

# CITY OF SHORELINE

## SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

September 6, 2012  
7:00 P.M.

Shoreline City Hall  
Council Chamber

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### Commissioners Present

Chair Moss  
Vice Chair Esselman  
Commissioner Craft  
Commissioner Maul  
Commissioner Montero  
Commissioner Scully  
Commissioner Wagner

### Staff Present

Rachael Markle, Director, Planning and Community Development  
Steve Szafran, Senior Planner, Planning and Community Development

### Others Present

### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moss called the regular meeting of the Shoreline Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

### ROLL CALL

Upon roll call by the Commission Clerk the following Commissioners were present: Chair Moss, Vice Chair Esselman and Commissioners Craft, Maul, Montero and Scully. Commissioner Wagner arrived at 7:05 p.m.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

### DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Markle announced that Jessica Simulcik Smith will be on maternity leave until December, and Steve Szafran and Miranda Redinger were both promoted to the position of Senior Planner.

Ms. Markle advised that staff will provide an extensive update to the City Council regarding light rail station area planning on September 17<sup>th</sup>, and the City Council may refer a future land use map amendment to the Commission for consideration. She encouraged the Commission to follow the City Council's discussion, and staff will also report back to the Commission. Chair Moss asked if the City

has any areas that are considered urban fringe. Ms. Markle answered no. She said this is a regional issue that would affect the City of Shoreline, as well.

Ms. Markle said the City Council will also discuss a potential State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) update that would raise the thresholds in urban areas above that of areas that are closer to the edge of the urban growth boundary. This would give areas that are closer in and have services and amenities more of an advantage for development. She advised that staff is closely following the Department of Ecology's (DOE) weekly committee meetings on rule making for SEPA.

Ms. Markle announced that the Echo Lake Neighborhood is sponsoring a light rail forum on September 18<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at City Hall. They have invited residents of the Echo Lake, North City and Meridian Park Neighborhoods to participate in learning more about light rail from Sound Transit and the City of Shoreline, specifically focusing on the 185<sup>th</sup> Street station. This group has done a lot of outreach, and they are expecting a good turnout.

Chair Moss asked staff to provide an update on the City's recent grant application for station area planning. Ms. Markle answered that the City did not receive grant funding this year, but they will apply again when station area planning funds become available in the future.

Chair Moss recalled that during an earlier Comprehensive Plan discussion, staff agreed to research the policy for the City accepting money to a dedicated fund that could be used for the arts. Mr. Szafran agreed to provide this information at the Commission's next meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of August 2, 2012 and August 16, 2012 were approved as presented.

### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one in the audience.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Markle did not have any additional items to report to the Commission during this portion of the meeting.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **Establishing a Subcommittee for Light Rail Station Area Planning**

Chair Moss invited the Commissioners to share their thoughts about establishing a subcommittee for light rail station area planning. She also invited them to provide suggestions for who might serve on the subcommittee.

Commissioner Craft suggested that density, existing land uses around the proposed station areas, and the areas that will be impacted are important issues to consider. He reminded the Commission that the City's goal is to have two light rail stations in Shoreline. He recommended that two subcommittees be formed, one for each of the two stations. He noted that there are so many specific details to consider, and each neighborhood deserves its own time.

Vice Chair Esselman noted that, at this time, Sound Transit has not made a final decision on sites in Shoreline. She suggested the subcommittee's discussions should be issue specific rather than site specific.

Commissioner Montero expressed his belief that one subcommittee would be sufficient. He said it will be important for the subcommittee to provide regular reports to the Commission and provide copies of the handouts they collect while they attend meetings related to light rail and station area planning. He commented that the subcommittee should be particularly sensitive to the two proposed areas (145<sup>th</sup> and 185<sup>th</sup> Street), and listen to the people who live in those neighborhoods. For example, a representative from the subcommittee should attend the meeting sponsored by the Echo Lake Neighborhood to listen and report back to the Commission. The subcommittee should also attend applicable City Council meetings to learn more about their broad direction to the Commission.

Commissioner Wagner emphasized the need for the Commission's message to be bold. She observed that this is an uncomfortable topic and people will be impacted. However, those most impacted will be future residents rather than current residents of the neighborhoods. Light rail stations in the two proposed locations make sense, and it would be a disservice to imply that existing single-family neighborhoods will not be changed. The Commission's mission should be to educate and engage existing neighborhoods to participate in the journey. Having a realistic plan in place will provide specificity and predictability for the neighborhoods going forward.

