



**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**May 27, 2004**  
**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

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**Commissioners in Attendance**

John Owen, Chair; George Blomberg, Vice Chair; Mahlon Clements, Tom Eanes, Jerry Finrow, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Joe Quintana, Mimi Sheridan, Paul Tomita

**Commissioners Absent**

Anjali Bhagat, Angela Brooks, Ray Connell, Lyn Krizanich, Steve Sheehy

**Commission Staff**

Marty Curry, Executive Director

**Guests**

Scott McColl, City Council Central Staff

**Call to Order**

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Tom Eanes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jerry Finrow, to approve the May 13, 2004 Commission minutes. The motion to accept the minutes was approved unanimously.

**COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**Chair's Report**

**Upcoming and Recent Meetings**

Chair John Owen asked Commissioners to review the June Calendar of events, particularly noting the upcoming series of community workshops on the Neighborhood Business District Strategy. A sign up sheet was passed around and Commissioners were encouraged to sign up to attend one of the six meetings and to note if they were willing to help facilitate during the small group discussions.

## **Northgate Update**

Chair John Owen thanked Mimi Sheridan for presenting the Commission's summary report on the Pedestrian Connections workshop to the Northgate Stakeholders' Group. He also noted that the Commission's Northgate Subcommittee will meet June 3 (Noon – 1:30pm) to finalize their report and help DPD staff formulate key concepts for the Open Space and Pedestrian/Bicycle Connections Plan.

## **Nominating Committee Recommendations**

Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa read the Nominating Committee's recommended slate of officers for 2004: George Blomberg, Chair; Steve Sheehy, Vice Chair; Jeanne Krikawa, At-Large Executive Committee representative; Matthew Kitchen, Transportation Committee Chair; (with Anjali Bhagat, Transportation Committee Vice Chair); Jerry Finrow, Chair of the Housing, Neighborhoods and Urban Centers Committee.

**Action: The Nominations slate was MSP, with Commissioner Sheridan moving to accept the nominations and Commissioner Eanes seconding the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.**

## **Executive Director Selection Process**

Chair John Owen reported that progress is being made on the selection of the new Executive Director. Almost 70 applications have been received, and the rating panel will review them over the weekend. They will meet early next week to recommend candidates for interviews. He thanked again Commissioners who are helping with this process.

## **Commissioner Spotlight Jerry Finrow**

Commissioner Jerry Finrow shared an interesting and informative slide show on housing research he has conducted in Sweden and the Netherlands, focusing on innovative housing types in dense urban settings. While very different cultural contexts, Commissioners appreciated learning about how other countries are making efficient use of scarce land in urban areas and trying out different building materials and types to create affordable housing.

## **Approval of Commission Letters**

### **Comp Plan Amendments**

Commissioners were generally pleased with the draft letter's tone and breadth. John Owen noted that it appeared his memo/input on the Precautionary Principle had not been included, and asked staff to insert that into the letter. He explained to Commissioners his follow up with City staff and the proponents of the amendment and their agreement with his proposal to include public health indicators and incorporate terms in appropriate places in the Comprehensive Plan to address public health dimensions of various elements, including land use, transportation, open space, housing, and environment. Commissioner Jerry Finrow stated that the purpose of indicators is to monitor the effects of actions or policies, but that the question is "so what?"

Commissioner Joe Quintana asked if there was any interest in expanding economic indicators. Other Commissioners agreed that either now or following this amendment process the Commission should work with DPD to reexamine the Comp Plan indicators given the changes made in this process or suggest any additional indicators that should be measured.

Chair Owen asked that staff review his notes from the Comp Plan Transportation workshop and add any relevant comments. Commissioner Quintana asked whether the Transportation Strategic Plan (TSP) is a real transportation plan this time. Commissioner Kitchen responded that the TSP is not completed yet, and that a significant issue is whether GMA procedural requirements will apply to its adoption (requirements for a public review/input process). Commissioner Quintana asked further if this is more of a policy driven plan (the TSP), what is the policy basis? If this is coming from the Comp Plan, is the revised Transportation Element able to provide clear policy direction, particularly where there may be competing goals?

Commissioner Paul Tomita observed that the new section in the Transportation Element, Make Best Use of the Streets We Have, may be the most useful addition to this element.

Commissioners suggested some specific changes in their comments that staff noted for revisions. Commissioner George Blomberg asked that the Commission step back and remind ourselves and others why we are doing this – a reminder of the larger goals of the growth management/urban village strategy as our framework for managing how we grow and maintain a strong community.

**Action: Commissioners directed staff to make the noted revisions, and by voice assent approved the letter. Chair Owen directed staff to move forward with finalizing the comments and letter and submitting them to DPD.**

### **Alaskan Way Viaduct DEIS – Commission Comments**

Commissioners reviewed the almost-final draft of the joint Planning and Design Commission comments on the Alaskan Way Viaduct DEIS. Chair John Owen noted that the DEIS is not a document that leads to a decision. He urged more specific language calling for a succinct evaluation of alternatives to use for making decisions – something that compares impacts on the local and regional economy, on development opportunities, and on the regional transportation system.

Commissioner Kitchen stated that the purpose and need statement clearly defines this as a preservation project, so is not necessarily compelled to address traffic problems or improvements to the area. Commissioners discussed whether this is or should be viewed simply as a preservation project. They noted that even if the EIS process takes this narrower view, the questions raised by Chair Owen need to be addressed, even if outside the scope of the EIS. It is these issues that should be informing the decisions to be made regarding the preferred alternative.

Commissioners offered several editorial comments and several Commissioners agreed to read through the comments again and provide more detailed revisions. Staff reminded Commissioners that this letter and comments are due Tuesday, June 1, 2004.

**Action: Commissioners approved unanimously the letter with the noted revisions and editorial changes to be offered by Commissioners by Friday. They authorized staff to make these changes, and to work with SDC staff to finalize and submit the letter and comments by the due date, Tuesday, June 1, 2004. (Commissioner Sheridan Recused)**

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Adjournment**

Chair Owen adjourned the meeting at 9:00 a.m., thanking the Commissioners for the opportunity to serve as their chair for the past two years.