



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

McCaela Daffern and David Goldberg, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, May 11, 2023
Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present:	McCaela Daffern, Roque Deherrera, David Goldberg, Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson, Dalton Owens, Julio Sanchez, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble, Kelabe Tewolde
Commissioners Absent:	Mark Braseth, Matt Hutchins, Rick Mohler, Radhika Nair, Alanna Peterson, Dhyana Quintanar
Commission Staff:	Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Olivia Baker, Planning Analyst

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

Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<https://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/meetings>

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Co-Chair McCaela Daffern called the meeting to order at 3:08 pm and announced several upcoming Commission meetings. Co-Chair Daffern offered the following land acknowledgement:

'On behalf of the Seattle Planning Commission, we'd like to actively recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people who have lived on and stewarded these lands since the beginning of time and continue to do so today. We offer land acknowledgement because Native land was taken by force and colonized to form the United States as we know it today. Through this process, which is ongoing through systematic oppression, Native identity, history, and land ownership has been ignored by colonizers and attempted to be erased. Land Acknowledgement is the first step in opposing the systematic oppression and historic erasure of Native people and Native Land ownership.'

Co-Chair Daffern noted that this meeting is a hybrid meeting with some Commissioners and staff participating remotely while other Commissioners and staff are participating in the Boards and Commissions Room at Seattle City Hall. She asked fellow Commissioners to review the Color Brave Space norms and asked for volunteers to select one or more of the norms to read aloud. She suggested to Commissioners that they collectively agree to abide by these norms.

Announcements

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, reviewed the format of the meeting. She noted that public comment could be submitted in writing via email at least eight hours before the start of the meeting or provided in person by members of the public attending the meeting at City Hall. Ms. Murdock stated that full Commission meetings will be recorded and posted to the Planning Commission's website. She noted that these recordings are not in lieu of the Commission's minutes, which are approved at the next full Commission meeting.

Briefing: 2022-2023 Get Engaged Cohort

Dalton Owens, Seattle Planning Commission Get Engaged Member

Mr. Owens provided an overview of the YMCA's Get Engaged program and described his involvement in the 2022-2023 cohort. He stated that he has enjoyed the program as a way to get involved in the work of a specific City of Seattle board or commission, meet other participants between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine, and learn about the various other boards and commissions. Get Engaged Commissioners serve a one-year term as fully vested, voting members and help shape policy decisions, make recommendations, and provide citizen participation in city government. Mr. Owens stated that program participants meet as a group monthly and share updates from their respective organizations. He listed the City boards and commissions participating in the Get Engaged program and provided highlights from the following groups:

- Immigration and Refugee Commission
- Bicycle Advisory Board
- Seattle Human Rights Commission
- Community Involvement Commission
- Pedestrian Advisory Board
- Seattle Arts Commission
- Seattle LGBTQ Commission
- Urban Forestry Commission
- Landmarks Preservation Board
- Seattle Design Commission
- Board of Parks and Recreation
- Seattle Women's Commission

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners asked Mr. Owens how much longer the Get Engaged program allows him to serve with the Planning Commission. He stated that his term ends in September.
- Commissioners noted that Mr. Owens highlighted the Pedestrian Advisory Board's review of the Seattle Transportation Plan (STP) and inquired if the Planning Commission will be coordinating with that group. Ms. Murdock stated that she will be contacting the Pedestrian Advisory Board to learn more about their work on this topic.
- Ms. Murdock stated that the Get Engaged program has been a great asset for the Planning Commission. Several Planning Commission members started out as Get Engaged

participants. She encouraged Commissioners to send the Get Engaged recruiting announcement to their networks.

Discussion: Revised Draft Housing Levy Letter

Olivia Baker, Seattle Planning Commission staff, provided an overview of the revised draft of the Planning Commission's letter on the proposed Seattle Housing Levy. She stated that revisions to the draft letter include a more direct statement in support of increasing the levy and clarification for the "why" of increasing the levy with the following three main points:

- Scale of need
- Costs and inequitable outcomes of underfunding
- Need to adjust for rising costs

Additional revisions include noting that there are both social and financial costs to everyone if the City does not provide enough affordable housing; recommending increased access to affordable housing for people with disabilities and noting accessibility as a reason to increase the levy; and suggesting that the City should work to reduce City-driven development costs such as permitting fees and infrastructure costs for affordable housing.

