



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Councilmember Sally Clark, Chair, PLUNC
Councilmember Tim Burgess
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen

FROM: Diane M. Sugimura

DATE: January 9, 2008

SUBJECT: Committee Briefing: DPD Monthly Report on January 14

We anticipate the new year will bring more challenges; we are also hopeful that opportunities will come with the challenges! Below is a brief year end summary.

Permitting Stats

In terms of revenues from development fees, we collected \$23.5 million in 2008. This compares with \$31 million in 2007, \$24.8 million in 2006 and \$21.3 million in 2005. This past year, intake value was \$2.25 billion and we issued permits worth \$2.62 billion. This compares to \$3.1 billion for both intake and issued in 2007. We are watching revenues very carefully for 2009.

- 48 hour initial review: 91.5% (goal = 80%)
- 2 week initial review: 73.4% (goal = 80%); October to December monthly averages reached 82 to 89%
- 6 week initial review: 76% (goal = 70%)
- MUP 120-day: 82.9% (goal = 80%)
- Construction 120-day: 81.3% (goal = 90%); this still includes applicant time rather than “chess” clock time

In terms of permits issued for residential units, net for 2008 (new minus demo) was 6,378 units. While this is somewhat lower than the 2007 total of 7,919 units, it is higher than, and generally significantly higher than, all other years as far as we track (1984). It is important to note that these are issued permits and not necessarily completed units.



City of Seattle, Department of Planning and Development

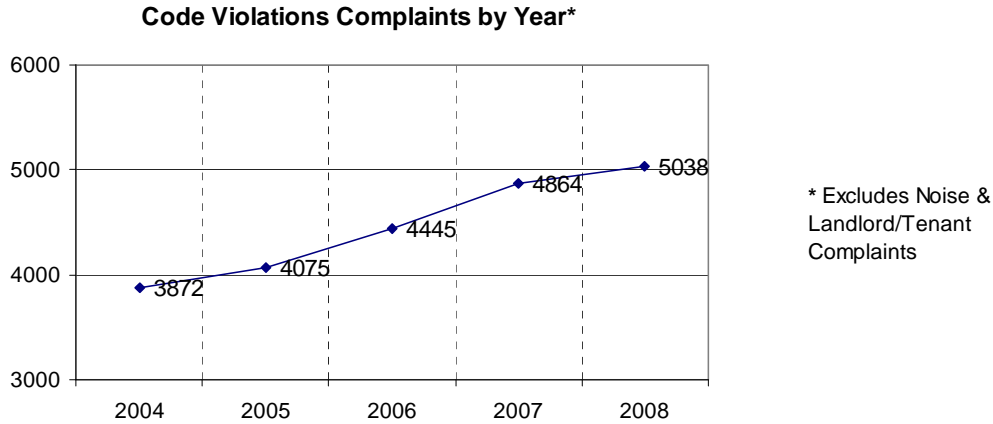
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Code Compliance Activity

Violation complaints continued on an upward trend this year, but did not increase as rapidly as the previous couple of years. There has been about a 30% increase overall since 2004. Major increases during that time period include Land Use/Zoning (+18%), Vacant Building Standards (+46%) and Vegetation Overgrowth into Right-of-Way, which more than doubled (+110%).



Not surprising in this economy and housing market, condo conversions have tapered off to almost nothing.

YEAR	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2004	32	30	53	16	22	46	123	61	0	31	13	3	430
2005	0	102	14	51	7	300	130	14	538	142	108	144	1550
2006	97	104	340	98	436	137	167	337	47	359	118	112	2352
2007	292	205	63	199	159	380	94	106	63	67	12	0	1640
2008	30	0	34	139	9	8	10	14	0	0	4	0	248

Planning Summary

Comprehensive and Neighborhood Plans: Adopted a package of Comprehensive Plan amendments; initiated our Neighborhood Plan public engagement efforts, established the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee and began update processes for three Southeast neighborhoods where light rail will begin operations in 2009.

