

“We build a city first with words, and then with bricks.” – Winston Churchill

Date: April 15, 2009

TO: Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee Outreach Subcommittee

RE: Neighborhood Plan Update Outreach Concerns

Dear fellow members of the City of Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee:

We, the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee Outreach Subcommittee, want to express our serious concerns about the process which the City is currently engaged in to update neighborhood plans in Southeast Seattle. We believe that the integrity of the process is being threatened by a timeline which does not allow for input from the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (NPAC), and, hence, is not structured in a way that allows for true neighborhood involvement.

Our primary concerns are as follows:

- The process is moving so quickly that the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) were not able to submit information such as workshop agendas, workshop formats, and Planning Outreach Liaison Biographies in a timely manner to NPAC and/or the Outreach Subcommittee. NPAC is charged with reviewing these documents and providing advice/recommendations/guidance *before implementation* in accordance with Council Ordinance Number 122799. To date, DON and DPD have not met the requirements laid out in Council Ordinance 122799. As a result, we request that the deadline for Southeast Seattle Plan Updates be extended to May 2010, to ensure more time for NPAC involvement as well as additional workshops in the community, more neighborhood plan education, broader outreach efforts, and a full review of the Plan Update process to date, together by NPAC, City Council, DPD and DON.
- It is our belief that Southeast neighborhoods that spent vast amounts of time preparing their Neighborhood Plans now feel that their work is not being acknowledged. Council Ordinance 122799 states the following principle: *“Focus on strengthening and renewing relationships with neighborhood organizations, neighborhood councils, business groups, stewardship groups, immigrant and refugee groups and other under-represented groups, interested individuals, etc.”* Many of the original planners, community participants and stewardship groups were not contacted for input and many community leaders have not been included in the outreach process to date. The current timeline under which DPD and DON are operating is not allowing for adequate outreach to occur in the three station area communities. People are a neighborhood’s most precious asset and many in Southeast have a wealth of wisdom about their communities. This wisdom must be tapped and leveraged so that public funds are not wasted in this planning endeavor, requiring needless duplication of efforts later on.
- In terms of the DON and DPD outreach to date, we are concerned that City employees with a vested interest in the outcome of the Neighborhood Planning Workshops are staffing and facilitating these workshops, as they will the Town Hall Meetings scheduled

for May. There is a distinct impression amongst some neighborhood activists in Southeast Seattle that this is a top-down process, driven by the City, with only token input from the communities, rather than a community-driven process. Ordinance 122799 clearly states in Principle 11 that the process should “*make best use of and respect the extensive community knowledge, expertise, and passion for Seattle that exists in all our neighborhoods*”. To ensure that updated plans are successful and validated by neighborhoods, we suggest training and using existing community members and/or hiring trained facilitators to staff all future outreach events. In doing so, the process will build planning leadership from within each community and create lasting trust between the City and neighborhoods.

- NPAC members are a diverse and committed group of community members. We are volunteers and we each bring a unique perspective and time commitment to the Neighborhood Plan Update process. To ensure that our expertise is used wisely and capably, we must receive information from DPD and DON in a timely manner that allows for full NPAC participation in this process. While we believe that additional subcommittees (and thus time) are necessary for the efficient functioning of the NPAC, the creation of new NPAC subcommittees should *absolutely not* replace the duties of either DON or DPD as laid out in Ordinance 122799.

We request that the full NPAC consider these concerns and take action for correction of the above issues before the City progresses with the May Town Hall Meetings.

Sincerely,

The NPAC Outreach Subcommittee

Adrienne Bailey, Central Area Neighborhood District Council

Judith Edwards, North Beacon Hill Council

Edward Hill, City Council At Large

Brian Ramey, Alternate, Lake Union District Council

Renee Staton, North District Council

Kate Stineback, City Council At Large

CC: Sally Clark, Seattle City Council & Chair, Planning Land Use & Neighborhoods Committee

Diane M. Sugimura, Director, Department of Planning and Development

Stella Chao, Director, Department of Neighborhoods

Lyle Bicknell, Neighborhood Planning Update Manager, Department of Planning and Development

Raymond Gastil, Planning Director, Department of Planning and Development

Sebhat Tenna, Outreach Strategic Director, Department of Neighborhoods

Michael Kern, Senior Associate, Triangle Associates

LETTER—NPAC STATUS REPORT UPDATE SUBCOMMITTEE

To: NPAC and City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development
From: NPAC Status Report Update Subcommittee
Re: Advice Letter to City
Date: April 21, 2009 – Revised for May 19, 2009 NPAC Meeting

Pursuant to Ordinance 122799, we are writing to provide advice from the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (NPAC) regarding the Status Report Updates and the update process.

Background:

Ordinance 122799 directed City departments to work with neighborhoods to “review the status of the City’s existing Neighborhood Plans.....” A number of neighborhood plans are 10-years old and during this time many neighborhoods throughout the city have experienced significant growth. Added to this, “the City also adopted new growth targets for all neighborhoods when the Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2004.” Not all of the growth and development has been equitably distributed throughout the City, with a number of neighborhoods benefiting from major public investments (i.e., Pro-Parks levy, Libraries for All, Bridging the Gap and other programs) while other neighborhoods have experienced less investment. Consistent with the intent of the Neighborhood Plan Status Report Process, our primary objective was “to provide an opportunity for the City and neighbors to discuss the current status of their neighborhood plans and changes in neighborhoods since the plans were adopted.”

Introduction:

The NPAC Status Report Update Subcommittee has the following comments on the format and content of the DRAFT Neighborhood Status Report Template presented at the March 17, 2009 NPAC Meeting.

We hope that the Status Reports will:

- Report information about the neighborhoods in a clear, organized manner;
- Help inform citizens about neighborhood planning;
- Facilitate dialogue at the open houses;
- Support the prioritization of neighborhood plan updates; and
- Identify gaps in current neighborhood plans

I. General Comments:

1. City-wide wrapper is a good idea, with more specific neighborhood information inside.
2. Clarify who is key audience for status report. Identify what information is on-line to support points/information in the status report. The idea is to make this information accessible to the key audience.
3. Graphics need work and need to be consistent. Graphics shown are confusing and could be better organized. Graphics also need to be consistent and comparable within each neighborhood status report and between the neighborhoods.

4. Discuss current Neighborhood Planning Element in the Comp Plan – Section 8. It is our understanding that these status reports will inform the City’s 2011 Comp Plan update. As such, this information should be used to revise Neighborhood Plan specific goals and policies listed in section 8.
5. Provide information discussing city-wide growth targets and neighborhood-specific growth targets. People need to know the projections for the City as a whole and how each neighborhood is participating in that growth. A chart comparing urban village growth targets would be very helpful. This information could be included on city wrapper because this is primary/important information.
6. Identify the difference between the “neighborhood” and an urban village. Growth targets are for the urban village areas, but many people participating do not live within the urban village boundary. Remind people why the urban village boundaries were drawn in the first place. Example, Greenwood and Phinney Ridge are different neighborhoods but share the same Urban Village.
7. Remind readers that these status reports are going to help the City and NPAC evaluate which Neighborhood Plans should be recommended for update.

II. Neighborhood/Urban Village Specific

1. Tell the neighborhood’s “story”. We like the use of images and text. Show a “then and now” visual comparison using neighborhood plans. (The current neighborhood plan/map contrasted with an updated plan/map showing changes that have occurred since implementation of the plan.)
2. For each status report, list the elements in the same order as the Comp Plan so that information can be compared from one neighborhood to another. This should be done with one page minimum for each of the following elements:
 - land use
 - transportation
 - housing
 - capital facilities (with subcategories – parks, libraries, schools, fire, etc)
 - utilities
 - economic development
 - human development
 - cultural resources, and
 - environment.

The intent of identifying the elements of the existing neighborhood plan is to let people know whether or not a neighborhood included this information in its plan. This is not a qualitative comment, rather one to let people know whether this occurred so they can decide whether to include it in the update. This also may be a way to organize comments at the public meetings where we gather information from the community members.

3. If the purpose of the neighborhood plans is to identify gaps, they need to be summarized at the end of the status report. All gaps summaries should use a consistent format (maybe a simple table) for easy comparison. At a minimum the gaps should identify if a neighborhood plan did/did not address an element.

4. Discuss sustainability as an overarching theme that should be identified within each element.
5. Some elements need to be described within the urban village boundary while other would be described within the neighborhood. For example, Wallingford urban village open space does not include Gas Works Park, but Gas Works Park is still accessible to the Wallingford neighborhood.
6. Some elements may need to be described with a hierarchy – for example open space and transportation are elements that can be described in regional facilities and local facilities. Licton Springs Park is a neighborhood Park in Aurora-Licton Urban Village. Seward Park is a regional destination and Alki Playground is more of a neighborhood park – both serve neighborhoods but neither is included in Urban Village statistics. Light rail and train service are examples of regional transportation facilities. Bike lanes and sidewalks can be described locally.
7. Status reports should be the same length so that when it comes time to compare status reports to inform the prioritization criteria – analysis is easier. For example, if a neighborhood plan did not address open space, do not skip the section; note that element was not addressed in the existing 1998 Plan.
8. Identify how and if design guidelines fit into the Comp Plan and Neighborhood Plans. If a neighborhood does not have design guidelines – say that. If a neighborhood has conflicting or more current plans for urban design elements, show the conflicts or updates on the status report.
9. Identify the limitations of the existing data. If 2000 census data is no longer current – consider using it for the baseline of the current plans since it is more reflective of Seattle in 2000 vs. 2009. Remind people about the status of the 2010 Census collections and the timeline for when more current data would be available. If we are relying on 2000 census data, we recommend creating some type of QA/QC process that will use more current data when it is available during the 2011 Comp Plan update process.
10. Avoid using planning terms without explanation or definition – Not everyone knows the different types of zoning. If planning terms need to be used, a glossary might be useful.

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

SECTOR OPEN HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

(MAY 19TH, 2009)

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING(S), TOPICS AND ATTENDEES

The Sector Open House Subcommittee met on (April 28th 2009) to discuss the NPAC/Planning Commission training session and the Sector Open House Meetings. In attendance were Subcommittee members Boaz Ashkenazy, Christie Coxley, Thomas Im, Kay Knapton and Catherine Stanford. Irene Wall conferenced into the meeting.

Planning Commission, NPAC members and DPD members met on (April 30th, 2009) to discuss further details of the Sector Open Houses. In attendance were Planning Commission members Barb Wilson and Katie Sheehy. In attendance were NPAC members Boaz Ashkenazy, Kay Knapton and Catherine Stanford. In attendance were DPD staff David Goldberg and Lyle Bicknell.

SUMMARY OF SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Subcommittee met to discuss the timing and agenda of the Sector Open Houses and the Sector Open House training sessions.

