



City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Michael Austin, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, September 10, 2020
Approved Meeting Minutes

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- Commissioners Present:** Michael Austin, David Goldberg, Grace Kim, Patience Malaba, Rick Mohler, Amy Shumann, Jamie Stroble, Rian Watt, Patti Wilma
- Commissioners Absent:** Katherine Idziorek, Kelly Rider, Lauren Squires
- Commission Staff:** Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Connie Combs, Policy Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Commission Coordinator
- Guests:** Sandra Fried, outgoing Planning Commissioner
Annya Pintak, Seattle Department of Transportation
Lauren Flemister, Office of Planning and Community Development

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:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/when-we-meet/minutes-and-agendas>

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Chair Michael Austin called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm and recognized that we are on indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people. Land acknowledgement is a traditional custom dating back centuries for many Native communities and nations. For non-Indigenous communities, land acknowledgement is a powerful way of showing respect and honoring the Indigenous Peoples of the land on which we work and live. Acknowledgement is a simple way of resisting the erasure of Indigenous histories and working towards honoring and inviting the truth. Chair Austin asked fellow Commissioners to review the Color Brave Space norms and asked for any additions or amendments to those norms before stating the expectation that everyone practice those norms.

ACTION: Commissioner Rian Watt moved to approve the August 13, 2020 meeting minutes. Commissioner Rick Mohler seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Announcements

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, provided a brief review of the format for the online meeting, and noted that due to the online format, public comment must be submitted in writing at least 8 hours before the start of the Commission meeting.

Ms. Murdock recognized Commissioner Sandra Fried for her five years of service to the Commission and to the people of Seattle, noting this would be Ms. Fried's last meeting. Commissioners thanked Ms. Fried and encouraged her to keep in touch.

Briefing: SDOT's Transportation Equity Program

Annya Pintak, Transportation Equity Manager, Seattle Department of Transportation

Ms. Pintak introduced herself and provided some background on the Transportation Equity Program within the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). She stated that this work is not just about affordability but has expanded to include policy and strategy. A Transportation Equity Workgroup was convened in April 2019 to develop the department's first Transportation Equity Agenda. The workgroup has been building trust with communities of color and is now finalizing a series of equity strategies.

The 2020 Transportation Equity Program workplan and timeline has shifted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Current workplan elements include developing a community engagement plan including focus groups and surveys. The Transportation Equity Agenda implementation plan will include a series of value statements, strategies, and statements. Ms. Pintak stated that SDOT's Transportation Equity Program and anti-racist work are inter-connected. She ended her briefing by describing a series of opportunities to connect the Transportation Equity Agenda to SDOT's overall work program.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners asked if regional transit agencies are undergoing similar efforts, and if yes, how is SDOT engaging with them. Ms. Pintak stated that King County Metro and Sound Transit have both initiated equity efforts. King County has gone through a similar process to SDOT's and has created a mobility framework and are now shifting toward an implementation plan. Sound Transit does not have a similar advisory board but has a chief equity officer who has been focusing on transit dependent communities and how issues like safety and enforcement affect Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).
- Commissioners noted that at least one Transportation Equity Workgroup member position was intended to be held by a person experiencing homelessness. Ms. Pintak stated that the workgroup includes members who work on the front line of homelessness. The group is focusing on issues of affordability including advocacy regarding the price of transit.
- Commissioners inquired about SDOT's strategy to ensure transportation equity priorities are funded moving forward. Ms. Pintak stated that this will depend on the upcoming budget discussions. SDOT is committed to developing long-term strategies to create cultural change.
- Commissioners asked if SDOT's Transportation Equity Program has been coordinating with Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) comprehensive planning staff. Ms. Pintak stated that she has been working with OPCD Equitable Development Initiative staff.
- Commissioners recognized that enforcement actions such as traffic violations can have significant effects on BIPOC populations and asked what steps can be taken to address this. Ms. Pintak stated that there has been a lot of discussion within SDOT on this topic. She noted that parking enforcement will move from the Seattle Police Department to SDOT, where discussions are

ongoing about ways to rethink enforcement so as to not burden communities of color. There has also been a significant inter-departmental effort focused on community safety. This work has not produced any solutions yet; however, there is an acknowledgement of the need to do things differently. King County Metro has done a great job of shifting their fare enforcement policy.