Commissioner Maul agreed that they must be upfront with the community that things will change in these two locations. He also agreed that one subcommittee would be sufficient. He asked if a City staff member currently attends Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) meetings. Chair Moss said she is a member of the PSRC task force, and Director Markle and Mr. Cohen attend PSRC meetings, as well. Commissioner Maul commented that there will be a lot of information to digest as the process moves forward. Because connectivity is so important, he suggested the subcommittee should study the 145<sup>th</sup>, 175<sup>th</sup> and 185<sup>th</sup> areas as potential sites for light rail stations.

Chair Moss recalled the Commission's recent discussions with the City Council about using a corridor approach (looking at issues that are common along the corridor) when addressing station area planning. If the two proposed station areas at 145<sup>th</sup> and 185<sup>th</sup> are built with an overlapping radius, there will not be a huge amount of difference between one end of Shoreline and the other. The land use in the very small gap may also change as a result of the changing dynamics when the station areas are developed. If Sound Transit decides to shift the station areas somewhat, a corridor approach would allow the City to adapt their plans accordingly. She reminded the Commission that Sound Transit will not announce their next stage of recommendations based on the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) until 2013. Ms. Markle agreed that the City will not likely know the preferred alternative until June 2013.

Chair Moss agreed with Commissioner Wagner's recommendation that the Commission be bold in their approach to station area planning. There is an opportunity to think beyond what has been traditionally done in Shoreline. She commented that the City can learn much from outstanding examples throughout the United States and the world as they determine what will work best for Shoreline's unique community.

Commissioner Wagner agreed that there are great examples for the City to consider. She commented that the City has tended to meander along in their growth, and they have not been bold enough in their planning to incorporate extremely innovative approaches. She suggested the subcommittee and staff should make it part of their mission to research these innovative ideas as potential options for Shoreline. Chair Moss reminded the Commission that, at least for the first few months, the subcommittee will operate without significant staff support. She said she could point the subcommittee to where they could obtain additional information, and it would also be helpful for subcommittee members to attend the next American Planning Association Conference, which will focus on breaking gridlock, to network and gather information.

Commissioner Scully commented that the Commission will obtain more focused and precise public comments if they present a concrete proposal. He suggested the subcommittee be charged with preparing a plan that can be presented to the public as a draft proposal. He said he supports Commissioner Craft's suggestion of having two subcommittees. It might be interesting to see the commonalities of what each group comes up with and then have discussions over the differences.

Vice Chair Esselman pointed out that the planning process will require numerous tasks, and several members of the Commission have expressed a desire to participate. Recognizing that the subcommittee would lead the process, the Commission briefly discussed the best approach for involving additional Commissioners in accomplishing the tasks associated with station area planning. Chair Moss cautioned that it is important that the process be very transparent. She agreed to request feedback regarding this issue from Anne McFarlane, who previously made a presentation to the Commission regarding parliamentary procedure.

Chair Moss summarized the Commission's discussion thus far as follows:

- Density, existing land uses around the proposed station areas, and the areas that will be impacted are important issues. The City Council may refer a future land use map amendment to the Commission, and there may be opportunities for the Commission to incorporate some of their work on light rail station area planning.
- A corridor approach would be appropriate and would allow the Commission to provide a lot of helpful information in case Sound Transit shifts the station locations at some point in the future.
- Providing concrete information and perhaps a draft plan would solicit more specific comments from the community.
- The Commission's message should be bold in support of the proposed station locations. They should be upfront with the community that the stations will change the existing neighborhoods.

Chair Moss recommended that at least one member of the subcommittee should attend the upcoming PSRC open house that will involve the North Corridor Task Force. There is a significant amount of

information available on the PSRC's website, as well. She said that rather than honing in on what currently exists, the task force has requested tools from the PSRC for communities to become what they want to be.

Commissioner Montero said he understands the function of the Planning Commission in the station area planning process. However, staff will be responsible for using the information provided by the Commission to prepare the actual plan. He asked if the staff would come up with a specific proposal based on the Commission's recommendation or would the subcommittee make recommendations to the Commission based on their experience and research. Ms. Markle said staff will design a public process for station area planning as the first order of business. She cautioned against getting too far ahead with planning and visionary work without first identifying a public process for soliciting feedback. Public Works, Planning and Economic Development staff will have a retreat in late September or early October to outline a public process based on framework policies for land use, transportation and public outreach. They have submitted a request to the City Council for \$250,000 to fund station area planning in 2013.

While she does not want to discourage the Commission's enthusiasm for learning about light rail and getting engaged in station area planning, Ms. Markle cautioned them to focus on learning and gathering the best examples without making any recommendations or creating anything that looks like a predetermined decision before the public outreach process has started. She also expressed concern about the City's process becoming too advanced before the draft EIS is released, which could create public confusion between the City's process and the EIS process.