The subcommittee identified the following ideas for the Sector Open House Training Session:

1. TRAINING AGENDA - The training sessions to prepare for the Open Houses will be broken into three sections (Neighborhood Planning History, Status Report Updates, Facilitation Training) The city will brief the attendees on the history of the planning process and the organization of the status reports. Triangle Corporation will follow the City's presentation with a brief orientation on group facilitation techniques.
2. NPAC/PC HOMEWORK - It will be the responsibility of each NPAC and Planning Commission member to familiarize themselves with the details and particulars of the Neighborhood Plan and the Status Report they have been assigned to.
3. DATE/TIME - June 2nd and 4th - 12pm - 1:30pm

The subcommittee outlined the following ideas for the Sector Open House Meetings:

1. OPEN HOUSE AGENDA - The Open House would be broken into a large-group presentation and small break-out sessions. The large group presentation would focussing on city goals and neighborhood plan background information and would be delivered by either an NPAC member of a Planning Commission Member. The breakout sessions would be specific to each neighborhood plan and focus on listening and documenting community comments and concerns. Two NPAC and/or PC members would facilitate these sessions. The style of these breakout sessions would be casual and conversational with facilitators answering questions and providing clarification about the neighborhood plans and the status reports.
2. DOCUMENTATION - Multiple modes of documenting community comments and concerns encouraged. Documentation would include Large format note taking, paper surveys and digital surveys.
3. GRAPHICS - At each breakout session the city will provide a poster outlining the status reports. We recommend that the city keep data, information, graphs and charts clear and consistent from neighborhood to neighborhood. The posters will organize information so community members will understand the basics of the current plan and the modifications outlined in the status reports.

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee Subcommittee Report

4. GOALS AND QUESTIONS - It is crucial that the city is clear about its goals and outcomes for these meetings. The subcommittee feels that a short set (3-4) questions be presented to the community at each breakout session.
- a. Question 1: Did our summary and status report of your neighborhood reference important information? What have we missed? What should we focus on?
 - b. Question 2: Is your neighborhood plan “vision” still relevant?
 - c. Question 3: Has the change that has occurred in your neighborhood been as hoped?
 - d. Question 4: Are the Neighborhood Plan’s “Key Strategies” still priorities or are there new ones?

DISCUSSION ITEMS FOR NPAC

- NPAC/Planning Commission Training Session for Sector Open Houses
 - Date/Time - June 2 and 4 - 12pm - 1:30pm
 - Training Agenda
- NPAC/Planning Commission - Sector Open Houses
 - Sector Open House Date/Time/Venue
 - Revised Sector Groupings
 - NPAC Member Allocation
 - Sector Open House Agenda

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/DIRECTION NEEDED FROM NPAC

- NPAC/Planning Commission Training Session for Sector Open Houses
 - Confirm Date, Time and Agenda
- NPAC/Planning Commission - Sector Open Houses
 - Approval of Date, Times and Venue
 - Approval of Sector Groupings
 - Approval of NPAC/PC Staff Allocations
 - Approval of Sector Open House Agenda

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Sector Open House Neighborhood Groupings, Dates and Times

NPAC and Planning Commission Member Open House Allocation

Sector Open House Agenda and Format - Issued by the City

Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

July 21, 2009

The Honorable Greg Nickels
Mayor
City of Seattle
PO Box 94749
Seattle, WA 98124-4749

The Honorable Sally Clark
Chair, Planning, Land Use and Neighborhood Committee
Seattle City Council
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Re: Funding for the neighborhood planning process in the next biennium

We are writing to express the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee's (NPAC) concerns regarding upcoming funding levels for Seattle's neighborhood plan update/status report process. NPAC was formed to provide the Mayor and the City Council with advice on how best to execute the review and revision of the ten year-old adopted neighborhood plans. As citizen volunteers serving on NPAC, we are dedicated to keeping Seattle's neighborhood plans alive and current.

We have worked closely with the dedicated staff at the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and the Department of Neighborhoods (DON). Recently, along with the Seattle Planning Commission, NPAC co-hosted a series of sector open house meetings designed to stimulate a neighborhood-based conversation about the status of the neighborhood plans. We engaged in a facilitated conversation with neighborhood residents and stakeholders, asking them to think seriously about how neighborhood plans are shaping their communities, what is working, what is not, what positive changes have occurred and what is still to be accomplished. Over the next several months, we will continue these neighborhood-based conversations. As we and the City continue community outreach efforts, public expectations regarding continued support for updating the 10 year-old neighborhood plans will rise.

From our experience so far—and the experience of the many people involved in neighborhood planning over the last decade—we are convinced that this round of neighborhood planning deserves funding commensurate with the expectations created by the current neighborhood plan update and status report process. Please note that ordinance 122799 states: “Whereas, while City resources are limited, the City Council has identified funding for neighborhood planning updates as one of the Council's top five priorities for the 2009–10 budget ... ”

Public support for planning-based initiatives underscores the importance of continued funding for neighborhood planning. Without question, successful funding for initiatives and levies for parks, transportation, libraries and fire protection is directly linked to public support for neighborhood planning. Without robust, widely supported planning, the levies would not have been so widely supported. Likewise, the key to public acceptance of the neighborhood plans was the public validation process.

Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

The Honorable Greg Nickels
The Honorable Sally Clark
July 21, 2009

While we realize the City faces enormous budget challenges in the coming years, we respectfully request that neighborhood planning remain a long-term priority. Lack of adequate funding in the coming biennium will jeopardize the revision, updating and public validation of neighborhood plans. This will create impacts felt for many years. The City, through NPAC and the update and status report process, is laying the groundwork for improvements in our urban villages that will assure Seattle's economic success in the 21st century. Public acceptance of viable neighborhood plans and the means to fund implementation of those plans is essential to the fulfillment of our urban village goals.

Added to this, the City must not squander the goodwill and work accomplished by NPAC and the Planning Commission. Many dedicated volunteers and City staff have spent countless hours working on these plans, updates and status reports. If the City walks away now, it will squander this hard work and goodwill, thereby feeding another decade of distrust by neighborhood stakeholders. Failure to adequately fund the current neighborhood planning process will support claims that the process is a sham, wasting the time of the neighborhood stakeholders and imposing unilateral requirements on their communities.

We hope that in this time of budgetary constraints, you will be able to increase funding for the neighborhood planning process that we are dedicated to moving forward.

Sincerely,

Josh Brower
NPAC Co-Chair

Irene Wall
NPAC Co-Chair

Cc: Diane Sugimura, DPD
Stella Chao, DON

Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

September 9, 2009

Diane Sugimura
Director
Seattle Department of Planning and Development
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Re: Status Report Recommendations

At its August 18, 2009 meeting, the Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (NPAC) approved several specific items of advice to the Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) regarding the Neighborhood Planning Status Reports DPD is developing and compiling into a State of the Neighborhoods Report. This advice is in addition to advice on the Status Reports provided by NPAC earlier this year, and is based on NPAC's experience and observations while serving as co-host for a series of Status Report Open Houses in June and July 2009. On behalf of NPAC and its Status Report Subcommittee, I am pleased to provide the advice below:

1. Update the "Community Investment" portion of each neighborhood's status report to reflect projects that were important to the community—whether they were implemented or not. This section should read less like a city public relations document, and more like a "here's what happened in the neighborhood" synopsis. This information could come from the online and written questionnaires and open house comments.
2. Update the "Vision" portion of each neighborhood's status report to reflect community input from the open houses and the online questionnaire. In a paragraph following each Vision, state clearly whether the community feels the Vision is still current or is outdated. This information should help to prioritize which neighborhoods should be updated next, and could come from the online and written questionnaires and open house comments.
3. Provide more complete and accurate statistics and trend information throughout the status reports for every neighborhood. However, as plan updates are pursued this information should be kept current.
4. When listing capital facilities, clearly state whether or not a facility is in the Urban Village. If a facility outside the urban village (or in another urban village) is listed in the status report, clearly explain the City's rationale for including those external capital facilities, so that it doesn't seem like a mistake has been made in the report or whether there is any intention to expand the Urban Village boundaries. Not all Urban Villages have the entire assortment of Capital facilities, so the fullest listing possible may help provide a perspective of what is within, near or at a distance to an urban village.
5. There are many ideas NPAC has forwarded to and discussed with DPD that would ideally be a part of updated status reports. However, the reality of currently available statistics and funding for the status reports, as well as the timing of future updates makes this data more feasible and relevant during a neighborhood Plan Update process. NPAC encourages DPD to keep these general and neighborhood-specific items in mind as it updates neighborhood plans.

Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

Diane Sugimura
September 9, 2009

Thank you in advance for considering this advice and do not hesitate to contact me if we can provide further information. We look forward to hearing how this advice was taken into account.

Sincerely,

Irene Wall
NPAC Co-Chair

Cc: The Honorable Sally Clark, Seattle City Council Planning, Land Use and Neighborhoods
Committee
Stella Chao, DON
Kimberlee Archie, DON
Ray Gastil, DPD
Lyle Bicknell, DPD

Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

November 4, 2009

The Honorable Sally Clark
Chair
Planning, Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee
Seattle City Council
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Re: Recommendations regarding Neighborhood Planning in 2010

Dear Councilmember Clark:

At its October 20 and 27, 2009 meetings, the Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (NPAC) approved several specific items of advice in response to your request for input on the Council discussion document you provided dated October 14, 2009 and entitled *Issues/Options for Neighborhood Planning 2010 Budget*. On behalf of NPAC, we are pleased to provide the advice below:

1. In response to the City Council's question about the appropriate role and scope for NPAC moving forward, NPAC members moved and seconded that the Council provide facilitation and staffing resources for NPAC for up to the first six-months of 2010, to allow NPAC to wrap up any remaining work set out in Resolution 31085. The motion passed with 10 in favor, 2 opposed, and 0 abstentions.
2. In response to the City Council's question about whether NPAC agrees with the Executive's proposed approach for 2010 updates (as described on Page 2 of the Council's October 14, 2009 *Issues/Options for Neighborhood Planning 2010 Budget* document), NPAC decided by consensus that it does not agree with that proposed approach.
3. NPAC decided by consensus that it supports Option B, "Modify Executive's 2010 approach," (as described on Page 2 of the Council's October 14, 2009 *Issues/Options for Neighborhood Planning 2010 Budget* document), but with the following recommendations:
 - That the two neighborhood plan updates be selected based on NPAC criteria.
 - That additional funding be provided to the Department of Neighborhoods for adequate outreach.
 - That 2010 neighborhoods are allowed to use an outside city-approved consultant to draft their plan updates.

NPAC requests that the City Council provide the amount of funding necessary to allow NPAC to continue to meet with facilitation and staff support for up to six months in 2010. NPAC has been working with a schedule developed with DPD and DON that shows meetings and actions through at least March 2010.

Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

The Honorable Sally Clark
November 4, 2009

Thank you in advance for considering this advice. Do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide further information. We look forward to hearing how this advice was taken into account.

