

# Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

October 20, 2009

City Hall, Bertha Knight Landes Room

600 4th Ave, Seattle, WA 98124

## MEETING SUMMARY

*Prepared by Triangle Associates, Inc.*

### ATTENDANCE

✓ In attendance, □ Not in attendance, X Excused absence

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee Members			
Last	First	Affiliation/Neighborhood	In Attendance?
Ashkenazy	Boaz	At Large/Wedgewood	✓
Bailey	Adrienne	Central Area District Council/Central Area	✓
Coney	John	Magnolia-Queen Anne District Council/Queen Anne, Magnolia	✓
Coxley	Christie	Southeast District Council/Rainier Beach	✓
Edwards	Judith	Greater Duwamish District Council/North Beacon Hill	✓
Hale	Jeannie	Northeast District Council/ Laurelhurst	✓
Harris	Ashley	Ballard District Council/Ballard	✓
Knapton	Kay	Seattle Planning Commission	✓
Leighton	Amalia	Seattle Planning Commission	X
Meeks	Sharonn	Southwest District Council/West Seattle	✓
Oien	Heidi	At Large/Capitol Hill	✓
Ramirez	Maria	Delridge District Council/Delridge	X
Saxman	Dennis	East District Council/Capitol Hill	✓
Stanford	Catherine	Downtown District Council	✓
Miller	David	North District Council/Pinehurst	□
Stineback	Kate	At Large	✓
Thaler	Toby	Lake Union District Council/Fremont	✓
Vergis Vinh	Diana	At Large	✓
Wall	Irene	City Neighborhood Council Neighborhood Planning Committee/Phinney Ridge	✓

Alternates			
Last	First	Alternate for	In Attendance?
Barker	Cindi	City Neighborhood Council Neighborhood Planning Committee/Phinney Ridge	✓
Benjamin	Craig	Ballard District Council/Ballard	□
Brower	Josh	Seattle Planning Commission	✓
Counts	George	Magnolia-Queen Anne District Council/Queen Anne, Magnolia	✓
Hinrix	Robert	Greater Duwamish District Council/North Beacon Hill	□
Joncas	Kate	Downtown District Council	✓
Lathromp	Denise	Council Alternate/Morgan Junction	✓
Lee	Mona	Southeast District Council/Rainier Beach	□
McAftertey	Blayne	Northwest District Council	□
Melo	Sandra	Delridge District Council/Delridge	□
Murakami	Pat	Central Area District Council/Central Area	□
Ramey	Brian	Lake Union District Council/Fremont	✓
Wainwright	Mark	Southwest District Council/West Seattle	□

Project Team/Other City of Seattle			
Last	First	Organization	In Attendance?
Bicknell	Lyle	Department of Planning and Development	✓
Kern	Michael	Triangle Associates	✓
Goldberg	David	Department of Planning and Development	✓
Nolte	Dan	Councilmember Clark's Office	✓
Trask	Blake	Triangle Associates	✓
Whittemore	Thomas	Department of Neighborhoods	✓

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The facilitator opened the meeting and the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (NPAC) Co-Chair welcomed members and led a round of introductions. A new Council-appointed alternate was introduced. The facilitator reviewed the agenda and meeting materials (available from the Committee's website). The Committee reviewed and approved the September 15, 2009

**Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee**  
**October 20, 2009**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**

meeting summary (available from the website) by consensus. The Validation Subcommittee and NPAC agreed to defer discussion and decisions of the Subcommittee's recommendations (beyond providing an update and some questions to consider), to allow the Committee to focus on a request from the Chair of the Seattle City Council's Planning, Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee for input on neighborhood planning in 2010.

**STATUS REPORT OPEN HOUSES**

The Open House Subcommittee Lead and a Co-Chair distributed a schedule for the second round of status report open houses being co-hosted by NPAC and the Seattle Planning Commission (information available on the website). The Co-Chair asked for volunteers to fill in the gaps at the table hosting assignments.

The Co-Chair asked DPD to provide a brief explanation of its recommended format for the Open Houses. DPD said there will be a description of the Status Reports and the table of contents will be presented, but specific text from the Status Reports will not. City staff will provide a brief overview of City planning initiatives that affect neighborhood planning (e.g., Bicycle Master Plan, Neighborhood Design Guideline Process, Pedestrian Master Plan). Following the City presentations, meeting participants will divide into subgroups. Meeting participants will use a dot exercise to help City staff understand what issues residents would like the City to place emphasis on for their neighborhoods' Status Report. DPD said that scheduling conflicts exist with the Open House dates for a couple of communities. It is working to resolve them, but will urge online participation as well.

One Committee member expressed concern that the dot exercise would narrow residents' choices and input. Another member asked how the City would accept feedback if a salient neighborhood issue was missing from the City's list. DPD suggested a quick round-robin be used to capture any points missed.

The Subcommittee Lead said that one remaining issue was how to incorporate discussion of the Approval and Adoption (A&A) Matrices into the Open Houses. A Co-Chair circulated an excerpt from the implementation database (which the City has stopped maintaining, though there were updates made to some neighborhoods in January 2009) and described its relationship to the A&A Matrices. She suggested that NPAC cull a report from each Neighborhood Plan area out of the database, to spur discussion at the Open Houses about implementation items that remain undone. The resulting information could help NPAC develop its recommendations regarding how to prioritize the order of future Neighborhood Plan updates. NPAC members asked a number of questions about how this process would work at the open houses.

