



City of SeaTac

Joint City Council / Planning Commission

Workshop Agenda

April 30, 2013

6:00 PM

(Revised 04/29/13: Public Comments added)

**City Hall
Council Chambers**

CALL TO ORDER:

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Review of formal relationship**
- 3. Sharing of goals and mutual expectations**
- 4. Discussion of initiation, review and recommendation process**
- 5. Effective communication options**
- 6. Frequency of joint meetings**
- 7. Review of consensus and understandings**

ADJOURN:

Memorandum

TO: SeaTac City Council
FROM: SeaTac Planning Commission
REGARDING: Operating procedures
DATE: February 24, 2013

SeaTac City Council Members,

During regular meetings of the SeaTac Planning Commission Feb. 5 and 19, 2013, commissioners present held substantive discussions on the processes the Planning Commission, Zoning Code Ad Hoc Committee, City Council and staff followed recently in developing and reviewing proposed amendments to the City Zoning Code.

We are writing to share our concerns as well as our hope that moving forward the Commission will receive clear direction and ongoing communication from the Council when embarking on major projects. Our goal is to begin a dialogue between the Commission and Council to create a more productive workflow.

Given the wide variety of challenges facing the City of SeaTac, like other municipalities in our region, there is too much at stake for the future of our city, home, and place of business, to not accomplish the City's objectives for the good of the residents of the City of SeaTac.

Our initial concern stems from the lack of comprehensive discussion about the recently proposed "Park and Fly" zoning code, especially in light of the great deal of staff and volunteer time that went into it's creation.

However, instead of dwelling on one particular occurrence we would like to relay our overall objective, not specific to the lack of Council direction or discussion on the policy itself, but the process by which it was handled. By addressing these issues we can work to facilitate an increasingly meaningful and productive relationship moving forward.

Below are some of the important details about the Ad Hoc Committee work pertinent to this dialogue:

- The Zoning code Ad Hoc Committee was wholly inclusive - members of City Council, business community, Planning Commissioners, residents, etc., were involved in primary discussions and final policy negotiations.
- The Park-and-Fly code was the primary driver of the workload in the Ad Hoc Committee.
- The majority of members on the current City Council were not amenable to the proposed changes.

- Despite a multitude of opportunities - staff briefings at study sessions, City Council meetings, council retreats, special meetings, briefings and work before the Planning Commission, as well as the time spent developing the proposal in the Ad Hoc Committee, it was not communicated to stakeholders that the direction of the proposed code did not meet the expectations or interests of the current City Council.

We would like to make sure that in the future the Planning Commission has clear initial direction and goals throughout any major undertaking and would like to express our interest in open communication throughout these processes.

As a research and policy arm of the City Council – as we are appointed by and serve under the direction of the Council – we wish to meaningfully provide insight and support for work before the Council.

However, after specific issues that arose with the Park-and-Fly process and more generally during the past year, our desire for open communication is necessary for the Planning Commission to be an effective and helpful tool for the Council.

There is a great cost to implementing public policy:

- City staff are necessary and continue to be an incredibly valuable asset throughout our proceedings. A great deal of staff time, and therefore taxpayer dollars, have been essentially wasted as multiple staffers spent countless hours on work specific to the and Park-and-Fly sections of the Zoning Code.
- Volunteers, including non-council members of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Planning Commission, have spent a great deal of time sharing their goals and concerns throughout the entire process.
- Completing a SEPA review is an arduous process that requires money and staff time and in this case outside consultants.
- Just as important as time, which can be easily quantified, is the non-quantifiable “business climate” as perceived by landowners, developers and other stakeholders. Any entity that gains a reputation, deserved or not, as inconsistent in policies and incongruous interactions with outside entities, is fairly or unfairly going to face a stigma that can be devastating to economic development.
- In addition to the cost of time for the work of City Council members, City staff, Planning Commissioners and stakeholders, is the cost of what could have been accomplished during that time had involved parties had adequate initial direction, consensus and open communication throughout the policy-making process from the City Council.

Members of the Planning Commission who have signed below, sincerely enjoy serving on behalf of the Council in order to achieve what we believe are shared objectives - to make the City of SeaTac a great place to live and work.

We believe it would be productive to hold a joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission to review our processes, develop more effective communication channels, share our goals and gain a mutual understanding of our expectations in order to be more successful and helpful to the Council.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for the time you dedicate to our City and we look forward to meeting with you soon.