Sincerely,

Irene Wall
NPAC Co-Chair

Amalia Leighton
NPAC Co-Chair

Cc: Diane Sugimura, DPD
Stella Chao, DON
Ray Gastil, DPD
Lyle Bicknell, DPD
Kimberlee Archie, DON
Veronica Sherman-King, DON

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

VALIDATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

(12/1/09)

Criteria for Neighborhood Plan Validation

Based on the work of the NPAC Validation Subcommittee, and the December 1996 Neighborhood Planning Office *Guidelines for Validation*, the following is NPAC's outline of criteria for neighborhood plan validation. These criteria are applicable to both plan updates and wholly-new plans. The 1996 document (attached) contains guidance that is still valid, and should be referenced during the planning process.

In this outline of criteria for neighborhood planning validation, "Planning Committee" is the name for the entity empowered to develop a particular neighborhood plan or update, and "City" is the department(s) authorized to oversee the process and take the product to the City Council for review and approval (e.g., incorporation into the City's Comprehensive Plan).

Neighborhood Planning Validation Criteria and Steps

1. The estimated cost of conducting an open and accessible planning process—including provisions for outreach and validation—must be determined before commencing, and adequate funding must be available before the City helps a community set up a Planning Committee. More detailed and numeric "minimum" guidelines to ensure appropriate plan/update validation may be developed by the NPAC or similar city-wide, neighborhood oriented body, in cooperation with the City. Such guidelines should be reviewed and approved by the City Council.
2. All validation-related activities must be documented in the City's comprehensive plan files, and maintained along with all related materials in an accessible archive for easy reference, preferably online.
3. The planning process (new or update) must be inclusive of all interested stakeholders (people who live, work, own property or a business in the planning area, or who represent the chamber of commerce, community council, or similar organization). Documentation of outreach to stakeholders and their inclusion in the Planning Committee must be maintained. Membership on the Planning Committee should reflect the demographics of the affected area. There shall be promotional outreach to underrepresented communities. There shall be translation services (funded by the City separate from the planning process) for non-English speakers in the validation process, if requested.
4. One early Planning Committee activity is the development of the scope of the plan or update. The vision, goals, issues, objectives and the like should be presented for review and comment by the community prior to commencing the substantive planning process. [In the mid-1990s process, development of the vision and goals was called "Phase I," and the development of the plan proper with the help of consultants was called "Phase II."]
5. Another of the Planning Committee's first activities will be the development of a detailed outreach plan and budget based on the agreed scope of the planning effort. The planning process cannot proceed until an outreach plan is approved by the committee and the City, and both assure that adequate funding is available for implementation (e.g., sufficient funds for the number of

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee Subcommittee Report

mailings called for in the outreach plan, and for all needed consultants, copies, meetings, and other activities needed to address the agreed-upon scope of the planning process).

6. Any consultants retained to help with the planning process should be under the direct control of the Planning Committee, with the advice and consent of the City. The scope of work for any consultant(s) retained to help with the process must be consistent with the planning process scope agreed upon by the committee. The process of searching for and selecting consultants must be spelled out by the committee and distributed to the community, and selection will be made by the committee, with the approval of the City.
7. The Planning Committee's process may allow for the presentation of minority recommendations in the committee's final proposals where there is substantial lack of consensus.
8. The validation process for the Planning Committee's final recommendations must include sufficient community-wide outreach to ensure a high degree of penetration. Methods include all-address mailings and multiple community-wide and stakeholder group meetings. The 1996 Guidelines suggest a minimum of two public forums to present the committee's recommendations and ensure broad community support for them. There shall be monitoring by the committee with the assistance by the city. Documentation of community opinions and concerns regarding the final committee recommendations must accompany presentations to the City Council.



Phase II Guidelines for Validation

December 1996

Purpose

The purpose of validation is to make sure that those affected by neighborhood plan recommendations are aware of the proposals and that they have an opportunity to contribute. An effective and well-documented validation process for a neighborhood plan will make it possible for NPO, other City agencies and ultimately the City Council to endorse and eventually implement the neighborhood plan.

Minimum Standards

On-going, iterative process: The records of the planning committee should demonstrate that continuing efforts were made to inform and involve members of the community in the investigation of problems and development of solutions. Development of a Phase II outreach strategy and its incorporation into the Phase II work plan is essential. Outreach efforts should ensure that parties not at the table are identified and that special attention is paid to bringing them into the process. Groups are encouraged to be creative in their outreach and to remain open to new participation at every stage of the process.

Closure activity(ies): Once a draft Approval and Adoption Package is prepared (see Guidelines) the following will be required as minimum validation steps before the Approval and Adoption Package is submitted to City Council.

1. A notification mailing to all stakeholders within the planning focus area, including a mechanism for returning comments and asking questions about the recommendations. NPO will fund this mailing to addresses within the planning focus area and to non-resident property owners. Generally, this mailing will be no larger than one 8-1/2 by 14-inch or 11 by 17-inch sheet (approximate cost per item is \$.35 which includes bulk rate postage).
2. At least two public forums at which the recommendations are presented and public feedback is encouraged and audio taped. At least one of these sessions should be scheduled at a time which is not an evening or weekend. Use of a "third party" facilitator, not associated with the planning committee, is one of several ways to ensure objectivity. (*Efforts will be made to work with Channel 28 to videotape and air forums.*)

Appropriate Approaches to Validation

The information to be provided and the nature of comment opportunities to be offered depend upon the significance and impact of the plan recommendation.

"Intensive" validation required:

Any recommendation which would change the Comprehensive Plan or other City ordinances such as the Land Use Code requires intensive validation. Public forums on the subject and the stakeholder mailing will be expected to provide a detailed explanation (with appropriate maps or graphics and budget information) of the recommended change, why it is being proposed and to invite comment. Examples of plan recommendations requiring intensive validation are urban village designations, growth targets or street classifications; Land Use Code changes (affecting uses or development standards); legislative rezones of property (e.g., to take advantage of RSL zoning); neighborhood-specific design guidelines or proposed changes to City Council-adopted policies. *When plan recommendations require intensive notification for validation, NPO and the planning committee may negotiate additional funding for an appropriately detailed stakeholder mailing.*

"Broadcast" validation required:

Summary information on recommendations will be required for those which entail changes in City or other public programs in a specific area (such as bus route alterations or changed community center or library hours), for those which propose changes to City facilities or suggest buying, selling, leasing or changing the use of facilities, and for those which involve improvements or changes to City rights-of-way. Broadcast notification should also solicit comment, but the level of detail of the discussion in the stakeholder mailing need not be as extensive as that above. For both intensive and broadcast level notification, the stakeholder mailing should include information about where (at the local library, neighborhood service center or other accessible location) more complete records on the planning process may be reviewed.

"Invitation" validation required:

Volunteer-led community activities recommended by the planning process should be publicized to stakeholders. Validation occurs when community members participate and do the work. Examples of such activities which may be recommended in a neighborhood plan include tree planting projects, arts installations or festivals, graffiti clean-up, formation of public safety organizations or fundraising projects. The validation mailer needs at least to mention these activities and provide information about how to get involved.

Documentation

Public response elicited through *any* validation opportunity should be included in the information submitted to City Council with the Approval and Adoption Package. A *summary* of comments received during the *closure* activities should be prepared and submitted by the planning committee along with its final Approval and Adoption Package. Groups must also complete the Public Involvement Checklist. Copies of *all* written comments received during the closure activity(ies) and audio tapes of public forums should be kept on file, and if requested by the City Council, should be included in the final recommendation package.

Optional/additional validation actions

Groups may wish to conduct validation activities in addition to the minimums listed above. Examples include publication of recommendations in local newspapers or an extended mailing to include all parties in the outreach area. The required stakeholder mailing will be conducted at NPO expense; additional notification costs should be in the neighborhood planning group's Phase II budget. In areas where familiarity with English is an issue, opportunities for learning about the proposals and commenting in other languages should be part of the validation process.

When there is no community newspaper or other appropriate outreach avenue or there is a particular need associated with one or several stakeholder group(s), funding for costs associated with translation services or other outreach costs (such as a mailing to the outreach area beyond the focus area) may be negotiated with NPO as part of the Phase II contract.

Note on Validation: Neighborhood planning validation does not supersede, and can be greatly assisted by, independent notice requirements associated with City actions or programs. For example, a neighborhood planning recommendation regarding establishment of a L.I.D. (Local Improvement District) will trigger the petition process always associated with such an initiative. Published notice about the environmental review process, decisions and appeal opportunities will take place for each plan in conjunction with but independently of the validation process.



Phase II Guidelines for Public Involvement Checklist

December 1996

(Phase II Outreach Evaluation for Council Approval and Adoption Package)

Introduction

As part of your adoption and approval process, NPO will help you create a public involvement checklist that will reflect all the outreach work you have done. Following the NPO guidelines and completing performance reports as you go should assure that there will be minimal work needed to complete the checklist.

Objectives

- Assure an open and accessible planning process.
- Assure that the Planning Committee included members drawn from a range of interests, ages and backgrounds.
- Assure that the vision, goals and issues selected for planning were shared with and validated by members of the community (residents, business and property owners in the planning area).
- Assure that your draft neighborhood plan and recommendations have been appropriately validated by the community.

Criteria

Evidence that,

- Your organizing committee created and implemented an initial outreach plan.
- Planning Committee membership reflects a stakeholder analyses and was selected through a process that was open and accessible to people who live, work, own property or do business in the planning area.
- The Planning Committee created and implemented a continuing outreach plan.

- The scope-of-work for planning was developed through a clear and accessible process as issues were selected, relationships among issues were determined and priorities developed. Agreement on priorities, and planning recommendations was achieved with broad public participation by residents, business and property owners, and other stakeholders in the planning area. (Phase I validation.)
- Consultants were selected by a clearly articulated process established by the Planning Committee (or Organizing Committee).
- Opportunities for participation in gathering and analyzing information and creating options during the planning process were accessible and inclusive.
- Validation processes (including, but not limited to, a stakeholder mailing and two public forums) were used to notify and gather comments from all stakeholders on recommendations to City Council to implement your neighborhood plan.

Checklist

NPO will use to evaluate:

Phase I

NPO will review documentation already gathered of:

- outreach plan completion
- selection of Planning Committee
- participation in creating scope-of-work
- validation of Planning Committee and scope-of-work.

(See Planning Committee Guidelines and Phase II Scope of Work Guidelines)

Phase II

NPO will need to evaluate documentation of Phase II:

- Consultant selection process was clearly managed by the Planning Committee to reflect community planning priorities.
- Phase II continuing outreach plan was developed and implemented. New participants were included in the planning process; especially those "stakeholders" not previously participating.
- The Planning Committee remained diverse throughout Phase II and selection of new members was conducted through an open and accessible process.

