



**City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission**

Amalia Leighton, Chair
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 10, 2015
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Austin, Luis Borrero, Lauren Craig, Molly Esteve, Sandra Fried, Grace Kim, Amalia Leighton, Tim Parham, Marj Press, David Shelton, Spencer Williams, Patti Wilma

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Yolanda Ho, Jeanne Krikawa, Kara Martin, Jake McKinstry

COMMISSION STAFF

Diana Canzoneri - Demographer, Robin Magonegil, Administrative Assistant, Vanessa Murdock – Executive Director, Katie Sheehy - Policy Analyst (on loan from DPD)

GUESTS

Jeseca Brand, DON; Robert Feldstein, Mayor's Office; Ava Frisinger, ADS Advisory Council; Maureen Linehan, ADS Director

IN ATTENDANCE

Cindi Barker, Carson Bowlin, Corey Buttry, Patrice Carroll, Nathan Torgelson

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's Report & Minutes Approval

- Chair Amalia Leighton

Chair Leighton called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm

Commissioner Marj Press moved to approve the August 13, 2015 minutes. Commissioner Spencer Williams seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Commissioners Michael Austin and Amalia Leighton abstained.

Chair Leighton briefed the Commissioners what was discussed at the Comp Plan meeting that immediately preceded this meeting.

Chair Leighton introduced the new Get Engaged Commissioner, Molly Esteve. Ms. Esteve introduced herself and shared a bit about her background and why she is excited to be on the Commission.

Chair Leighton reported that Jesseca Brand, the Policy Analyst for the Commission, has accepted a position with the Department of Neighborhoods and will be working on HALA. She added that Katie Sheehy has been loaned to the Commission from DPD for ten hours a week and will be assisting Commission staff for a couple of months.

Briefing: Affordable Housing Impact Mitigation Program

- Robert Feldstein, Mayor's Office

Chair Leighton welcomed Robert Feldstein from the Mayor's Office.

If you would like to view the documents presented on the Affordable Housing Impact Mitigation Program, they are included in the supporting documents found in the minute's section of our website.

- Applies to developments with > 4,000 square feet of new chargeable floor area devoted to commercial uses
- Does not apply to institutional uses, but Incentive Zoning will still apply in eligible locations
- Exemptions for first 4,000 sf of street-level retail and all required street-level retail on pedestrian designated streets in primarily residential buildings
- Requires cash contribution to the Office of Housing for capital investment in preserving or producing affordable housing (rental \leq 60% AMI, ownership \leq 80% AMI), or provision of onsite or offsite rental housing affordable to households \leq 60% AMI
- Developments are subject to the greater of Affordable Housing Impact Mitigation Program or Incentive Zoning requirements

Commission Discussion:

The Commissioners wondered if there would be a rush to vest under current regulations permit before these changes get adopted. Mr. Feldstein acknowledged that some developers will move to vest before the program is adopted but noted if the City were to wait to implement the program until the next economic downturn, the current building cycle would be completely missed. He added that contract rezones could happen sooner but that legislative rezones will happen concurrently.

There was also discussion regarding adjusting the implementation map to acknowledge transit access.

Mr. Feldstein clarified that apartments and condominiums would fall under Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH). He added that there are exceptions for the first floor areas where commercial uses are required.

Commissioners asked if the program worked given the building code. Mr. Feldstein replied that staff are still working through some of those details, particularly at the 85 foot building height.

Commissioners wondered how the fees are determined and were told that staff is looking at a range of possibilities.

Commissioners asked what would happen if the proposed upzones are not passed. Mr. Feldstein stated that a plan B to build affordable housing would be necessary, adding that there are not a lot of other options beyond this program.

The Commissioners discussed the possibility of communities wanting to revisit their neighborhood plans. Mr. Feldstein stated that the upzone conversation will be citywide and that it will be focused on the upzone proposal.

The timeline was discussed with Mr. Feldstein noting that the necessary environmental review adds time to the process. Mr. Feldstein acknowledged this component of the process and added that Uptown and the University District are about to undergo environmental review for ongoing planning work in those neighborhoods.

The Commissioners talked about the transit communities as potential areas. Jesseca Brand stated that the HALA recommendations talk a lot about transit communities and family sized housing.

Commissioners wondered about the school district, whether or not they apply to this program and they suggested that it be part of the discussion. They added that it would be good to see higher density around schools with more affordable units near the schools. Mr. Feldstein noted that he liked the idea of family-sized units near schools.

Commissioners questioned if this will appear in the Comp Plan. Mr. Feldstein responded that the Comp Plan is going to stay at a more programmatic level.

Chair Leighton thanked Mr. Feldstein for coming.

Discussion: SPC thoughts to date on public draft of Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan

If you would like to view the documents presented on the Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan, they are included in the supporting documents found in the minute's section of our website.

- Meaningful effort to eliminate redundancy
- Use of graphics has greatly increased and is starting to shape the story
- Plan is largely focused on and incorporates equity
- SPC comments are particularly reflected in Housing and Transportation
- Vast improvement in flexibility in Land Use Element

Commissioner staff discussed the timeline for preparing a position letter on the public draft, noting the November 12th Commission meeting as the target date for approval of a letter.

Briefing: Area Plan on Aging – Public Draft

- Maureen Linehan, ADS Director and Ava Frisinger, ADS Advisory Council Chair

Chair Leighton welcomed Maureen Linehan and Ava Frisinger from the Aging and Disability Services

If you would like to view the documents presented on the Area Plan on Aging, they are included in the supporting documents found in the minute's section of our website.

- Area Plan on Aging is based on community input
- The Plan will guide ADS work from 2016 to 2019
- Highlights goals for developing age-friendly communities
- Summarizes annual budget of \$38 million in federal, state and local resources
- Updated every two years

Commission Discussion:

The Commission discussed the presentation and provided their feedback mentioning issues regarding maintenance, displacement, affordability, safety, transit, health needs, accessibility, climate change and disaster response.

Chair Leighton thanked Ms. Linehan and Ms. Frisinger for coming.

Discussion: Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) Program renewal

Commission staff and Commissioner Grace Kim briefed the Commission on the presentation made by Office of Housing staff to the Commission’s Housing and Neighborhood committee:

- Expand areas where the program applies to include all multifamily housing
- Encourage family size units (directly in response to SPC action agenda)
 - Extra encouragement for 2+ BR units
 - 20% if 4 or more 2+ BR units
 - 25% if mostly studios and 1 BR
 - As unit size goes up, developers can get MFTE credit at a slightly higher AMI level (in response to how HUD sets tiering for larger households)

Commission Discussion:

The Commission discussed the multi-family tax exemption program noting the new Area Median Income (AMI) percentage thresholds, expanded boundaries and the increase in the average home tax.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Leighton adjourned the meeting at 5:30