Director Barbara Wilson reported that the Transit Community Comp Plan proposal was submitted to DPD on Monday.

Chair Cutler noted that the Commission's letter to the Seattle School Board supporting a downtown school is out for final approval. Ms. Wilson added that they are still waiting on a few Commissioners to email their approval. Commissioner Krikawa mentioned that there was an article in the paper regarding this. Commissioner Roewe stated that DSA did a study on downtown schools and suggested that we have them come and brief the Commission.

Ms. Wilson noted that the Commission would be sending a letter supporting the Mayor's transportation budget.

She added that the Commissioners could refer to the handout in their folders that highlights the transportation budget. Ms. Wilson stated that she hopes to have a draft out for review on Monday.

Chair Cutler reviewed the upcoming Commission Outreach and Engagement for Transit Communities noting that the effort will focus on updating key thought leaders on our progress moving the concepts and recommendations of the report to actual policy implementation. He added that between October 24 and November 5 the Task Force will host 3 meetings with different sectors and a big wrap up event on Thursday, November 8 or 14.

Chair Cutler introduced new commissioner Grace Cho. Ms. Cho briefly talked about her background followed by the rest of the Commission introducing themselves to her.

Chair Cutler noted the upcoming meetings and events.

▪ **Briefing: Parks Legacy Plan**

- Christopher Williams, Susanne Rockwell, Susan Golub, & Brice Maryman, PKS

Chair Cutler welcomed Chris, Susanne, Susan and Brice.

Chair Cutler called for any disclosures and/or recusals.

DISCLOSURES & RECUSALS:

- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture, is working with clients that are currently negotiating with the Parks Department on a land swap.
- Commissioner Hough Beck disclosed that that the firm she works for, HBB has several ongoing contracts with the Parks Department and non-profit groups that partner with the Parks Department.
- Commissioner Leslie Miller disclosed that she is on the Othello Park Now! and Othello Park Alliance steering committees and is the Capital Improvements Chair for the Othello Park Alliance, a recipient of an active Large Matching Fund grant for Othello Park.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design, has active contracts with the Parks Department. Additionally, she works with Parks Board Commissioner Brice Maryman.
- Commissioner David Cutler disclosed that his firm, GGLO, designs projects that might be impacted by the Parks Legacy Plan.
- Commissioner Catherine Benotto disclosed that her employer, Weber Thompson, has a project where the developer is negotiating a neighborhood open space with the Parks Department.

Chair Cutler briefly noted that this briefing should help provide the Commission with better understanding of how Parks and Recreation will play into the bigger picture planning issues. Chair Cutler added that Susanne

has briefed the Commission a few times this year and the Commission has provided both her and the project team with feedback.

Christopher Williams gave a high-level overview and shared the direction for the strategic plan. He noted that they are working on an 18-24 month strategic plan and are prepping to put something before the voters in 2014 for funding. Mr. Williams stated that it would support maintenance and operations. He noted that the public's relationship to and the way they use parks changes over time and they want to understand the trends and the drivers for change. He added that, the story the city needs to tell the voting public should be data driven and it needs to articulate the priorities for funding parks. Mr. Williams shared that he is concerned about voter fatigue with all the other levies and they need to know how to move forward if the levy is approved and also if it is not.

The project team gave a power point presentation that can be accessed via the link below.

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/outlineillustrateddraft92412parkslegacyplan.pdf>

Brice Maryman stated that he is a big fan of the Commission and noted that he has been on the Parks Board since spring. He added that they are thinking about how they can best serve the Parks system and want to work with the Commission on how the park system as a whole can serve the city. Mr. Maryman stated that it is a question of not just how we steward but what the long-term vision is. He added that conversation should be weaved into the Comp Plan rewrite. Mr. Maryman expressed his hope that the city could create an interconnected network of green spaces adding that parks bring value as a smart growth strategy. He recognized that both boards are comprised of volunteers and hoped that we could collaboratively steward.

Chair Cutler expressed that the major update to the Comp Plan is very important to the Commission and it offers up an opportunity to find a new and better way to think about the City holistically. He added that the Commission's goal is to clarify and simplify the plan and noted that working together with the Parks Board would be great.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked if this plan would be adopted. Mr. Williams stated that Council gave them a statement of legislative intent and that they were asked to look at the best practices of agencies trying to survive in these lean economic times and what funding mechanisms are working.

Commissioner Hough Beck asked if they were RCO compliant. Mr. Williams replied yes, that they provided a five-year update recently. Commissioner Hough Beck stated that when they talk about bringing density to neighborhoods that they are always looking for metrics/mechanisms to connect open space and that they are losing in that area, as they do not have the tools in place. She wondered if this would provide more leverage. Mr. Williams stated that he believed so, that this will identify demand for services and amenities. He added that information would emerge around where the needs are which could inform capital planning. Ms. Rockwell added that parks have a gaps analysis and it looks at service delivery and urban village boundaries but does not take into account topography and freeways. She added that they are going back to update some of their assumptions and growth projections. Ms. Rockwell continued that with the recent levies from neighborhood planning they have achieved 90-95% of what they could implement in those plans.