- The community members (residents, business and property owners and other stakeholders in the planning area) were periodically given updates of the progress of the planning effort.
- The planning process provided opportunities for review and comment as the plan and recommendations were being developed by stakeholders who had not been regularly participating and this "input" was respected and considered in the plan and recommendation development.
- The draft plan and recommendations were "validated." Notice with sufficient detail was mailed to all stakeholders and there were opportunities to comment at two public forums and by other means. Comments or responses are included in the approval and adoption package submitted to City Council.

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Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

(12/15/09)

I. GENERAL PHILOSOPHY (approved on 11/17/09 as NPAC advice)

1. Every neighborhood reflected in the existing Neighborhood Plans is different with a particular history, culture mix, physical assets, community services, public realm features.
2. Each neighborhood has unique demographics, existing growth targets, a mix of market rate and subsidized housing, and under-utilized land.
3. As part of the Comprehensive Planning process, the City develops targets for additional housing and employment, based on assumptions from various processes at the city, regional and state levels. The City should work with the neighborhoods to determine how City-wide growth targets should be allocated among them.
4. Neighborhoods with plans that accept new population and job spaces should prioritize needed urban infrastructure, public facilities, and public services that relate to serving the population, including current and new residents.
5. Neighborhoods should have funding to utilize professionals in revising their plans, creating/revising Neighborhood Design Guidelines, Streetscape Plans, etc.
6. A neighborhood plan could request prioritized goals for specific types of Incentive Zoning where appropriate in the neighborhood.
7. All station areas need to be as complete as possible with a diversity of uses/businesses, services, and housing types, consistent with underlying zoning. The station area developments should encourage diverse housing and businesses that serve a population with diverse cultures, incomes, age categories.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS (approved on 11/17/09 as NPAC advice)

1. The Plan Updates should be web-based (to some degree, depending on neighborhood preferences) and should contain important links to other sources of neighborhood information in the planning area: design guidelines, streetscape guidelines, earlier neighborhood planning documents and graphics, stewardship organizations websites, etc. The DPD website should have a site-map that allows easy access to all the Neighborhood Plans by clicking on any neighborhood planning area on the map.
2. The City should establish an interdepartmental task force with representation from all related city departments to assist Neighborhood Planning efforts along with neighborhood stakeholders.
3. Outside consultants should be utilized for developing plan updates. Since funding will likely not be available for all neighborhoods desiring updates, neighborhood stakeholders should be allowed to assemble, raise funds and hire a consultant to draft individual plan updates.
4. In order to achieve consistency across plans, DPD should develop guidelines for any new plan updates to be undertaken by consultants. Guidelines should be consistent with NPAC Plan Update recommendations within this document.
5. District councils and other stewardship bodies should be active in encouraging stakeholder group participation during a plan update process. DON should provide direct financial and administrative support to regenerate stakeholder groups for each plan update.
6. Each Neighborhood Plan should contain:
 - a) The City's revised growth targets, as accepted by a stakeholder-based planning committee.
 - b) Revised goals, policies, and strategies for achieving the goals related to livability, sustainability, walkability, health, education, reducing car dependency, economic vitality,

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- job creation, and other policies related to the Comprehensive Plan. These should be updated within the Comprehensive Plan as each plan update is done.
- c) An updated history section, so it is known what has changed for that set of neighborhoods, as well as an inventory of potentially-designated historic structures and districts.
 - d) A survey of the neighborhood's existing physical assets and needed assets, including recommendations on which assets to save/conservate, which to replace, and which to add. Survey methods could include lists, maps, and/or photographic records of the assets and items listed in the sections below.
 - e) A list of target projects related to strategic plans, such as the Pedestrian, Bicycle or Transit Master Plans.
 - f) Updates to outdated and illegible maps, to reflect current conditions (and/or proposals), using current technology and software.
7. Any neighborhood-based steward group hiring consultants and representing the neighborhood should have open meetings and agree to abide by the intent of City Council Resolution 27709 and 28115.
 8. Recognition of existing community organizations and past stewards of neighborhood plans should be a mandatory element of any future neighborhood planning effort.
 9. The Neighborhood Plan Updates should identify and prioritize currently desired public benefits for application in cases where a project in the neighborhood planning area receives additional development capacity under the city's current and any future incentive zoning programs.
 10. Neighborhood plan updates should call for modifications or additions to existing neighborhood design guidelines (or the creation of such design guidelines where none exist) that explicitly identify site and architectural features that will support the Sector Design Review Boards and support neighborhood plan goals and policies related to preserving neighborhood character and buildings identified in the required survey of neighborhood physical and historical assets.
 11. Each neighborhood needs to be explicit as to what elements of its neighborhood character it wishes to see preserved and the preferred legal mechanisms to accomplish that preservation.

III. A CHECKLIST OF TOPICS FOR STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN REVIEW AND REVISION TO CONSIDER (approved on 12/15/09 as NPAC advice)

In addition to the topics below, Seattle's Comprehensive Plan should be consulted for more planning topics and accompanying commentary.

1. LAND USE

- a) Evaluate the city's Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan and review current land use and zoning designations in your urban village, and make recommendations for maintaining or revising them. Consider preparation of "build out" conditions illustrations for different zoning scenarios.
- b) Be active in the development of zoning law changes that would change or retain the character of your urban village or urban center. Revisions in the multifamily Building Code for both townhouse construction and larger multifamily structures are underway. Stakeholders active in Neighborhood Plan Review and Revision for their planning areas should be aware of proposed changes and how they could affect their urban village or urban center.
- c) Consider zoning law that could provide new public or private open space (or other types of amenities), particularly in dense neighborhoods within your planning area.
- d) Consider zoning and zoning law changes that could offer lower rents or other advantages to new or old locally-owned businesses in new projects in urban villages or urban centers.
- e) Utilize Transfer of Development Rights strategies where appropriate in neighborhood plans to conserve land for the public good where the neighborhood deems appropriate.
- f) Specify in the neighborhood plan future development of Neighborhood Design Guidelines

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or Streetscape Guidelines (if not already existing) to aid the sector's Design Review Board in making new building development more appropriate to the neighborhood character areas.

- g) Facilitate spaces for new public facilities by allowing additional building height or volume in exchange for public facility space(s) in urban villages or urban centers where appropriate. This could be accomplished through contract rezones or other strategies for the entire neighborhood, or at specific neighborhood parcels prioritized for public facilities.

2. TRANSPORTATION

- a) Consult the Seattle Transit Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, and Bicycle Master Plan, and other relevant plans, as springboards for more detailed recommendations to increase transit use, alternatives to the car and improved pedestrian safety.
- b) Review transportation element of Neighborhood Plan for consistency with the growing body of policy and plan direction to enhance alternatives to auto use. Review the relevant recommended improvements in the recently complete master plans, establish neighborhood priorities; and add specificity and/or needed neighborhood guidance on select priorities. Where significant new transit investments are planned, consider transportation within the context of integrating land use and transportation within the station area.
- c) Considerations for urban villages with station areas:
 - Consider elements in station area that are complementary to less dense parts of the neighborhood beyond the urban village boundary.
 - Bike/pedestrian routes to extend the quarter-mile access to station(s).
 - Drop-off facilities at station.
 - Bike storage/maintenance at station
 - Directional signage for bike/pedestrian routes
- d) Considerations for all revised Neighborhood Plans:
 - Evaluate mass transit and bus connections to other key urban villages and urban centers.
 - Review neighborhood bike/pedestrian facilities/routes for conformity with Seattle Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans.
 - Evaluate bike/pedestrian facilities/routes improvement potential as supported in those Master Plans.
 - Designate needs for bike/pedestrian connections to key trail system components.
 - Evaluate need for a designated transit hub in the urban village or urban center.
 - Evaluate bus stop locations, bus shelter needs.
 - Encourage electrification of transit.
 - Designate need for improved transit service hours to specific destinations from the neighborhood. Transportation issues should be evaluated in each neighborhood to determine if professional transportation consulting is warranted as part of a plan update.
 - Consider parking needs for local businesses.
 - Provide for development of Neighborhood Streetscape Plans for pedestrian overlay zones.
 - Evaluate pedestrian safety and pedestrian level of service for crossings at key urban village/urban center intersections. Develop recommendations for improved safety features, aesthetic appearance of key crosswalks.
 - Designate areas in need of sidewalks or walkways and sidewalk improvements to enhance pedestrian safety and walkability.
 - Consider traffic calming alternatives to promote vehicle and bicycle safety and walking and biking. Develop safe routes to schools, parks and other public facilities.

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3. HOUSING

- a) Specify need to develop policies that encourage integration of affordable housing units into market rate residential projects.
- b) Specify need to develop Neighborhood Design Guidelines that encourage ground-level housing designs that are appropriate to your multi-family zoned neighborhoods.
- c) Consider the physical transition between multi-family, neighborhood, commercial and single-family blocks or land parcels in your planning area.

4. CAPITAL FACILITIES (Existing and needed for increased density)

- a) Parks
- b) Libraries
- c) Public K-12 Schools
- d) Higher Education/Job Training
- e) Fire/Emergency Services Sites
- f) Recreation Centers
- g) Service Centers
- h) Facilities to serve the needs of senior citizens
- i) Health Services

5. UTILITIES

- a) Underground or co-locate with public facilities or housing new or renovated power substations.
- b) Designate pedestrian walkways for pedestrian lighting, bus stop lighting.
- c) Reduce unsightly pole-located transformers adjacent to public open spaces and utility boxes on public property. Coordinate with, or identify gaps in, the long term capital and maintenance programs of public utilities.
- d) Consider the location of utility's facilities and their impacts.

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- a) Recommend a Merchants Association, Chamber of Commerce, Metropolitan Development Authority or Business Improvement District where appropriate and encourage cooperation with the local community council.
- b) Neighborhood Plan stewardship groups could establish a Land Use Committee which could include, residents, property and business owners, and developers.
- c) Develop parking strategies using available tools that support local businesses.

7. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

- a) Each neighborhood may consider current urban village boundaries and evaluate whether or not they should be revised based on neighborhood changes subsequent to their designation.

8. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

- a) Public Schools K-12
- b) Community College space
- c) Job re-training space
- d) Higher education sub-campus space
- e) Health care/wellness facilities

9. CULTURAL RESOURCES

- a) Improve/construct Rec. Centers
- b) Improve/construct children's play facilities, other park facilities.

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- c) Where appropriate, specify that live/work units suitable for artist lofts be among preferred residential unit types – an element in a Neighborhood Design Guidelines proposal.
- d) Provide for historic preservation recommendations for appropriate structures or for a contiguous character area.
- e) Provide for a public art program with a suitable neighborhood arts organization.
- f) Develop recommendations for a Neighborhood Design Guidelines document that encourage appropriate public art for the neighborhood in new development projects.
- g) Consider designation of an Arts Zone Overlay District.