Ms. Baker stated that the Commission will take action on the final draft comment letter at the May 25 meeting and provide public comment at the May 31 City Council public hearing. She then provided Commissioners with five minutes to review the revised draft letter.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners stated that the discussion at the April 27 meeting indicated support for the City's final levy amount. A statement in the revised draft letter supporting increasing the levy seems to contradict that discussion. Ms. Baker stated that the discussion at the last meeting was unclear on this. If there is discomfort about increasing the levy among Commissioners, this meeting is the last opportunity for developing consensus. Ms. Murdock noted that Commissioners who were asking for an increase to the levy at the last meeting were not present.
- Commissioners expressed support for the proposed draft revisions, especially the section on accessibility.
- Commissioners recommended the following revision at the top of page 3: "...City policies and regulations..."
- Commissioners recommended including language to express support for the proposed levy amount or an increase in the levy amount if suggested by City staff.
- Commissioners suggested maintaining language in the draft letter supporting the proposed amount as a floor but not a ceiling for the levy amount.
- Commissioners expressed support for the Office of Housing's proposed levy amount although it is not enough to meet the significant need for affordable housing.
- Commissioners recommended draft language to underscore the need for policy tools to incentivize family-sized housing units. Commissioners also suggested adding a reference to Federal sources of funding and adding citations wherever possible.

Working Session: Comprehensive Plan and Seattle Transportation Plan Review Frameworks

Ms. Baker provided an overview of a proposed framework for the Commission's upcoming review of the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan. This review framework includes the following themes:

- Racial and Social Equity
- Climate
 - Mitigation
 - Preparedness and adaptation
- Sustainable Quality of Life
 - Health
 - Safety
 - Resilient Communities
- Anti-Displacement
- Housing Access and Choice

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff, provided an overview of a similar proposed framework for the Commission's upcoming review of the STP. It included the following themes:

- Racial and Social Equity
- Transportation Choices
- Access to Daily Essential Needs
- Safety
- Climate Change/Resilience
- Repurposing the Right-of-Way
- Anti-Displacement
- Integration with the Comprehensive Plan
- Regional Coordination

Ms. Murdock presented a preliminary timeline for the Commission's review of the Comprehensive Plan and STP. This timeline is based on the tentative release of these plans in late June and concludes with the Commission's approval of comment letters on both plans in late August.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners asked how new State housing legislation will affect the Commission's review of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Murdock stated that the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) is currently working on the Draft Comprehensive Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). She stated that the City of Seattle is well poised to respond to the new legislation, as OPCD has already been thinking about ways to incorporate the issues addressed by the legislation into the Comprehensive Plan.
- Commissioners expressed interest in reviewing the Capital Facilities and Utilities elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Murdock stated that the Commission may not have the staff capacity to

review all the elements. Staff may be able to review additional elements if there is an agreement among Commissioners on which to review. Alternatively, Commissioners can choose to review a smaller number of elements and conduct a more thorough review of those.

- Commissioners asked if other City boards and commissions will be reviewing specific elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Murdock stated that she will be contacting specific boards and commissions to learn more of their approach to reviewing the Plan.
- Commissioners stated that the housing appendix to the Comprehensive Plan is typically a substantive piece of work and asked whether staff has a suggested approach to reading the appendices. Ms. Murdock stated that all Commissioners are welcome to review the appendices, especially if they are a subject-matter expert. Staff can review the appendices but probably have less technical expertise.
- Commissioners suggested adding the Color Brave Space norms to the Comprehensive Plan and STP review frameworks.
- Commissioners noted that it could be helpful to include examples within the worksheet of what certain words mean, such as the word resilience, because individuals may have different understandings of what the word means in the context of the plan.
- Commissioners suggested sending the draft review frameworks to the full Commission because many Commissioners were not present at the meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.