Commissioner Leighton asked if the typologies and classifications that were mentioned were the same and how does that relate to the gaps analysis. Ms. Rockwell clarified that it was classifications and that they just re-analyzed all of them. She added that they would do a policy modification on that and that they did not have regional parks called out and those have a different level of patronage. Ms. Rockwell noted that they do not drill down in gaps analysis by classification and that it is just usable open space based on the GMA. Mr.

Williams stated that they have taken more of a programmatic approach with the idea of having enough amenities to serve the community in a reasonable way. He added that they are thinking broadly about open space.

Commissioner Leighton wondered if they asked how people arrived at the park. Ms. Rockwell stated that question was there originally but due to the number of questions, they had to leave it off. Mr. Williams stated that Councilmember Bagshaw has been a strong advocate of access to parks and is concerned with connections and greenways.

Commissioner Leighton asked if they tracked incidents. Mr. Williams answered that they do and that Park Rangers fill out incident reports. Commissioner Leighton asked if there were a downward trend in incidents. Mr. Williams replied yes, that their indicators show a large number of moms and young people. He added that the downtown parks have had a large transient population and they are promoting safe use. Mr. Williams noted that there has been an 80% decrease in 911 calls. Commissioner Hough Beck added that Westlake is a good example of it working.

Commissioner Miller wondered if they targeted kids in the survey. Ms. Rockwell replied that they did not, just 18 and over. Mr. Williams noted that it might be an opportunity for focus groups for teen facilities.

Commissioner Miller suggested taking existing open space/park space and connecting to initiatives in the Comp Plan, (e.g. food policy, private/public connections, and a restaurant in the middle of the park). Mr. Williams agreed and stated that she had hit on something important – how do parks support overall livability of the city. Ms. Rockwell noted that they did three pilot studies – (1) food service within the park system, (2) fund raising and sponsorship, and (3) online retail. She added that they would be folded into the plan. Mr. Maryman stated that they have been thinking about multi values that parks provide and translating that. He would like to see those values in one place so that people can see the balancing factors but this is a challenge with the Comp Plan.

Chair Cutler encouraged them to look at the Climate Action Plan as well, that will have plenty of info.

Commissioner Roewe exclaimed that the Parks Department is responsible for a lot of stuff. He added that he has been thinking about the Parks Legacy Plan and that with the region growing by 7,000 people a year, you would have to put another park in every year. Commissioner Roewe noted that there currently are many big projects adding to their responsibility and that it seems like a good time to ask for money. Commissioner Roewe suggested leaning on other groups and the private sector to bring more safety and activity to the parks and find ways to leverage and integrate with land use. Mr. Williams agreed and stated that there is a need for a 100-year plan, a second phase of the Olmstead Plan. He wondered what management model makes sense for the City to be thinking about with baseline level support from the general fund with NGO enhancement. Mr. Williams stated that they met with the Trust for Public Lands regarding widespread commercial activity that generates a lot more funds. He added that they have to have that discussion about how to do that and could use the Commission's help. Mr. Maryman added that they need to look at how these new strategies work and could fit and the public-private partnerships. Commissioner Roewe stated that there are all kinds of opportunities.

Commissioner Krikawa stated that she was aware that funding has been an issue and she wondered what could happen if there were more education around what the parks offered and if people understood all the options. Mr. Williams replied that one of the best-kept secrets is the opportunities for families to use the park

system and they need to do a better job at marketing this resource. Mr. Maryman added that they are starting a parks campaign.

Commissioner Bell was curious about the equity analysis. She suggested considering non-parks groups such as the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs. Ms. Rockwell replied that they are looking at other service providers and mapping that out. Commissioner Bell wondered if that would inform the needs analysis. Ms. Rockwell stated that it would. Mr. Williams added that a few of the decision drivers have been access, relevant recreational opportunities, and sustainability. He noted that more traditional recreation patterns have different standards for access.

Commissioner Benotto noted that the Commission is working on the Seattle Transit Communities metrics and are struggling with how much is enough as some areas are well served by transit. Mr. Williams noted that it comes down to how many parks we can afford, what is the demand and what is the reasonable level of service. Mr. Maryman added that it is not just the amount of space but is the quality of that space. Commissioner Benotto stated that in denser areas you need more breathing room.

Commissioner McDonald stated that he has been thinking about how the urban forestry management can impact so many environmental things and about the quality of the urban forests. He wondered how much emphasis needs to be on high quality green space. Ms. Rockwell responded that the restoration of urban forests would be one of the goals and it is a question of funding. She added that they hope to document those costs and benefits in their report.

Commissioner Cho thanked them for going for a data-driven approach and noted that the metrics will be valuable. She noted that there is always a “what is in it for me” attitude so the more that they can quantify the land value assessment the better. Ms. Rockwell stated that they are updating the 2009 strategic action plan and it will complement that.

Commissioner Borrero agreed that it is great work and added that he would love to see this information in the context of other things as well - the difference in capital and maintenance costs. He added that putting in just a bit of context would be useful for the average person. Ms. Rockwell talked about capital improvements and the \$24M in improvements that is paid for by golf.

Ms. Wilson thanked them and asked where they felt the Commission should do to help. Ms. Rockwell stated that they are not sure if they have a concise answer but that they would definitely like the Commission’s support. Mr. Maryman said that, from the board perspective, they would love to have a conversation with the Commission regarding the Comp Plan update and to start working together.

Chair Cutler stated that the Commission looks forward to working with them on this and thanked them for their time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 9:07 am.