



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Rick Mohler and Jamie Stroble, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, March 23, 2023
Approved Meeting Minutes

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

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 Rick Mohler called the meeting to order at 7:33 am and announced several upcoming Commission meetings. Co-Chair Mohler 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 Mohler 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. He 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. He reminded Commissioners that they have collectively agreed to abide by these norms.

ACTION: Commissioner David Goldberg moved to approve the March 9, 2023 meeting minutes. Commissioner Roque Deherrera seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

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 the full Commission meetings will be recorded and posted to the Planning Commission's website via YouTube. She noted that these recordings are not in lieu of the Commission's minutes, which are approved at the next full Commission meeting.

Ms. Murdock announced the proposed Planning Commission leadership slate for the next year, based on nominations submitted by Commissioners. She thanked the past year's co-chairs for their leadership. The proposed leadership slate is as follows:

- Commission co-chairs: McCaela Daffern and David Goldberg
- Housing & Neighborhoods committee co-chairs: Matt Hutchins and Radhika Nair
- Land Use and Transportation committee co-chairs: Kelabe Tewolde and Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson

ACTION: The motion to approve the proposed leadership slate passed unanimously.

Discussion: Draft Industrial and Maritime Strategy Comprehensive Plan Amendments Letter

Co-Chair Mohler introduced the discussion of the Commission's draft letter regarding proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments related to the Industrial and Maritime Strategy. He reminded the Commissioners that the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments are the first step in adopting and implementing the Industrial and Maritime Strategy recommendations. These amendments and regulatory changes will be considered this spring by the City Council's Land Use Committee. The Commission's comment letter will be focused exclusively on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments, not the specifics of the Industrial and Maritime Strategy itself. The Stakeholder Advisory Group's recommendations were documented in a final report and studied in both a Draft and Final EIS. Co-Chair Mohler stated that this is the third of four meetings when the Commission will discuss and approve a comment letter on the proposed amendments.

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff, provided an overview of the Planning Commission's draft letter on the proposed Industrial and Maritime Strategy Comprehensive Plan amendments. He reviewed several proposed edits to the draft letter recommended by Commissioners. He stated that the draft letter will be revised to incorporate any additional Commissioner comments and proposed edits. Commissioners will take action on a final draft letter at the April 13th meeting.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners asked if the City's broader economic development strategy is reflected in the draft letter. Mr. Hoey stated that the draft letter focuses primarily on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to implement the Industrial and Maritime Strategy, which includes a significant focus on increasing industrial and maritime jobs and related economic opportunities.
- Commissioners recommended adding the Seattle Department of Transportation to the list of stakeholders involved in developing curbside management strategies.
- Commissioners requested clarification on inclusion of the Industrial Buffer zone in the draft letter. Mr. Hoey stated that the Urban Industrial zone will eventually replace the Industrial Buffer zone, but the two zones will co-exist until the development code is updated.
- Commissioners acknowledged the Planning Commission's consistency in advocating for protection of industrial lands and evolving industrial and maritime policies over the years. The Commission has consistently advocated for closing zoning loopholes and prioritizing low-income communities. The draft letter casts a vision for our future industrial lands, including dense transit-oriented working areas. The City's proposed new zones reflect the evolving nature of Seattle's economy.
- Commissioners reiterated the statement in the draft letter that creative uses and makerspaces do not need to be located only in industrial areas but can also be sited in urban villages and mixed-use commercial zones.
- Commissioners noted the nuances of locating industry-supportive housing near jobs and expressed ongoing concerns about perpetuating environmental injustice by doing so.
- Commissioners recognized a statement in the Transportation section of the draft letter highlighting the need for investment in sidewalks and other multi-modal infrastructure in industrial areas.

Briefing: Racial and Social Equity Index

Diana Canzoneri and Phillip Carnell, Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)

Ms. Canzoneri introduced Seattle's Racial and Social Equity (RSE) Index as "A shared resource for prioritizing, plans, programs, and investments using geospatial data." She stated that the project team is seeking feedback from the Planning Commission, including their thoughts on the RSE Index mapping app, how to enhance its usefulness for and dissemination to stakeholders, how to best use this data at the City to guide policy and programs, and specifically, how to best use the RSE Index to update and implement the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that the Index was first developed in 2017 by OPCD with interdepartmental consultation from the Mayor's Office, the Office of Civil Rights, Office of Sustainability and Environment, Seattle Public Utilities, and others. The Index provides City departments with a common set of data identifying where Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) priority populations make up relatively large shares of neighborhood residents. The Index is a tool for informing design, prioritization, and evaluation of programs, plans, and investments. OPCD refreshes and updates the Index on a regular basis.