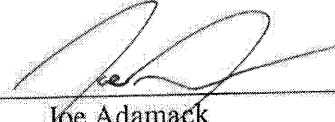
Sincerely,

The City of SeaTac Planning Commission


Daryl Tapio, Chair


Roxie Chapin, Vice Chair


Tom Dantzler


Joe Adamaek


Jim Toda

cc: Todd Cutts, City Manager
Gwen Voelpel, Assistant City Manager
Joe Scorcio, Community and Economic Development Director



A Primer on The Formal Relationship Between the City Council and the Planning Commission

Prepared by: Joe Scorcio, AICP, Community and Economic Development Director
Mike Scarey, AICP, Senior Planner

April 12, 2013

State Statutes

RCW 35A – Applies to SeaTac as an Optional Municipal Code City

RCW 35A.63.010 – Definitions

"Planning agency" means any person, body, or organization designated by the legislative body to perform a planning function or portion thereof for a municipality, and includes, without limitation, any commission, committee, department, or board together with its staff members, employees, agents, and consultants.

RCW 35A.63.020 - Planning agency — Creation — Powers and duties — Conflicts of interest

By ordinance a code city may create a planning agency and provide for its membership, organization, and expenses. The planning agency shall serve in an advisory capacity to the chief administrative officer or the legislative body, or both, as may be provided by ordinance and shall have such other powers and duties as shall be provided by ordinance. If any person or persons on a planning agency concludes that he or she has a conflict of interest or an appearance of fairness problem with respect to a matter pending before the agency so that he or she cannot discharge his or her duties on such an agency, he or she shall disqualify himself or herself from participating in the deliberations and the decision-making process with respect to the matter. If this occurs, the appointing authority that appoints such a person may appoint a person to serve as an alternate on the agency to serve in his or her stead in regard to such a matter.

SeaTac Municipal Code

Chapter 2.15: Planning Commission

2.15.010 Agency created.

There is hereby created a planning agency to be known as "The Planning Commission of the City of SeaTac," to serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council, and to serve at the pleasure of the Council. (Ord. 03-1030 § 1: Ord. 02-1008 § 1: Ord. 98-1024 § 2: Ord. 90-1047 § 1)

2.15.105 General duties.

The general duties of the Planning Commission shall be as set forth in the following language of the report on the Council's Task Force on Citizens Advisory Committees:

The Commission shall assist in providing additional information and work on projects assigned by the Council as the Council establishes policy for the City. It is important that the Commission maintains credibility and open communication with the Council in order to be of utmost assistance to the Council's decision-making process. The Council's function of establishing policy for the City can be

greatly enhanced by quality advice presented from the Planning Commission in a manner that supports the Council's policies. (Ord. 03-1030 § 1: Ord. 02-1008 § 1: Ord. 98-1024 § 2)

2.15.110 Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Commission shall prepare the Comprehensive Plan for the City, in accordance with State law, specifically including the Growth Management Act, and shall recommend the same to the City Council for adoption. ...

2.15.120 Development regulations.

The Planning Commission shall recommend to the City Council such development regulations which may be deemed necessary, but which shall be consistent with and shall implement the Comprehensive Plan. ...

2.15.130 Research.

The Planning Commission shall, with the assistance of the staff liaison and the City Manager, or designee, act as the research and fact finding agency of the City in regard to land uses, housing, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, and in regard to classification of lands as agriculture, forest, mineral lands, critical areas, wetlands and geologically hazardous areas. ...

2.15.135 Annual work plan.

Annually, by July 15th of each year, to coincide with the City's preliminary budget review process, the Planning Commission shall submit to the City Council a work plan for the ensuing calendar year, together with a report on progress made in implementing the goals and requirements of State law and on the status of land use policies and procedures within the City, for the purpose of assisting the Council in establishing a budget to support the Commission. ...

Chapter 16A.03: Development Review Code – General Provisions

16A.03.030 Administration and Review Authority

Responsibility for the administration, application and interpretation of City development standards and these procedures rests with the applicable City department as outlined in the SeaTac Municipal Code and Appendix I, and as follows:

...

E. The City Council shall review and act on development agreements, final planned unit developments, final subdivisions, rezones initiated by the City, and may review and act on essential public facilities as determined by the City Council.

F. The Planning Commission shall review and make recommendations on amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, amendments to Chapter 16A.23 SMC, Environmental Rules/Procedures, amendments to SMC Title 14, Subdivisions, and amendments to SMC Title 15, Zoning Code, and the Official Zoning Map.

G. The Hearing Examiner shall review and act on Type III permits, and appeals of Type I and Type II permits.

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