Chair Moss pointed out that there is a large volume of data available, and the framework policies provide guidance, as well. The Transportation Master Plan also provides a great deal of information regarding the City's vision for transportation. While it does not specifically address station area planning, it talks about connectivity, bicycling, walking, level of service, etc. Ms. Markle advised that while staff would not provide direct support during the initial stages of the subcommittee work, they could provide educational opportunities via informational documents, articles, field trips, etc.

Chair Moss agreed that the Commission should not get too far ahead in the process, since this could end up confusing the public. Ms. Markle cautioned against the subcommittee providing too much detailed information to the public during the early phase of the station area planning process. However, she agreed that some outreach to draw the public's attention to the fact that light rail is coming would be appropriate. She suggested it would be helpful for the subcommittee to provide feedback about effective public outreach methods. At this time, staff is proposing that an advisory group be formed to work with staff on a regular basis throughout the process.

Commissioner Scully said he does not envision the subcommittee will spend a great deal of time outlining a proposed public outreach program, since most of the public outreach requirements are prescribed by law. While the subcommittee could recommend a few creative ideas, their time would be better spent formulating ideas for discussion during the public outreach phase. He said he does not see a problem with coming up with a plan for discussion, as long as it is presented as simply one option put forth by the subcommittee. Commissioner Craft agreed that it would be appropriate for the subcommittee to provide options and examples based on their research, as long as they are presented in the correct manner. Commissioner Wagner suggested that having the subcommittee present their

proposal to the Commission at an advertised study session would provide public visibility. However, she stressed the need to provide better notice for and more information about study sessions, particularly via articles in *CURRENTS*. She recommended the Commission send a formal request to the City Council that a section of *CURRENTS* be made available for this purpose.

Commissioner Montero suggested the subcommittee meet with planning commissioners from SeaTac and/or Tukwila to discuss the challenges they faced. Chair Moss suggested it would be particularly helpful to talk with planning commissioners from the City of Seattle, who not only have the experience of on-the-ground stations, but they are also in the planning process for the north end stations. There is also the advantage of SeaTac being a smaller community with Aurora as a main corridor.

Chair Moss appointed Commissioners Maul, Scully and Craft to serve on the Light Rail Station Area Planning Subcommittee. It was agreed that the subcommittee would provide brief updates at Commission meetings. Once again, she agreed to contact Anne McFarlane for guidance about the proper procedures for moving the process forward.

Ms. Markle suggested that in their September 17<sup>th</sup> update to the City Council regarding light rail station area planning staff could inform the City Council that a subcommittee has been formed and then briefly describe what its focus will be. Chair Moss encouraged Planning Commissioners to attend the City Council meeting, if available.

Commissioner Wagner suggested that the Commission also formally request regular space in *CURRENTS* to publish Planning Commission information. Ms. Markle said that light rail information would be present in all future issues of *CURRENTS*. Staff could formally request that the Commission be allowed to utilize a portion of this space to report on the subcommittee's activities as needed. The Commission stressed the need to keep the public informed and encourage their input at Planning Commission study sessions. It is important for citizens to provide input early in the planning process.

## **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Moss announced that September 7<sup>th</sup> is the last day for Commissioners to contact staff to register for the American Planning Association Conference in Olympia on October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

## **AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Mr. Szafran advised that the full draft Comprehensive Plan Update will be presented to the Commission at a study session on September 20<sup>th</sup>, and it may be necessary to extend the study session to the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. A public hearing on the update is tentatively scheduled for October 18<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Moss noted that the City's website has announced that Aurora Square has been designated to become a Community Renewal Area (CRA), and this process will eventually involve the Planning Commission. She invited staff to share more information about the CRA process at an upcoming meeting. Ms. Markle reminded the Commission that Matthew Kwatinetz, the City's CRA consultant, will present the final speaker series event on September 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. The topic of the presentation will be "Sustainability, Culture and Integrated Economic Development Strategies."

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

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Donna Moss  
Chair, Planning Commission

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Steve Szafran  
Clerk Pro Tem, Planning Commission

**TIME STAMP**  
**September 6, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**ROLL CALL:**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA: 1:08**

**DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: 1:13**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 7:00**

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT: 7:35**

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT: 7:50**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Establishing a Subcommittee for Light Rail Station Area Planning: 8:00**

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1:02:07**

**AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING: 1:03:12**

**ADJOURNMENT**