

**CITY OF SEATAC
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of July 16, 2019**

**Special Joint Meeting
With the Planning & Economic Development Committee**

Planning Commission Members present: Leslie Baker, Tej Basra, Roxie Chapin, Tom Danztler, Jagtar Saroya, Brandon Pinto, Andrew Ried-Monro

Members absent: None

PED Committee Members present: Joel Wachtel, Chair; Stanley Tombs

PED Committee Members absent: Peter Kwon

Other Councilmembers: DM Clyde Hill; Mayor Erin Sitterley; Rick Forschler; Pam Fernald

Staff present: City Manager Carl Cole; Senior Planner Kate Kaehny; Jennifer Kester, Planning Manager; Steve Pilcher, CED Director; Senior Assistant City Attorney Mark Johnsen

1. Call to Order

PED Chair Wachtel called the joint meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Public Comment

Earl Gipson commented that he believes the Commission's Bylaws amendments must be approved by the City Council. He objected to the manner by which the Bylaws were transmitted to the Council. He stated that he sees a pattern of decreased transparency and is concerned that meetings are not being recorded. He asks that the Council vote in an open public meeting to decide whether they wish to see Bylaws amendments.

3. Planning Commission Bylaw Amendments

Chair Wachtel asked Sr. Asst. City Attorney Mark Johnsen to provide comments on the manner of the change to the Bylaws. Mr. Johnsen noted that the Municipal Code was changed in 2017 to state that the Council does not need to approve the Bylaws of the Commission. He also noted the matter will be on the Council meeting for next Tuesday's (July 23) meeting. Mr. Johnsen pointed out that the Code also makes it clear that the Council has oversight of the Commission and all committees.

Vicki Lockwood commented there is a distinction between "committee" and "commission."

Mr. Johnsen pointed out the Code typically refers to "boards, committees and commissions." It was noted that the Code could be amended to provide greater clarity.

A concern was raised that Section 6.2 deletes the reference to providing a summary of public hearings and inquired as to why this change was made.

CED Director Steve Pilcher noted that staff had recommended the changes to Section 6.2 since the same information is provided in a Council agenda bill. He also noted that the change to the Municipal Code had essentially indicated that the Council did not need to review Bylaws for any of its committees.

CM Fernald spoke in favor of providing more thorough minutes and recording of meetings.

City Manager Carl Cole noted that he has faith in his staff and that if there are issues, they should be brought to him instead of being discussed in an open public meeting.

CM Forschler related his concerns with prior Planning staff and his concern that the Bylaws changes give the Planning staff too much power.

CED Director Pilcher noted his approach to taking of minutes and the reason why Section 4.5 includes mention of the CED Director.

Commissioner Chapin explained that things were worse in the past, but she has confidence in the current staff. She noted that the Commission's Bylaws only relate to how they conduct their meetings.

Commissioner Dantzler expressed his appreciation for the meeting and individual comments.

Planning Commission Chair Basra agreed that he viewed the Bylaw changes as how the Commission chooses to run its meetings. He stated he was shocked when the recording of their meetings ceased. He indicated that he is pleased with the staff and has good communications.

CM Tombs spoke in favor of recording meetings. He stated that waiting two weeks to receive a report from public hearings is too long. He favors making the recordings available shortly after the meeting.

Chair Wachtel noted that the Bylaws should be rewritten to incorporate the changes discussed during the meeting.

Planning Manager Jennifer Kester noted there is not sufficient time to rewrite the Bylaws in time for this to be in front of the Council at its 7/23 meeting.

City Manager Cole indicated the item can be pulled from the 7/23 agenda.

PED Chair Wachtel adjourned the joint meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Regular Planning Commission meeting

4. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Basra called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

5. Approval of Minutes

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2019 meeting. **Approved 7-0.**

6. Public Comments

None.

7. City Center Plan Update

Senior Planner Kate Kaehny provided an update on the work that has been done and what will be occurring. She noted that staff has hired BDS Planning & Urban Design.

Ms. Kaehny then noted that community and stakeholder engagement will begin shortly. These are being conducted by the consultants and will involve both businesses/commercial property owners and community members. She reviewed the list of business stakeholders that have been identified. Ms. Kaehny then reviewed the next steps that are being planned.

Chair Basra provided comments about the BDS team, based upon his participation in the selection process. He stated that he supported the potential increase in the budget, as it will primarily go towards additional community outreach.

CM Forschler commented that the “City Center” is mis-named and that had caused problems in the past by raising false hopes with residents. He believes a real city center should be identified first, most likely located somewhere else in the community.

Chair Basra noted there is not a pre-determined decision that this will indeed be the city’s center. He agreed with staff’s statement that the beginning is to have “listening” sessions to hear what the community hopes to see in the area.

CM Tombs expressed concerns with spending too much money on the project and that Council is not sufficiently involved.

Commissioner Baker noted that the availability of land will determine where a city center can be located and, if it’s not on International Blvd., where else would it be?

Planning Manager Kester noted that the area is currently called the “City Center” in the Zoning Code, so staff is limited to using that phrase as part of this process. She noted that the consultants are studying an area, not necessarily a defined city center. She stated that current contract amount is \$45,000; the ask will be for an additional \$25,000.

Commissioner Danzler related his past experience with Eric Hovee (the economic specialist on the consultant team) and the value of the information he produced. He advocated that the consultants make some analysis of what type of projects would be financially viable.

Chair Basra noted the difference in land prices here in SeaTac vs. other suburban areas and that the consultants understand this nuance.

CM Tombs noted that the amount of funding for the study is not sufficient.

8. Directors’ Report

CED Director Pilcher mentioned an upcoming meeting regarding the Department of Commerce’s Airport Study. He also provided an update on the Alaska Airlines’s HUB project.

Ms. Kester discussed the Commissioner's City email address and how to access that system. She inquired whether the Commission wished cancel its second meeting in August, as that is a traditional time that meetings are canceled. The August 6th meeting date will be held open in the event there is guidance from Council regarding amending their Bylaws.

After discussion, it was moved and seconded to cancel the August 6, 2019 regularly scheduled meeting. **Passed 7-0.** Moved and seconded to cancel the August 20, 2019 regular meeting. **Passed 7-0.**

Ms. Kester noted that a new Senior Planner will be starting on Monday. This individual will specialize in transportation issues, capital facilities planning and coordinating with utilities providers.

9. Commissioners' Comments

None.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.