Phillip stated that the RSE Index is a newly updated composite of three subindices: the Race, English Language Learners (ELL), and Origins Index; Socioeconomic Disadvantage Index; and Health Disadvantage Index. OPCD selected this combination of indices after extensive study. Each of the subindices are mapped at the census tract level and are colored slightly differently from the composite index map. The Index is available in a variety of forms, including a detailed, print-friendly PDF map, the ArcGIS Online mapping app, SeattleGeoData (open data), and the City's internal GIS Production server. OPCD produced a users' guide to make the Index as accessible as possible, both within and outside City government.

Phillip shared an example of how the RSE Index can be used to complement the City's recent Tree Canopy Assessment Report. This report revealed a loss of citywide tree canopy. The RSE Index Equity provides additional details on tree canopy distribution loss in environmental justice priority areas. These areas started with a lower baseline and saw a greater loss than other neighborhoods. Ms. Canzoneri provided another example of how the RSE Index can be used with the Equitable Development Monitoring Program as a place-based analysis of Equitable Development Community Indicators. She highlighted RSE Index maps for the following indicators - Proximity to Community Centers, Access to Frequent Transit, and Homeownership Rates. She stated that homeownership rates are generally highest where single family homes are prevalent and are lower in RSE priority areas. However, homeownership rates among low-income households are relatively high in parts of Southeast Seattle.

Ms. Canzoneri highlighted the following considerations for using the Index.

- It is best used as a starting point to be considered along with additional data relevant to the purpose at hand, as well as community voices and input.
- The RSE index only shows characteristics and conditions of people living in an area. View population density alongside.
- There can be variation within, and not just across, census tracts.
- Consider ways to prioritize based on place and people. Persons in RSJI priority groups also live outside RSE Priority Areas.
- There are limitations in neighborhood level data for some RSJI populations.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners suggested that it would be helpful for the RSE Index to incorporate a tool to compare different data sets. Phillip stated that OPCD has been focused on completing this version of the Index and will consider suggestions like these for next update.
- Commissioners stated that some users may have challenges using technology such as ArcGIS online and asked if all the sub-layers can be exported and downloaded. Phillip stated that this has not been considered but can be incorporated into the next update.
- Commissioners suggested that the RSE Index could incorporate data on the locations of traffic collisions and injuries from SDOT. Ms. Canzoneri stated that SDOT's recent top-to-bottom Vision Zero analysis includes aggregated data on collisions involving pedestrians. She offered to contact SDOT to learn what data layers they have. Phillip stated that this could be a good opportunity to discuss different sub-layers for the online application that are updated annually.
- Commissioners requested more information on the schedule for maintaining the data dashboard. Ms. Canzoneri stated that OPCD plans to update the data every three years. She stated that most of the data is multi-year in nature and does not change much every year.
- Commissioners asked for more information on how the RSE Index data informs the City's indicators related to displacement and underserved neighborhoods. Ms. Canzoneri stated the City will be addressing medium-term displacement risk in the Comprehensive Plan. The Equitable Development Monitoring Program has heightened displacement risk indicators that are more indicative of real time data. Commissioners stated that the displacement risk data can inform the Comprehensive Plan and suggested that the data could be displayed in a time-lapse view with five- or ten-year increments.

- Commissioners stated that the RSE Index unlocks a wide variety of information with linkages to other maps to show trends over time. Commissioners suggested incorporating data layers such as Walk Score, Bike Score, fifteen-minute neighborhoods, and access to community centers.

Resources

- [Vision Zero: Top-to-Bottom Review - Transportation | seattle.gov](#)
- [Residential Moving Patterns in King County, WA | San Francisco Fed \(frbsf.org\)](#)
- [Indicator Projects | Population and Demographics \(arcgis.com\)](#)
- [DisplacementRiskIndexUpdate.pdf \(seattle.gov\)](#)

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 am.