



**City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission**

Leslie Miller, Chair
Barbara Wilson, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 28, 2012
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Vice-Chair David Cutler, Kadie Bell, Catherine Benotto, Luis F. Borrero, Josh Brower, Colie Hough-Beck, Mark Johnson, Bradley Khouri, Jeanne Krikawa, Amalia Leighton, Kevin McDonald, Chris Persons, Matt Roewe, Sarah Snider

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Chair Leslie Miller, Morgan Shook

COMMISSION STAFF

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

IN ATTENDANCE

Rebecca Herzfeld, Council Central Staff; Nathan Torgelson, Seattle Parks & Recreation; Bob Chandler, Seattle Department of Transportation; Jessie Clawson, McCullough Hill Leary; Peter Steinbrueck

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

- **Approve: June 14, 2012 Meeting Minutes**

ACTION: Commissioner Kevin McDonald moved to approve the June 14, 2012 minutes. Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with edits. Commissioner David Cutler abstained.

- **Chair's Report**

Vice-Chair Cutler reviewed the upcoming meetings and events with the Commissioners.

▪ **DISCUSS & APPROVE: SPC Recommendations on Yesler Terrace Proposal**

Vice-Chair Cutler recused himself from the Yesler Terrace discussion and left the room.

Commissioner Kevin McDonald called for any disclosures & recusals.

Disclosures & Recusals:

- Commissioner David Cutler recused himself from the discussion.
- Commissioner Bradley Khouri disclosed that his firm, b9 Architects, design single-family and multi-family housing throughout Seattle and might in this neighborhood.
- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture, works on municipal planning and private development projects throughout Seattle and that he serves on the board of Capitol Hill Housing, which may develop replacement housing or on-site housing for the Yesler redevelopment.
- Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa disclosed that she serves on the Yesler Terrace Citizen Review Committee, which may also submit a letter to City Council.
- Commissioner Luis Borrero disclosed that his firm, DRVE LLC, has a strategic partnership with Heartland, LLC, which is working on the Yesler Terrace project.
- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group PLLC, represents single and multi family developers throughout the city of Seattle. He added that used to serve on the Advisory Board of Full Life Care (formerly Elderhealth NW), which works closely with SHA to provide housing and adult-day services to people suffering from dementia.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design, is working on the infrastructure for the Yesler Terrace redevelopment project.
- Commissioner Sarah Snider disclosed that her firm, LMN, does urban design and various types of architectural projects and works for clients who might be interested in pursuing development projects at Yesler Terrace.
- Commissioner Catherine Benotto disclosed that her firm, Weber Thompson, designs projects and advises clients who might be interested in pursuing development projects at Yesler Terrace.
- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that the firm she works for, HBB, works with SDOT, SPU, Parks, and City Light on projects throughout Seattle. She added that her firm also works for private and public housing developers in Seattle.
- Commissioner Chris Persons disclosed that his organization, Capitol Hill Housing builds affordable housing throughout Seattle and may develop replacement housing or on-site housing for the Yesler redevelopment.

ACTION: Commissioner Josh Brower moved to approve the letter. Commissioner Mark Johnson seconded the motion. After the discussion, summarized below, Commissioner Josh Brower moved to approve the letter with the amended changes. Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Commissioner Mark Johnson shared his concerns related to the section about attracting new families.

Commissioner Benotto wondered, in relation to the graph on family housing, if we should reference a desire to influence unit mix and something about understanding the economics.

Commissioner Hough Beck clarified that we should use the term “lines” and not “wires.” She suggested that we eliminate “above ground utility lines since they impact the aesthetics of neighborhoods.”

Commissioner Johnson noted that he would send some edits to Ms. Wilson. He added that the point, regarding attracting families, is still a little less forceful.

Commissioner Krikawa questioned whether these are recommendations as it sounds like we are supporting what they are doing. Commissioner Roewe agreed and added that they have done a good job. Ms. Wilson asked would “comments” be better. Commissioner Krikawa suggested just rephrasing this paragraph.

Commissioner Khouri suggested that, in the second graph, it should read, “design guidelines create great pedestrian environments.” He asked for some clarification regarding minimizing displacement and wondered how many are being displaced. Commissioner Johnson suggested that we might just want to avoid the numbers.