**Validation Subcommittee Report**

The Validation Subcommittee Lead said that he and a Co-Chair recently met with DPD to discuss the City's early thinking on validation. He presented the Subcommittee's report (available on the website) to NPAC, which is based on that meeting, but mostly on earlier Subcommittee discussions that led to unanimous recommendations. He asked members to review the report, focusing on several questions it contains for future NPAC discussion. He underscored the Subcommittee's belief that a quality planning process is the first element of validation; you do not "fix" the process at the end through validation. He referred NPAC members to a 1996 document from the first round of Neighborhood Planning (available on the website) that lists elements of validation. The Subcommittee believes that this document remains relevant. The Subcommittee will continue to meet and prepare a report on neighborhood plan update validation methods for full Committee review and discussion at an upcoming NPAC meeting.

**Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee**  
**October 20, 2009**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**

The Co-Chair asked DPD to summarize the City's current thinking on validation. DPD noted that validation is a process and a continuum that is built on a foundation of solid outreach. DPD said the level of connections and outreach that have been done in Southeast Seattle during 2009 is unprecedented and includes previously underrepresented residents, who have not participated in past neighborhood planning efforts. When the City misses connections, it is working hard to address them. The City feels that it is building validation for the Southeast area updates on the thoroughness of its outreach to 1,500 people at 87 special meetings, in addition to meetings with existing neighborhood groups.

**Neighborhood Planning in 2010**

The Co-Chair explained that the PLUNC Chair requested that NPAC provide input on neighborhood planning in 2010. NPAC agreed to set aside its planned agenda to focus on responding to this request. The Co-Chair introduced a number of questions she included in a document entitled *Memo to NPAC Re Neighborhood Plan Budget for 2010*, which responded to a City Council Issue Identification paper entitled *Issues/Options for Neighborhood Planning - 2010 Budget* (available on the website). The Co-Chair noted that the goal of the discussion was to hear Committee members' comments.

An NPAC member who was in attendance at the October 20 City Council discussion related to Neighborhood Planning recapped his recollections. He said the Council did not discuss NPAC in detail, but it expressed some displeasure with the neighborhood planning process and its focus on transit-oriented development.

NPAC members discussed the three neighborhoods scheduled for 2010 updates in the *Issues/Options* document. Several NPAC members were troubled that the document appeared to indicate that the City has already selected three neighborhoods to receive plan updates in 2010. They noted that NPAC is charged with advising the City on the selection of these neighborhoods. Some indicated that their neighborhood very much wants, or does not want, to be given an early update. A Co-Chair said that DPD expressed regret to her that the *Issues/Options* document made it appear that the neighborhoods for 2010 plan updates had been preselected. Those decisions have not been made and other neighborhoods could be selected.

Other members said that a letter NPAC wrote regarding the 2010 budget did not appear to influence the executive's proposed budget. One commented that the Outreach Subcommittee had asked in the spring for a six month extension for plan updates in the 2009 neighborhoods, because of concerns about the process being rushed. She said those neighborhoods are unhappy with the rush.

The Co-Chair led a series of round robins and "straw polls," to get a feeling for where the Committee was on the appropriate role and scope of NPAC moving forward. The first was a round robin where the Co-Chair asked the following question from her memo: "Should NPAC as it is currently constituted continue, or can we accomplish enough by December to sunset?" In this initial response, 11 members indicated support for a December sunset and four expressed some degree of reservation to sunset in December.

The Committee then held an extensive discussion on the subject. Following that discussion, three options from the *Issues/Options* document were straw polled. No NPAC members supported Option 1, "Approve Executive's 2010 Budget as proposed, which removes consulting and city staff support for NPAC." On Option 3, "Reconstitute the neighborhood planning advisory committee as an ad-hoc advisory committee under the City's Planning Commission (would likely need to provide some resources to assist with staffing)," one member indicated support, 10

**Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee**  
**October 20, 2009**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**

members indicated a lack of support, and two members did not indicate a preference. On Option 4, "Provide facilitation and staffing resources for NPAC for the first six months of 2010, to allow NPAC to wrap up any remaining work set out in Resolution 31085," nine members indicated support, five members indicated a lack of support, two did not indicate a preference, and two abstained.

Given that there were conflicting messages in the round robin and straw polls, it was moved and seconded that NPAC hold a special meeting on October 27, to allow members to reflect for a few days and then complete the conversation. The motion carried with 14 in favor, two opposed, and none abstaining.

**Public Comment**

Three individuals provided public comment. An NPAC alternate advocated for NPAC continuing to meet for the first six months of 2010, noting that if NPAC stops now the process will be set aside. The alternate said NPAC members need to set aside smaller differences to complete their tasks. Another alternate agreed that NPAC should continue, to meet expectations that the Committee will complete its work. Another alternate commented that he did not feel the web-based gathering of comments during the first round of open houses was scientific, and should not be factored into the process. He said the origin of web-based comments cannot be verified and therefore the survey should not be used to measure anything except as a list of ideas. He also called for NPAC to recommend that future planning initiatives not allow stewardship of neighborhood plans by District Councils or committees who do not meet basic open meeting rules, and/or who have been found by the City Auditor's Office to operate outside of the rules of District Council governance created by the City. A Central Area resident urged NPAC to continue, to achieve the requirements of the ordinance. He said a lot of neighborhood residents are looking to NPAC for guidance, even though the process has been difficult, and that change is occurring.

**Next Steps/Final Thoughts**

The facilitator reviewed topics identified for the October 27 agenda and asked members to forward any additional items. The Co-Chair thanked the members for their participation and adjourned the meeting. The Committee's next meeting will be Tuesday, October 27, 2009 at 6:15 pm in the Bertha Knight Landes Room at City Hall. Because Bertha Knight Landes is not available, NPAC agreed to hold its December 15, 2009 meeting in room 4050 of the Seattle Municipal Tower.