10. ENVIRONMENT

- a) Utilize Incentive Zoning as appropriate to encourage developers to provide public open space at street level, view corridors, improved streetscapes.
- b) Identify sites that are not practical for development in the future that can be acquired for public open space, recreation, pea-patches or sustainable farming, bike station, etc.
- c) Specify preference for appropriate sustainable design standards in new construction.
- d) Consult the most progressive neighborhood sustainability guidelines, currently LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND), during the neighborhood plan update process. LEED ND concepts include: compact development, prioritizing brownfield redevelopment, historic preservation and re-use of historic buildings, reduced parking footprint, local food production, animal habitat restoration, innovative storm water systems, housing-job balance, heat island reduction, and reduced water use.
- e) Investigate neighborhood planning opportunities for more sustainable, "low impact development", creek day-lighting, natural storm water management in new street improvement and large development plans.
- f) Investigate opportunities for partnerships to build energy-efficient district heating and cooling (shared between several buildings) or renewable energy sources.
- g) Investigate opportunities for creation or restoration of wildlife habitat.
- h) Promote biking and walking routes and facilities for public health and carbon emissions reductions.

11. EMERGENCY PLANNING

- a) Each plan update should include emergency preparedness strategies and identify local resources to cope with emergencies.

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

SELECTION CRITERIA SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

(12/15/09 & 1/19/10)

Recommended General Criteria for Selecting Neighborhoods for Neighborhood Plan Updates

I. Recommendations for Objective Criteria

The following objective criteria were developed considering available city-wide to relatively compare neighborhoods with each other. It was also assumed that all evaluations would be compared to existing neighborhood plans. The following general criteria are in no particular order:

1) Growth Target Status

- a) Evaluation of Residential/Housing Numbers
- b) Evaluation of Economic/Job Numbers

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods which are the furthest above the Comprehensive Plan growth targets, in comparison to all other neighborhoods

2) Demographic Change

- a) Evaluation of available City-wide data including but not limited to:
 - Census data
 - Regional transportation data (i.e. transit rider ship)
 - King County Health data (i.e. Health of King County Report)

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods which are showing the greatest demographic change in census numbers (e.g. age, ethnic, social economic, cultural composition), either up or down, or other demographic changes which could indicate the existing NH Plan may insufficiently address new or changing issues.

3) Urban Village Boundary Applicability

- a) Identify development outside of existing urban village boundary
- b) Identify pending or approved request(s) to change urban village boundary

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods which have experienced greater proportionate development within the planning area of each Urban Village.

4) Elements of Existing Neighborhood Plan

- a) Identify elements missing from existing plan

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to Neighborhoods which are missing elements identified in the City Comprehensive Plan.

5) Transportation Investments by City and/or other agencies

- a) Identify Capital Improvement Program (CIP) plans or projects
- b) Evaluate Transportation Oriented Development Opportunity
- c) Identify of Major State Projects (i.e. SR99 and SR 520)

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods which have been receiving or are projected to receive significant public investment through the CIP, either projects driven by the Neighborhood Plan or projects driven to the neighborhood by City programs.

Greater priority should be given to neighborhoods that will be impacted by major State projects.

6) Lack of Infrastructure

- a) Identify missing sidewalks
- b) Evaluate Transit Service and Amenities (i.e. Bus shelters)
- c) Evaluate Wastewater Service
- d) Evaluate Stormwater Service
- e) Evaluate Power Service

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods which either had identified major infrastructure gaps as part of their original Neighborhood Plan and which still may not be fulfilled, or which now have gaps in infrastructure due to changes in the Urban Village which have created new demands.

7) Pressure from Developers and/or Private Institutions

- a) Identify changes in land use
- b) Identify pending zoning changes
- c) Identify Landmark Nominations and Designations
- d) Identify Major Institution Master Plans

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods where, if all permits or proposed land use changes in the pipeline were completed within the next two years, it would increase the residential units or job counts by 10 percent or more.

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods where significant buildings or other historical resources are subject to redevelopment pressure.

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods which now have large contiguous area(s) identified for redevelopment, which were not identified in the Neighborhood Plan.

8) Pressure from Public Institutions

- a) Identify Health Initiatives
- b) Identify Planning Efforts
- c) Identify Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project (non-Transportation)
- d) Identify Major Institution Master Plans

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

Greater priority for update should be given to neighborhoods which have outside pressures leading towards planning efforts of Major Institutions for development in and around the Urban Village that was not identified in the Neighborhood Plan.

Weighting should also be given to neighborhoods that are having a Major Institution Master Plan implemented if the Master Plan was approved after the adoption of the Neighborhood Plan.

9) Distribution of Resources

- a) Evaluation of City budget (i.e. Considering Race and Social Justice)

Element weighting/prioritizing consideration:

The city budget should be reviewed for funding inequities based on social and demographic information that guides departmental decisions for equitable distribution of city resources. Priority should given to neighborhoods and their planning areas that appear to be receiving less than equitable distribution, based on what was requested or identified in the original Neighborhood Plan.

II. Recommendations for Subjective Criteria

In addition to the objective criteria outlined above, the following subjective criteria could be applied after information was collected through a documented public outreach process coordinated between the neighborhoods and the City:

A. Stakeholder Participation

- Identify the stakeholders
- Is there a stewardship group?
- Which stakeholders are part of the stewardship group?
- How do the stakeholders communicate (i.e. at meetings, via email, newsletter/website)?

B. Willingness of Stakeholder to Participate

- Are the stakeholders willing to update their neighborhood plan?

C. Neighborhood Character

- Is there a feeling of neighborhood character?
- Is there concern over a loss of neighborhood character?

January 19, 2010

To: The Honorable Sally Clark
The Honorable Mike O'Brien
Amalia Leighton, NPAC Co-Chair
Irene Wall, NPAC Co-Chair

Subject: Minority report submitted to the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (NPAC) Subcommittee Report on Recommending General Criteria for Selecting Neighborhoods for Neighborhood Plan Updates.

The undersigned, a minority of the NPAC subcommittee appointed to recommend general criteria for selecting neighborhoods for neighborhood plan updates, not agreeing with the majority, desire to express their views below in this case.

There is one additional objective criteria that should be added to guide in the decision for selecting Neighborhood Plans for update, and that criteria is the extent to which existing neighborhood plan items from the Approval and Adoption matrix have been completed or at least put into work. Two perspectives of weighting can be applied:

- 1) Priority should be given to neighborhoods which have most of their projects completed or in work, so there is updated community input on the continued shaping of their neighborhood. This presumes that the neighborhood is either at or exceeding its jobs and growth targets – we haven't asked what to do if a neighborhood plan and growth target are achieved simultaneously, would there be no "next" Neighborhood Plan?
- 2) Priority should be given to Neighborhoods which seem to have fallen behind in implementing reasonable projects, and the stewardship group should be given an opportunity to provide feedback if an update is needed. Priority would go to those neighborhoods who feel their projects are no longer relevant in light of changing conditions, or new data from the 2009 Status Reports from the SPC & NPAC, or new data collected by the neighborhood itself.

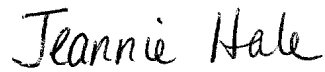
Original objection to the inclusion of these additional criteria was that there was no easy way to get current information about the status of completion of Neighborhood Plans, as the Department of Neighborhood ceased updating their database about 2 years ago.

According to the Office of City Auditor "Seattle District Council System Needs Renewal" June 22, 2009. Table 3 on page 4 makes it very clear that a responsibility of the City is the monitoring of commitments by the City to neighborhoods, citing Resolutions and 27709 and 28115 as authorization. This function was coded "Red" by the Audit team. It is not acceptable or logical that future decisions about the priority needs of neighborhoods to undergo an update would be made without data about the completion status of the current plan. We should have available as a decision factor how much of an existing plan has been implemented to date.

Respectfully Submitted,



Cindi Barker
City Neighborhood Council Neighborhood
Planning Committee



Jeannie Hale
Northeast District Council



Toby Thaler
Lake Union District Council

Cc: Stella Chao, DON
Diane Sugimura, DPD
Lyle Bicknell, DPD
David Goldberg, DPD
Members of the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

January 26, 2010

The Honorable Sally Clark
Chair, Built Environment
Seattle City Council
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

The Honorable Mike O'Brien
Chair, Public Utilities and Neighborhoods
Seattle City Council
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Re: Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee Report

Dear Councilmembers Clark and O'Brien:

As someone who has followed this process from the time Mayor Nickels first proposed updating neighborhood plans, I am writing this minority report to balance the majority report's overall rosy tone and to provide information which paints a fuller picture of what transpired over the brief time the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC) was active. The majority report, meeting summaries and staff reports to Council do not adequately represent the extent of the frustration of the community and the District Council representatives on NPAC with the latest round of "neighborhood planning."

As most of the Council and former members of the Planning, Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee (PLUNC) will recall, I attended most Council and PLUNC hearings on these matters, and made numerous public record requests that clearly revealed, early in this process, the desire of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and the Mayor's Office to dominate the neighborhood plan update process. I also served as a member of the Neighborhood Planning Committee of the City Neighborhood Council, and have discussed the process at numerous city-wide and neighborhood meetings. While on NPAC, I served on or participated in meetings on the following subcommittees: Charter, Outreach, Sector Open House, Neighborhood Plan Status Report, Neighborhood Plan Updates and Validation. In addition to my regular attendance at the monthly NPAC meetings, I attended at least 20 subcommittee meetings. Of the community-wide meetings hosted by NPAC and the Planning Commission, I attended at least 11 meetings.

During the debate over the process, the community made clear its desire to have a grassroots, community-driven process involving extensive outreach and meaningful community participation. On January 15, 2008, there was a presentation from Triangle Associates on the key themes from interviews with NPAC members. It was clear from the interviews that the committee wanted an inclusive process that was driven by the neighborhoods, not the City. Councilmember Clark stated at the first meeting of NPAC that it was a necessity that this be a community-driven process. A number of other Councilmembers expressed a similar view throughout the debate over how the updates were to be conducted. The Ordinance and

Resolution establishing the process and NPAC incorporated these views. The DPD and the Administration proceeded in defiance of these views and of the Ordinance and Resolution.

This first round of neighborhood planning was not community-driven: it consisted chiefly of the City's execution of preconceived plans to upzone and increase the density of the neighborhoods being discussed. The DPD dominated and manipulated the entire process, including its alleged partner, the Department of Neighborhoods (DON). That dominance began at the very outset of the process when Lyle Bicknell, speaking in regards to the station area plans (SAP) declared that: "the train had left the station." Lyle asserted at numerous points during the process that station area planning was not neighborhood planning and that it was a separate process that was to be run completely by the DPD and on which, the NPAC was to have no comment. He continued to do this despite my quotations from the Ordinance and Resolution establishing the neighborhood planning process and NPAC that clearly indicated that station area planning was a part of the neighborhood planning process. Indeed, the Department contradicted itself on this issue throughout the process, as a number of documents it produced that related to station area planning described them as part of the neighborhood plan update. For example, at the February 9, 2009 meeting we received a draft titled "Shaping the Future_ Updating Neighborhood Plans" that listed the SE neighborhoods as the primary audience.