Urban Center Plans: In South Lake Union the urban form study is underway and we have begun scoping the EIS to evaluate appropriate zoning designations. For South Downtown, the Final EIS and staff recommended proposal were published in May, and we are nearing submittal of proposed amendments to Council (anticipated March). Our goal for South Downtown has been to find the right zoning and development regulations that will protect and preserve the historic and culturally significant characteristics of these neighborhoods, while encouraging new investments, particularly housing, to help revitalize the area.

Policy and Codes: Multifamily Code revisions, our first major update in 20 years, will be forwarded to Council on January 13. This includes an Administrative Design Review process along with improved design standards for the much-critiqued townhouses. The Shoreline Management Update is on schedule for completion by the state mandated 2010 timeline. The Shoreline Characterization Report is nearing completion. We have had six meetings of our Shoreline Advisory Committee and conducted a successful tour of Seattle's shorelines for committee members, Councilmembers, other members of the public and staff. Approximately 60 people participated. Other legislation included workforce housing incentive; interim tree regulations; SEPA thresholds; fire station regulations; sidewalk cafes; peat settlement-prone areas; Dravus; and the Noise Ordinance.

Council Initiatives: DPD staff completed work on a full agenda of Council initiatives including the following:

- Completed recommendations for Pike/Pine Conservation strategies and amendments to the existing Pike/Pine overlay. These recommendations are currently being finalized with Council Central Staff for presentation to Council. Phase II in 2009 will include exploration of opportunities for transferring development potential from threatened buildings that contribute positively to the local character of the neighborhood.
- Adopted Single Family amendments to address issues related single family structures and their relationship to lot size and surrounding development. In 2009, we will be performing further analysis of the benefit of employing a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for controlling the size of new single family homes relative to lot size.
- Worked with Capitol Hill residents and property owners, Councilmembers, and staff to address issues related to arts and cultural facilities in the neighborhood. This will continue into 2009.
- Completed other completed Council initiatives including addition of more sites in Jefferson Park to view protection under SEPA; and evaluating the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions from new construction and initiating a disclosure process; further work related to mitigation continues.

Community Relations and Public Outreach

In our effort to make sure all the people of Seattle have access to and understanding of departmental outreach materials and public information resources, we have completed the following in 2008:

- Translated five critical documents: Declared Emergency No Apparent Hazard, Declared Emergency Limited Entry, Declared Emergency Unsafe Do Not Enter, Emergency Order Limited Entry, Emergency Order Unsafe
- Translated nine vital documents: Meeting invitations, posters, and press release for Little Saigon Project; meeting invitations to South Downtown Open House; Neighborhood Complaint cards; Tenant Relocation Package; Stop Work Orders; and Neighbors Who Notice brochure
- Translated three additional documents: Green Festival Display Signs, Compliance Inspector Business Cards, Field Inspector Business Cards
- Distributed translated Neighborhood Complaint cards and Neighbors Who Notice brochure to all 28 Libraries and 13 Community Centers

- Developed a draft "How to Guide" for translating documents for DPD use
- Made available interpreters at three public meetings: Little Saigon, South Downtown, and Northgate Open Houses
- Posted on the web translated vital documents that needed to be readily available to DPD's customers.

Recent and upcoming outreach includes the following:

- December 9: Northgate Stakeholder meeting to discuss Northgate rezone proposal and Urban Design Framework
- January 10: Beacon Hill Community Fair
- January 29: Open House for Administrative Design Review for Townhouses
- February 8: Phinney Home Design and Remodel Fair

Race and Social Justice

We continued both our "Race: The Power of an Illusion" discussions and the "DPD Talks" series throughout the year. These involve viewing a video together followed by facilitated discussions about the content of the video. The majority of staff have participated in the first series; about 70-100 have attended each of two "Talk" series.

Department Administration

We are exploring electronic plan review; the feasibility of upgrading Hansen to web-based platform; and began a major Organizational Development effort to improve leadership effectiveness within the department so we can better serve our customers. Bryan Stevens was selected to fill our Customer Service Manager position. In addition to handling media responses and overall ombudsing, he continues his role as industrial permit liaison and is our primary Council liaison. Bryan has also helped lead development of a customer service survey and is working on improved tracking of DPD responses to ombudsing issues, general inquiries and service complaints.