Commissioner Khouri asked about the underground utilities and noted that if we have district energy it could have potential for huge savings and suggested that there are more sustainable ways to manage the utilities. Commissioner Borrero stated that it could increase property values. Commissioner McDonald suggested moving that section and re-ordering the graphs.

Commissioner Persons noted that just focusing on district energy misses focus on other areas of sustainability that Yesler Terrace could focus on. Commissioner McDonald suggested including a broader range of sustainability. Commissioner Borrero noted that he considered it important to keep it separate, given that the development of this district is a unique opportunity to install district energy pipes. Commissioner Persons noted that the Capitol Hill ecodistrict encompasses district energy as one strategy.

Commissioner Persons noted that the hillclimb is specifically called out and although he agreed that was key but the connection across Boren is important to consider. He added that SDOT has removed some of the mid-block crossings. He continued that the connectivity to the east should be called out as well. Commissioner Persons stated that there is a lot of concern about how the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace would impact little Saigon and the possibility of gentrification. He added that this and the upward pressure on land values and rents are worrying to SHA. Commissioner Persons stated that it would be great to encourage continuation of looking at how we can preserve affordable retail space. Commissioner McDonald stated that places that Yesler Terrace is connected to are good for everyone. Ms. Wilson noted the changes about connectivity and adding mindfulness regarding affordable retail space.

Commissioner Benotto stated that the plan looks like it has more than one acre. Ms. Sheehy replied that it is one new acre of a pocket park and not total acreage.

▪ **DISCUSS: Proposed SoDo arena proposal**

Vice-Chair Cutler called for any disclosures & recusals.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner Colie Hough Beck disclosed that her firm, HBB, works on commercial, multifamily, and public infrastructure projects throughout the city and that the Port of Seattle, SDOT, SPU, Parks and Seattle City Light are clients of HBB.

- Commissioner Mark Johnson disclosed that his firm, ESA, consults on projects throughout the city, and the Port of Seattle, SDOT, and WSDOT are clients of ESA.
- Commissioner Sarah Snider disclosed that her firm, LMN Architects, does planning, urban design, and various types of architectural projects in the Seattle metropolitan area
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design Company does work in the public rights-of-way, on commercial, multi-family and industrial lands in Seattle. SvR has also done work with the Port of Seattle.
- Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa disclosed that the SODO Business Association is a past client.
- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his firm, Veris Law Group, represents industrial businesses and business associations located in or associated with the BNMIC and N. Seattle Industrial Area, and that his firm represents a client who owns a parcel of land located within the Stadium Overlay District that is unrelated to the arena proposal and which is currently occupied by an industrial and commercial use.
- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture, works on municipal planning and private development in areas of Seattle that could be influenced by the outcome of this project. He also volunteers with the Uptown Alliance who is currently asking the city for further study of a new basketball/hockey/concert arena at Seattle Center.
- Commissioner Kadie Bell Sata disclosed that her firm, Griffin, Hill & Associates, has previously worked on sports facility development projects.

Ms. Wilson reviewed what has been done on the draft and summarized the review process. She added that the staff is trying to get many of the comments into the paper and that several Council members have asked for the Commission's recommendations. Ms. Wilson noted that the timing is that they will be voting on the MOU soon and that she would like to get a letter to Council by July 13. She added that a number of people will wonder who exactly the planning commission is so she suggested that they add more background about providing the recommendations.

Ms. Wilson walked the Commission through the draft letter.

Vice-Chair Cutler stated that it was a great outline and noted that he had talked with Councilmember Conlin, other Councilmembers, and the Mayor's office and there was not a lot of agreement about how this is going to shake out. He added that the Commission has an important role to play concerning land use issues. Vice-Chair Cutler referred to point #5 on the draft concerning other issues or concerns and shared that projects like Yesler Terrace, schools, family-sized units, SLU, and transportation are all projects for public benefit and he wondered how to balance the city's land use capacity for those projects with this project. He urged the Commission to keep their eyes on the big picture and wondered if this is the right location.

Commissioner Leighton asked if there are any other locations where stadiums are allowed. Ms. Sheehy replied that they are allowed in IC zones. Commissioner Johnson added that there are a number of zones that allow for this type of development.