The DPD's and Administration's dominance were enabled by delays in appointing Council and Mayoral appointees to NPAC, and was further facilitated by a process that focused on City-driven agendas and presentations which dominated the early meetings of NPAC, as well as a focus on administrative aspects during the first few meetings of NPAC such as creating a Charter for the group. Out of a total of 17 meetings, the first was devoted to administrative details, one was devoted to discussions about a charter, one was devoted to Race and Social Justice, and one was devoted to discussion of City policies. NPAC began behind and fell further behind because the City's agendas did not allow it to begin work on the tasks assigned to it. A great deal of time at meetings was spent listening to City officials. City staff were accorded lengthy presentation periods to make statements while NPAC members time to comment was often curtailed. Numerous decisions were made and priorities set before the first meeting on NPAC, including: the selection of Co-Chairs, the selection of a facilitator, and the preparation of agendas and schedules. While per the Resolution, NPAC was to make recommendations and provide ongoing advice to the Executive and Council on the development of the Neighborhood Plan Status Reports and the Neighborhood Plan Update Process, in fact, the City often proceeded before receiving any input from NPAC.

NPAC's ability to catch up with the train that had left the station was further hampered by repeated and lengthy delays in the provision of critical information that had to be repeatedly requested by NPAC members and subcommittees. Most of the time, the information was received well after NPAC could have any meaningful input or impact on the matters discussed or the events planned. Once NPAC finally had an opportunity to comment on DPD-prepared draft

documents, its views were rarely reflected in changes to the drafts. Information and relevant documents for discussion were often provided just before the day of the meeting or the day of the meeting, such that they could not be given adequate consideration before NPAC was required by the City to make decisions.

Just as NPAC was beginning to develop its sea legs, on October 20, 2009, NPAC was asked to consider whether it should continue for another 6 months or whether it should sunset itself. All deliberations after that took place under a cloud and work was rushed just as it had been with the Station Area Planning.

Poor Attendance and Uneven Participation by NPAC Members

The work of NPAC was also hampered by irregular attendance such that not all members were current with all that had transpired in their absence. Alternates were to be encouraged to attend all meetings, but most did not. District Council members were replaced by alternates who had not previously consistently attended NPAC meeting. Among those who did attend more regularly, were a number of members who repeatedly left the meetings early. As a large percentage of the members appeared to feel that their only obligation in this process was to attend the monthly meetings, it became apparent early on that the work of NPAC would end up resting on the shoulders of a fraction of its members. NPAC began with the following membership: 9 At-Large members; 13 District Council representatives, the Chair of the CNC Neighborhood Planning Committee, and 2 members of the Seattle Planning Commission (SPC), and 12 alternates. Confusion as to neighborhood representation was caused by associating At-Large members with specific neighborhoods on the attendance lists and during introductions.

A number of members of NPAC had past or current relationships to urban real estate development. There were a number of architects and urban designers. One member who had spent most of her political career and community involvement in Lake Forest Park showed up as a representative of the Downtown District. Her interest in Town Centers was consistent with the Administration's objectives.

Of the 24 original members, 2 resigned formally, a number resigned simply by not attending, 1 resigned to work on a contract with the City and only 12 attended regularly as required by the Charter. Over time, key District Council representatives resigned. As a consequence, neighborhood voices were replaced by those of the Mayoral or Council appointees. Another consequence of these patterns was that the NPAC subcommittees became heavily dominated by members and staff of the SPC, DPD staff, Mayoral or Council appointees and architects/urban designers. I have attached an Excel chart that shows the declining attendance of District Council representatives as compared to SPC and At-Large members.

Lack of accountability and transparency

Summaries of the meeting contained no attributions: this makes it difficult to hold people accountable for their opinions or to perceive certain patterns of dominance when it came to making decisions or to judge possible bias. The Co-Chairs, facilitator, and the DPD decided that it was not necessary to reveal whether individuals were Mayoral or Council appointees. In order to obtain timely information on the Public Outreach Liaisons (POLs) and their recruitment, I had to make a public disclosure request. I found that most of them worked for agencies that were dependent on City and County funding. At one Open House, an NPAC member asked a POL for her contact information, and a DON staff member jumped into the conversation immediately and told her she did not have to provide that information to the NPAC member.

Poor Attendance at Open Houses by the Average Resident even in SAP areas

In a number of cases, there were more City and NPAC officials present than there were individuals from the neighborhoods. University of Washington students often attended and participated in the facilitation and discussion in significant numbers. I urge the Council not to permit DPD to validate the plans by citing their neighborhood meetings. If those meetings were anything like the one I attended on Beacon Hill, they were chiefly dog and pony shows by the DPD and the DON.

To give the Council some idea of the extent of the lack of participation by neighborhood residents, I share the following information that I compiled based on notes I took when I attended neighborhood events. At first open house, there were 36 POLs, NPAC and City staff. At the second open house on Capitol Hill out of 44 attendees 19 were NPAC, SPC, SDOT or translators. At North Beacon Hill, out of 68 attendees, 5 were NPAC, 3, at least, were UW, 2 were from Great City, 2 POLs, numerous City staff, and 1 member of ICPA. At the July 8, 2009 North Neighborhoods Open house: 8 of 15 attendees at the University District table were from community, at the Licton Springs table 8 of 11 were from the community, at the Bitter Lake table 13 of 18 were from community, and at the Lake City table, 17 of 19 were from the community. Overall of 63 people attending the North Neighborhoods Open House, 26.98 % were city officials, city staff or members of NPAC. At another Sector Open House, at the Fremont table, 5 people were residents, 2 were members of NPAC, and 1 was a member of the Planning Commission; at the Green Lake table, there was 1 NPAC member, 2 members of the Planning Commission, and 6 residents; at the Crown Hill/Ballard table there were 3 NPAC members, 1 Planning Commission member, and 11 residents; at the Greenwood/Phinney Ridge table there was 1 NPAC member, 1 Planning Commission member, and 18 residents; at the Wallingford table there were 4 residents, 1 NPAC member, 1 Planning Commission member, 1 DON member. On the whole at this event, out of 45 attendees, 33% were NPAC, Planning Commission or City staff. At the Delridge November 5, 2009 Neighborhood Plan Status Report update meeting: only 4 Delridge residents attended plus DON staff. According to information from another NPAC member at the May 9, 2009 neighborhood meeting at the African-American

Museum 29 of 93 attendees or 31.18 % were city staff or NPAC members, 3 were developers, and a number of people interested in the area green belt. Her figures don't include a number of UW students. Numerous public comments were received at NPAC meetings as to the insufficiency of neighborhood attendance, representation and participation. Such poor attendance is indicative of inadequate outreach, a topic that was frequently discussed at NPAC.

Larger Neighborhood Meetings were Dominated by City Staff

Facilitators were not drawn from the neighborhood but in many cases were UW students, developers or architects, or City staff. Dissident voices from the neighborhoods such as Southeast Seattle were dismissed when they weren't ignored completely. Attempts of some neighborhoods to have more control over the direction and operation of the larger meetings were thwarted by the DPD. Only Beacon Hill was able to vary the process to some degree. The focus of the meetings was on how to do density to get town centers, which was not the only neighborhood concern.

Neighborhood Plan Status Reports are Inadequate

The Neighborhood Plan Status Plan Reports have been criticized by numerous members of NPAC and the community as being inadequate due to outdated and or incomplete information, but little in them has been changed. The DPD made it clear on May 17, 2009, when David Goldberg, pleading the Council's direction to use available resources, declared that the DPD would not be generating any new data. As a result, the Status Reports contain seriously outdated information from the 2000 Census. According to the DPD, no Status Reports were required for the Station Areas.

Outreach was Grossly Inadequate

NPAC was also concerned that outreach in the Station Areas was being done without its input. An Outreach Subcommittee was established and communicated its concerns and suggestions to City staff, but City staff were very slow to respond.

The Planning Outreach Liaison/Trusted Advocates model was highly overrated. Anyone who looks at reports from the group that ran the Trusted Advocates process in White Center will find that the White Center process differed significantly from what happened with this round of neighborhood plan updates. When I reviewed documents I received in response to my public records request, I was appalled at the superficiality of the recruitment process. Although the recruitment process was supposed to be based on bicultural candidates referred by community members and/or those working in the community, most of the POLS worked in the social service field and for agencies that are dependent on City or County funds or had previously worked for such agencies. It was not a diverse group of individuals drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds or places.

While the ordinance called for a focus on strengthening and renewing relationships with neighborhood organizations, neighborhood councils, business groups and stewardship groups, immigrant and refugee groups and other underrepresented groups, the DPD and DON focused their resources on the immigrant and underrepresented communities to the exclusion of all of the other groups: this cannot be characterized as an inclusive process. Other than Station Areas, where the City bragged about holding hundreds of meetings with minority, they sought to decrease the number of neighborhood/area-wide meetings and the resources dedicated to them. The quality of the outreach for neighborhoods other than Station Areas can readily be judged by the lack of resources devoted to it in comparison to the resources devoted to Station Areas.

DPD's Disregard of the Letter and the Spirit of the Law

My questions as to whether the DPD was going to follow the Ordinance were either answered with a cursory "yes", which had no effect whatsoever on subsequent behavior or were ignored. Attempts to hold DPD accountable under ordinance was undercut by the failure of the Council to act to ensure that the Ordinance was upheld.

For all of the above reasons, I urge the Council to proceed slowly before proceeding with approval of neighborhood plan updates proposed by the City. I also urge the Council to require greater accountability and transparency from City staff on how its resources were allocated during this process, and to examine whether the resources were allocated according to Council priorities and direction, and in an equitable manner.