- Commissioners requested more information about the expectations for the Transportation Equity Workgroup. Ms. Pintak stated that the intention was to bring communities to the table that are not normally included, especially to ensure that transportation policies do not negatively impact BIPOC communities.
- Commissioners noted that bus drivers are subject to significant stress during the pandemic and asked what specific considerations have been made for transit drivers. Ms. Pintak acknowledged that drivers are essential workers and many who ride the bus look at drivers to be responsible for safety. This subject has come up during discussions with the Transportation Equity Workgroup. Metro will be taking up this subject for further consideration.
- Commissioners recognized that there are many transit-dependent individuals, not only transient and elderly people. Those transit-dependent populations with daily needs are now more than ever impacted by what happens on a bus. Ms. Pintak noted that more people are now choosing personal vehicles than before the pandemic but acknowledged that others cannot make that choice.

Briefing: Equitable Transit Oriented Development Grant

Lauren Flemister, Office of Planning and Community Development

Ms. Flemister provided an overview of a grant received from the Federal Transit Administration to develop an equitable transit-oriented development pilot program. The City has formed an inter-departmental working group to develop the scope of this work.

The grant includes the following components:

1. Station Access and Catalytic Public Realm Projects. Support connectivity and access through the leveraging of public and private infrastructure investments within walking and biking distance to each station. This work will focus on understanding projects in the pipeline and determining the potential for projects working together to create something better than individually. SDOT will lead the station access component including access and connectivity. This work will consider both public and private infrastructure investments including multi-modal projects (buses, bikes, sidewalks) and mutually beneficial projects with Sound Transit.
2. Remnant Parcel Utilization Framework. Create a set of strategies for small remnant parcels, so this land can provide small scale affordable housing, increased connectivity and open space, or another type of community asset. The Office of Housing will be supporting this effort. Since the exact light rail alignment is not known at this time, this effort will look at broader areas and may present opportunities for agencies to acquire land for various purposes. This component will develop tools and strategies to assemble land in partnership with Sound Transit, King County, and WSDOT.
3. Equitable Transit Oriented Development. Work with communities to develop a strategy for equitable, community-led development within light rail station areas. Focus on building and strengthening partnerships between City agencies and communities to develop policies and other tools to prioritize resources for development. This work will be defined by the community and will

be focused on issues such as community ownership, wealth building, and affordable commercial space. OPCD will focus this work in BIPOC communities. Neighborhoods will be able to tell their story. The Equitable Development Initiative will carry this work forward.

4. Community Involvement Task Forces. Build community capacity and decision making within the planning process at each station area. Each task force to develop a body of work that will address equitable transit-oriented development, public infrastructure investments, art, and other community assets. Task forces will take a tailored approach to each station area.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners encouraged coordinating with Seattle/King County Public Health on this work, especially on issues related to transit-oriented development, housing, air quality, and greenspace.
- Commissioners recommended the project team partner with BIPOC organizations and industrial stakeholders to consider workforce development opportunities near transit stations. Ms. Flemister stated that the team intends to look for opportunities to work with community based BIPOC organizations. Land assembly strategies are intended to result in BIPOC-centered equitable transit-oriented development. The remnant parcel work will consider preferences of BIPOC communities. The project team will consider coordination with the Industrial Maritime Strategy to incorporate partnerships.
- Commissioners requested more information on the scope, approach, and deliverables of this project. Ms. Flemister stated that the goal is for this work to be implementable, not just case studies. The station access work will be directly applicable to all stations. The remnant parcels work will result in a toolkit for land dispensation. The Equitable Transit Oriented Development component will involve working directly with communities along the alignment to form appropriate policy recommendations.
- Commissioners asked if the grant includes any opportunities for acquiring parcels. Ms. Flemister noted that the Equitable Development Initiative team was very involved in the recent sale of the Mercer Megablock property. Opportunities to acquire land will be depend on what funding will be available.
- Commissioners acknowledged that station area walksheds often lack publicly accessible green spaces. Ms. Flemister stated that the project team is coordinating with the Outside Citywide effort that is studying distribution of public open space and looking for creative strategies to reimagine and acquire open space opportunities. She noted that OPCD staff has been focused on open space in co-planning efforts with Sound Transit, including opportunities to create open space, art, etc.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.