Commissioner Leighton wondered about the general timeline for when this could come out and suggested that it would be good to clarify how this works with the Viaduct/Seawall replacement. She also asked if there will be any other transportation modeling or analysis. Ms. Wilson asked Bob Chandler from SDOT if he could respond to the question regarding the Viaduct/Seawall. Mr. Chandler stated that the seawall should be completed by late 2013/early 2014 with the tunnel opening in late 2015. Mr. Chandler added that the work around the south portal should be done in 2016 and it would be fall of 2016 for the arena.

Commissioner McDonald stated that he did some distance measurements from the light rail station and the ferry dock and it is $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the stadium to the SoDo station and 1.5 miles from the stadium to the ferry terminal. He added that the propensity of people to use the corridor is based on quality and based on walking this area, the quality is substandard with poor ADA accessibility. Commissioner McDonald asked who is responsible for upgrades and improvements to this area. He noted that there is a lack of connectivity and that makes a big difference in terms of transportation capacity. Commissioner McDonald noted that having a world-class NBA arena on that corner would expose the raw industrial nature of that neighborhood and thus there would be a lot of pressure on re-development in the adjacent areas. He encouraged the Commission to emphasize that the hard line of Holgate would most likely not hold in the long term.

Commissioner Krikawa noted that there is a lot that we have to do and wondered if we want to pull the bonding capacity out as that applies to wherever a stadium is built.

Commissioner Hough Beck suggested that the Industrial Lands Report be referenced and noted that the draft does not really address urban design specifically.

Commissioner Johnson encouraged the Commission to be very specific on the change from IG to IC and how it would affect the area. He added that there are challenges from the transportation question and the only way to make the tunnel pay is to charge a toll that 40% of peak hour users will not use it. He added that we do not have the information about those potential impacts. Commissioner Johnson mentioned the impact on Pioneer Square with more events in that area.

Commissioner Borrero agreed that the information presented to date about mobility impacts was insufficient, and that he thought the quintessential issue here was related to land use, i.e to understand the intention of the transition area when created. He noted that if it was to provide a buffer around stadiums to protect activity encroachments into the industrial areas, then the transition area would have to be expanded to the south. But if it was expanded, then would it be possible for someone to propose another heavy use in that space? Otherwise, we would have to agree that the intention would not be preserved.

Commissioner Brower stated that he thought the Commission should go back to the staff report and review when the original rezone and overlay was done. He added that the stadium overlay was intended to be a buffer. Ms. Sheehy added that in the land use code it notes that Holgate is the hard line.

Commissioner Persons stated that he did not see where it designates this area as a buffer and, from what he sees, it is within the hard line and within the use. He added that, as a developer, when there are zoning overlays you try to fit within the rules.

Commissioner Leighton noted that, in the recommendations we should make sure we recognize that there is discussion in the Transit Master Plan, the Pedestrian Master Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan about pedestrian and bike improvements.

Commissioner Roewe stated that he welcomes the idea of an arena but it seems that this is the wrong place. He added that the City owns Key Arena and has put considerable investment in uptown, transit, Mercer and there is a lot of connectivity there. He suggested that the owners seriously consider a new facility there.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice-Chair Cutler welcomed Peter Steinbrueck. Mr. Steinbrueck stated that he was encouraged by this discussion and the preliminary analysis. He noted that much of what he heard was what he had tried to communicate to the King County Council. Mr. Steinbrueck noted that it is more than just allowable uses and that people are getting a mixed message. He added that the planning context is not well understood but that the Commission is asking the right questions. Mr. Steinbrueck stated that the station overlay district is mischaracterized and that this overlay had purposes and represented years of work. He noted that package included adoption of the MIC neighborhood plan, regionally designated under the GMA, significant comp plan, approval and an adoption matrix and it has been forgotten and shelved. Mr. Steinbrueck agreed that there is a need to strengthen policy. He added that, in his personal view, this area is too confined to accommodate a third stadium and that the transition area was to establish a comfort zone. He shared that he feels that the City should hold off on approval until the necessary analysis is complete. Mr. Steinbrueck suggested that the Commission is not going to get the necessary answers with the project based EIS, it needs a programmatic EIS and this has not been done. He continued that there is a lack of understanding about overlays and that major institutions have to go through a 2-year process in order to address impacts on the surrounding residential areas. Mr. Steinbrueck expressed that the same should apply here as our industrial job base is critical.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 9:11 am.