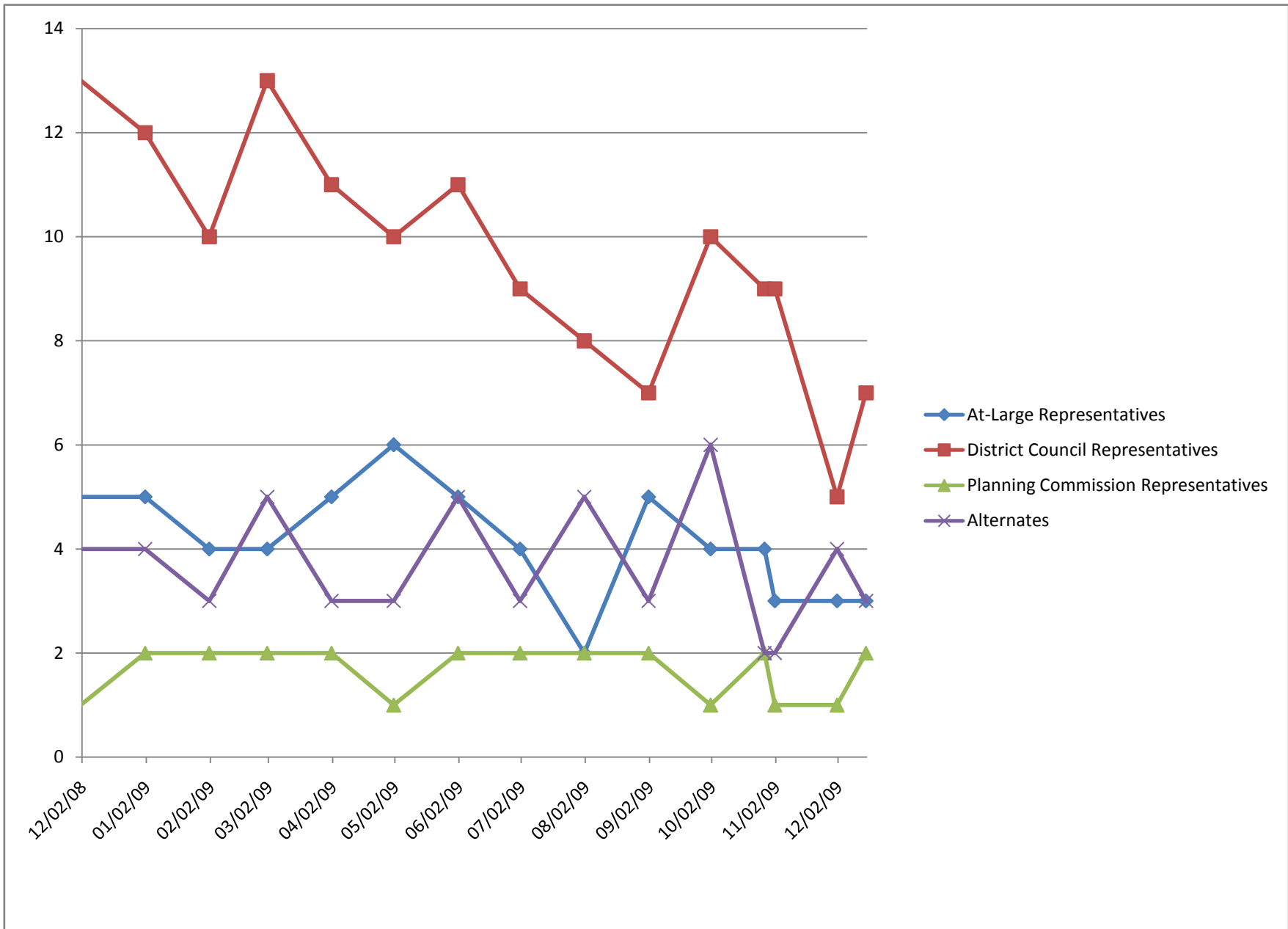
Respectfully submitted,



Dennis Saxman, East District Neighborhood Council Representative to NPAC

Cc: The Honorable Mike McGinn
Diane Sugimura, DPD
Stella Chao, DON
Ray Gastil, DPD
Lyle Bicknell, DPD
Kimberlee Archie, DON
Veronica Sherman-King, DON

Date	At-Large Representatives	District Council Representatives	Planning Commission Representatives	Alternates
12/01/08	5	13	1	4
01/01/09	5	12	2	4
02/01/09	4	10	2	3
03/01/09	4	13	2	5
04/01/09	5	11	2	3
05/01/09	6	10	1	3
06/01/09	5	11	2	5
07/01/09	4	9	2	3
08/01/09	2	8	2	5
09/01/09	5	7	2	3
10/01/09	4	10	1	6
10/27/09	4	9	2	2
11/01/09	3	9	1	2
12/01/09	3	5	1	4
12/15/09	3	7	2	3



January 31, 2010

To: The Honorable Sally Clark
The Honorable Mike O'Brien
Amalia Leighton, Co-chair, Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee
Irene Wall, Co-chair, Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

cc: Stella Chao, Director, Department of Neighborhoods
Diane Sugimura, Director, Department of Planning and Development
Ray Gastil, Dep't. of Planning and Development
Lyle Bicknell, Project Manager, Department of Planning and Development
Sebhat Tenna, Outreach, Department of Neighborhoods
Members of the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

Subject: Minority report on the Neighborhood Plan Update for N. Beacon Hill

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each of the members of NPAC for the intelligence, passion and history they brought to the Committee. Though ours was often a rocky road, we traveled it together.

This minority report focuses on only one of the station areas chosen for plan updates in 2009, the N. Beacon Hill area where I reside and chair the community council. It is not meant to diminish the report of the whole, rather to point out ways in which the process might be improved going forward. It is not intended to put a halt to zoning upgrades which have been encouraged for El Centro de la Raza, nor is it intended to diminish the work of the NPAC Committee.

Many residents of N. Beacon Hill are concerned with the manner in which the 2009 Neighborhood Plan Update was done. We have a 20 year history of neighborhood planning and have seen many items from our Adoption and Approval Matrix completed. We feel strongly that the process which has just taken place is incomplete and was driven by the City, not the neighborhood. I have listed those concerns in the following paragraphs.

Rapidity of the Process

The Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee Outreach Subcommittee and an ad hoc committee of the North Beacon Hill Council all requested that the process for updating N. Beacon Hill's neighborhood plan be delayed. These requests were not honored. The unrealistic timelines, combined with a general consensus that the process was understaffed, under-resourced, and should be delayed, caused great concern to the community.

As this process moves forward to Rainier Beach and the N. community area, it will be improved, in that only two areas will be updated. This allows more time for each community and less strain on the resources of DPD and DON. It is strongly urged that the necessary funding be allocated, so that this process will be done more thoroughly.

Outreach

Outreach to area business owners and former Neighborhood Plan committee members was insufficient, and the emphasis on outreach to under-represented groups did not

reach many of the ethnic groups here on Beacon Hill. In the 1990 planning efforts the Asian population, Hispanic population and business population were all part of the planning process. Many of these people, who dedicated long hours to complete the 1999 Neighborhood Plan, were not included in outreach efforts initially, if at all. Council Ordinance 122799 states, "*Focus on strengthening and renewing relationships with neighborhood organizations, neighborhood councils, business groups, stewardship groups*", etc.

It is strongly recommended that the neighborhoods be totally engaged in updating their plans, and that the emphasis on outreach to the underrepresented be continued, while at the same time listening to the voices of long term leaders in the community. Neighborhood Plan Updates need to be neighborhood driven, not City driven.

Review by other City Departments

We are genuinely concerned that studies of infrastructure needs were not done. If we are to add density, how will increased demands on sewer, water, electricity, and traffic be met?

Our current Adoption and Approval Matrix indicates that these infrastructure demands were reviewed by each City Department, and are part of the existing Neighborhood Plan. That is not the case today.

It is urged that the various agencies charged with providing needed services be in attendance at all meetings held in the communities, and that they develop plans for infrastructure needs. Where possible, these plans need to become part of Adoption and Approval Matrices.

Community Input to Planned Zoning Upgrades

The N. Beacon Hill community is concerned that the proposed changes to height designations in the core business area have not been adequately discussed with the community. Although the final N. Beacon Hill Plan Update is available on line, there are inadequate funds in either DPD or DON to alert the Hill's population to the website via a mailing, or other form of correspondence. Many people, unless they attend a North Beacon Hill Council meeting, or are members of the Beacon Blog, do not know that the plan is available.

The final neighborhood plans need to be presented to the affected communities through a large meeting of the population of the community. Funding should be provided for mailings to all affected. The Neighborhood Coordinators in each area must be a central point for outreach to the community. Relying only on electronic communication and on-line surveys should not be elements of the planning which goes forward.

Neighborhood Update Plan Validation

The November meeting during which the community saw for the first time the draft Goals and Objectives concerning changes to Beacon Hill was poorly advertised due to lack of funding for a mailing, and consequently was poorly attended.

Neighborhood validation of planned zoning changes and the update, in general, have relied on people using the web. Many residents of N. Beacon have no web access and speak English as a second language, thus are unable to read the plan. Reliance on the on-line survey as a form of validation does not constitute validation as we have known it. A more effective validation process would have come through a well-attended public meeting.

It is strongly urged that the City follow the recommendations of NPAC's Subcommittee on Plan Validation as they move forward.

Census Data

Density expectations for N. Beacon Hill are not stated, and the City continues to operate from census data collected ten (10) years ago. We have increased density on the North end of the Hill in the way of numerous town house developments. We have become a neighborhood of baby strollers and dog walkers. I was told by the General Manager of our local grocery store that the numbers of Hispanic people in our area have diminished due to the poor economy, and that our Asian population is moving to the suburbs, where they can better afford housing. It is inappropriate to base density requirements on insufficient and outdated data.

New census data should be available to the City in 2010. This data should be analyzed carefully, and used to set any future goals for density.

In summary, the City needs to do a more comprehensive and inclusive neighborhood planning that is community driven as they move into the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Edwards, Greater Duwamish District Representative to NPAC

Brian Ramey
2226 Eastlake Avenue E, # 143
Seattle, WA 98102

January 31, 2010

Mayor Mike McGinn
600 Fourth Avenue, Suite 700
Seattle, WA 98124-4749

Councilmember Sally J Clark, Chair
Committee on the Built Environment
P.O. Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4045

Councilmember Mike O'Brien, Chair
Seattle Public Utilities and Neighborhoods Committee
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

RE: Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC) Report and body of work under Resolution 31085 and CB 116319, September 8, 2008.

Dear Mayor McGinn and Councilmembers Clark and O'Brien:

I was appointed as the Alternate Representative to NPAC by the Lake Union District Council. I have attended most of the meetings and I have been following and commenting on the process and work product of NPAC since its first meeting.

My background in land use dates back to the mid 1970's when I worked for Governor Dan Evans as Coordinator for his Natural Resources Cabinet on matters related to the establishment of Wilderness Areas in Washington State and on issues relating to Energy. In 1977 I was hired as Central Staff with the King County Council and my title was Community Involvement Coordinator. My principal job was encouraging public participation in the development of a major update of the King County Comprehensive Plan and the development of the Shoreline, Northshore, Soos Creek, Woodinville and other Community Plans for the then unincorporated portions of King County.

All my adult life I have been active in public policy initiatives that affect my community. I was active in the development of Seattle's Neighborhood Planning during the late 90s and early 2000s for the University District Urban Center Plan and the Eastlake neighborhood. I was a member of the Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) Station Area Planning team for the University District. I am proud of my work with the policy makers and planners in reaching the conclusion that the Rail portal at the north end of Campus should be in the middle of the business district rather than on the UWcampus as was originally proposed. I have been a representative of the University District Community Council on the City University of Washington Citizen Advisory Committee, (CUCAC) helping to provide citizen oversight to the physical growth of the University of Washington. In the late 90's I was appointed to the original City of Seattle

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee which operated from 1999 through about 2001. It was called the Neighborhood Planning Implementation Advisory Committee. NPIAC.

I have lived and owned property in the Eastlake neighborhood of Seattle most of the time since starting College at the University of Washington in the late 1960's.

In short, I have been an active participant in the affairs of our city and state for a very long time and even though the previous Mayor decided to remove the funding for the current NPAC and rush through a process to update the original Neighborhood Plans, I will continue to be here (long after many city staff) to do my best to see that wrongs to neighborhoods are mitigated and some intelligent urban planning not driven entirely by the development community is applied to this wonderful City of Seattle.

What went right during the NPAC process?

First off, I would like to say that even though I may have disagreed with many statements made by members of NPAC in the process of discussing NPAC's work, I fully defend the right to hear divergent points of view. I am a firm believer that conversations (face to face) make for the development of good public policy.

The efforts by DON to involve many of the previously excluded communities, those diverse cultural and ethnic communities of our city, in the public discussions and open houses NPAC sponsored, was commendable. Many of the previous Neighborhood Plan Advisory and Neighborhood Planning Committees were dominated by self appointed neighborhood activists.

The efforts by DON to involve a broader community could have been executed more effectively. Because there was not a solid plan for how to engage those new to the process, ethnic, religious and racial communities who attempted participation in the NPAC process this year may not be willing to engage in any future processes. Commitment on the part of the Mayor's office and the City administration was missing. The organization of the forums by DPD was not done in a manner friendly to non native English speaking people. The rooms were too small, crowded and noisy to allow interpreters to do their work effectively.

The established neighborhood groups, "the self appointed neighborhood activists" were never invited to the table. As a result of this failure a large body of institutional knowledge was never taped.

There was a concerted effort to involve people who had not been connected with the process in the past and this was a good thing.

What went wrong during the NPAC process?

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

By ignoring those in the community who have the institutional knowledge of the City its history, its politics and its people, NPAC made sure that the end product would have little factual data from which to make good decisions.

The staff at the Planning Commission and the support staff to NPAC made pronouncements on what the policy would be and refused to allow discussion in the committee of any ideas of the committee members that did not mesh with their often undefined and undeveloped plan for the update of Neighborhood Plans. The Chair, co-chairs, staff and a few select members dominated the discussions. Formal presentations by staff took up most meeting times and actual deliberative discussion by members was held to a minimum.

The City appointed "Trusted Advocates" for groups of citizens who needed advocacy such as Senior Citizens. In the case of Senior Citizens the Mayor selected a representative who was a resident of Tukwila and was a Tukwila City Councilmember. Another member of NPAC representing downtown Seattle lived in Lake Forest Park.

The original Ordinance called for four meetings in each neighborhood during the preparation of the plan for an Update Process. Only two meetings per neighborhood were held.

The Seattle Planning Commission states in its review of this process that over 5,000 people participated in an online survey. I would really like to know who all these people were.

The web based surveys were initiated by the Seattle Planning Commission (without the advice or consent of NPAC). The NPAC Report to the Council and Mayor, should reflect that the web based surveys the Planning Commission hangs its hat on as proof of citizen participation can not be verified as to the origin of comments. The Seattle Planning Commission online survey should not be used to measure anything except as a list of ideas. Anyone (including a land development sponsored marketing firm in Hong Kong) could be completing these surveys and as many times as they wished (up to 5,000 times). The commission has stated that they can only verify 14 people in my neighborhood identified themselves as residents or business interests in the Eastlake Neighborhood who took the survey.

The Seattle Planning Commission has attempted to lead the public to believe that the web based "status check" surveys are a valid method of measuring views and opinions of stakeholders of a particular neighborhood on the future development of that neighborhood. This is dishonest.

NPAC completely ignored an Audit by the City Auditor which indicated that one voting member of NPAC was from an illegally constituted District Council. This representative was allowed to continue voting and participating. The City Council has to date not addressed this issue and it is clouding the future work of the city.

I was a member of the Public Outreach Subcommittee of NPAC and many of our concerns regarding timelines and public participation are included in our letter to Sally Clark sent in March 2009. Our concerns appear to have been ignored. (See attached pdf).

BAD DATA

The staff at DPD didn't provide up-to-date demographic data to help guide NPAC decisions. Never did NPAC get current population, growth, employment, economic or educational trend information.

Many times the members would ask staff for hard or electronic copies of data, time tables, charts that staff would allude to in discussion. Never did staff produce for the committee most of the data the committee would need to make the decisions called out by the legislation creating NPAC. Sometimes the data was provided after a decision by the committee, after the information was no longer needed. One good example of this is the request of the committee to have the timeline chart of actions and decisions needed to keep us in compliance with the Resolution and Ordinance creating our committee. The first chart the staff gave us showed us behind by 4 months in the process because it showed a beginning date of September 2008 and our first meeting was in January 2009.

We asked for a correction to this information at our first, second and third meetings. At our fourth meeting we got a chart which showed the actions we had taken to date but not any future dates. We finally received a timeline chart from staff at our meeting in September when we were told our committee would not be in operation after the first of the year.

CONCURRENCY and INFRASTRUCTURE

DPD's methodology in the NPAC process was to bring small square boxes of various sizes to the few crowded meetings in the community and placed them on a map of the neighborhood. Staff would then ask the mostly city staff, non-resident developer community representatives and a handful of non-English speaking neighborhood residents (the ratio at most meetings was 1:1:1) to tell them where the bigger and taller buildings should be built.

In the crowded and noisy rooms, no serious discussions occurred regarding the need for parks, libraries, new streets, buses, sub stations, etc as part of the mix of needs for a neighborhood under siege by developers to expand and grow.

For the most part, two meetings in each community of 2 hours each was the sum of the City Planning efforts for outreach to the public.

No discussion was allowed to try to define any of the impacts of development on the livelihoods and homes of those in the path of and in close proximity to the development. In committee (NPAC) during the debate on the Futurewise Transit Oriented Development (Eminent Domain)

legislation in Olympia, no discussion was permitted about the impacts of displacement on people and the environment.

THE ECONOMY and the ENVIRONMENT

Given the fact that the Development community has over built, over borrowed and over reached the carrying capacity of our community and its banks, I think it is time we take stock of why we need to increase the densities of our city neighborhoods.

It is certainly NOT for environmental reasons that we are doing this. This idea that urban infill will save our hinterlands is fallacy. The only way to save our water, air and land is to reassess our values and the way each of us uses the water, air and land.

Our Metro Sewer Utility system is allowed one overflow per year by the Federal Regulators. This last year it is estimated by Metro that we had over 40 overflows into Puget Sound.

The damage our thirst for electrical power is doing to our fish and salmon in the streams and rivers of our State is disgraceful. A \$400,000,000 Electrical Sub Station at the Taxpayers' expense for South Lake Union is indefensible.

Our Cedar and Tolt watersheds do not have an unlimited supply of fresh clean water, yet we are inviting 100,000 s of people to our city over the next ten years and hoping they will come.

As Toby Thaler has said, there is no such thing as a sustainable building project.

Sincerely,

Brian Ramey
Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee Alternate, Lake Union District Council

cc
Councilmember Nick Lacata
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen
Councilmember Sally Bagshaw
Councilmember Tim Burgess
Council Member Richard Conlin
Councilmember Jean Godden
Councilmember Bruce Harrell

January 31, 2010

Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee
c/o Triangle Associates

Re: Minority Report

Dear Neighbors and City Officials:

It has been an honor to serve on the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC) created by Resolution 31085 and Ordinance 122799. I appreciate the level of commitment each of you has to improving the quality of life for all residents and business owners in Seattle. I have enjoyed learning about the concerns of neighborhoods around this great city, as well as the perspectives of city officials.

When the City of Seattle came into being in the late Nineteenth Century, the idea that there could be limits to growth was dismissed as the raving of lunatics. Today, at the beginning of the second decade of the Twenty-First Century, there is no question that there are limits to growth. Most scientists who study the matter now believe the human population is well beyond the carrying capacity of the planet, at least at the current per capita rate of use of resources. The indicia of the problem include the continued erosion of the biosphere (loss of habitat and biodiversity—the foundation of our own sustenance), and the overloaded capacity of the atmosphere and oceans to absorb carbon dioxide and other green house gasses.

In other words, our increasingly global human civilization is not “sustainable.” Sustainable means “the use of resources in a manner or at a rate that does not diminish future generations’ access to the same resources.” Even if we don’t include the needs of all the other species we share the planet with, it is clear that the current paradigm of resource use cannot continue. “Business as usual” is a model for failure, if not outright disaster. I believe the first step toward a solution to avoid very unpleasant results is for people to acknowledge that perpetual growth—the abiding principle of our current economic structure—is inconsistent with “sustainability.”

Regardless, because we live in a democracy that permits people to move freely, we still must plan for growth, and we need to deal with the impacts of growth. The impacts of growth include significant changes in the quality of life of the people who live in, work in, and visit Seattle.

I have lived in the Fremont neighborhood since 1972. During that time, I have been involved in numerous local and citywide land use matters, including specific projects as well as zoning and planning processes. Based on my experience, it is my opinion that the essential elements of urban planning in Seattle (and throughout the United States) are largely driven by and for development interests—landowners, developers, architects, planners. The process is difficult for those whose time is not paid for to engage in—residential neighbors, small businesses, public interest advocates.

January 28, 2010

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Nevertheless, the City of Seattle has made admirable efforts to more appropriately inform and engage the majority of citizens, who have no vested interest in development, in the planning processes that affect their lives on a daily basis. The neighborhood planning effort of the 1990s was a very successful example. The creation of the NPAC is another example, but focused at top level policies rather than specific planning efforts. (To the extent that NPAC was intended to be a neighborhood sounding board for the three transit oriented community plan updates, I believe it was largely a failure due in large part to lack of resources and bad timing.)

In conclusion, based on my experience, I wish to emphasize the importance of a few specific recommendations by the NPAC:

- The development and allocation of “growth targets” (housing units, jobs) needs to be done in an open process. In the past, these numbers have been presented to neighborhoods as a given. This must change; neighborhoods must be informed by the City as to the specifics processes, from the state through the region to the City, and included in those processes to the greatest extent possible.
- The purpose of neighborhood planning needs to be made crystal clear to neighborhoods. I believe the process should emphasize that infrastructure must accompany allocations of growth targets. Growth should not be allowed if the infrastructure needed to support is not provided. This critical linkage in the planning process has not been strong enough during the implementation of existing plans.
- Community engagement and control are crucial to successful neighborhood planning. Essential elements are effective outreach and neighborhood hiring and control over consultants. The Council expressly asked NPAC to answer the latter question—should neighborhood planning groups be allowed to select contractors under their control—and the NPAC answered it strongly in the affirmative.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that the recommendations of the NPAC are given appropriate consideration by the City Council and the executive agencies.

Thank you for your consideration,

Toby Thaler
4212 Baker Ave. N.W.
Seattle, WA 98107
Lake Union District Council Representative to NPAC