



MINUTES

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION 6:30 p.m. – Thursday, March 27, 2025

1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. by CHAIR VOISS.

Commissioners Present: Chair Voiss, Vice-Chair Patterson, Commissioners Adair (virtual), Krass, Matthews, Millender-Irwin, Mohl-Barouh, Oliner, and Zakharoff

Absent:

Staff Present: Minnie Dhaliwal, Director, Community P & D
Amanda Jackson, Meeting & Records Assistant
Christen Leeson, Principal Planner

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Minutes of March 27, 2025

There being no corrections or comments, the Minutes were approved.

3. Public Comments (General)

There were no requests to speak.

4. Regular Business

a) Chair and Vice-Chair Election (A) (00:01)

CHAIR VOISS presented the Election process.

COMMISSIONER KRASS nominated Jason Voiss for Chair. There were no other nominations. Jason Voiss was elected Chair.

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF nominated Jesse Patterson for Vice-Chair. There were no other nominations. Jesse Patterson was elected Vice-Chair.

b) Rule and Regulations Review (A) (00:04)

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*Presented by
Tisha Geiser, City Clerk*

Geiser presented proposed changes to Rules and Regulations.

Commissioner Mohl Barouh asked if an abstention would be a nay vote in a tie. Geiser replied that abstaining can result in implications that can impact the outcome of the vote as well as reducing the vote threshold and that the rule as-is is confusing. Commissioner Mohl Barouh asked if an Alternative member would standardize the vote, and Geiser replied that an Alternate vote would be a good idea, and that currently an Alternate is allowed to be present if the regular member is not present. Commissioner Mohl Barouh asked if language could be changed to *absence of a member or abstention*. Geiser replied that there are possible issues, in example an Alternate not being prepared for a vote.

CHAIR VOISS stated that the process requires a Motion prior to questions. Geiser replied that questions could be asked prior to a Motion for discussion.

COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS asked for clarification regarding a tie in voting. Geiser stated that a Motion fails as there needs to be a majority of members present and voting to passage with the exception of amending rules when a majority of the full membership, or four, are required to be present. COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS asked if a failed Motion would reappear at the next meeting or if a proposal is needed to reintroduce into the Agenda. Geiser replied that Parliamentary Procedure allows re-consideration or renewal at a subsequent meeting.

CHAIR VOISS stated that the proposed changes are Best Practices and housekeeping, and that abstentions rarely occur; if an issue does arise there is an opportunity to address next year.

COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH stated that there may be matters before the Commission that COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH will need to abstain from. CHAIR VOISS replied that the Commissioner is an Alternate at this time but would need to be considered if a regular member.

Motion by COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF to adopt the Rules and Regulations with proposed amendments as presented. Motion seconded by COMMISSIONER OLINER. The Motion passed unanimously.

- c) **Planning 101 (I) (00:18)**
*Presented by
Christen Leeson, Principal Planner*

Leeson gave the Planning presentation.

COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH asked for clarification regarding development of other districts. Leeson replied that not districts but plans for existing neighborhoods are what are being considered, working with the neighborhoods.

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COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS asked how neighborhood plans work with Homeowner Associations (HOA). Leeson replied that criteria is being discussed regarding areas that HOAs want but do not control, outside of design and landscaping, such as transportation routes or public art.

COMMISSIONER ADAIR asked for clarification regarding the Environmental Committee. Leeson replied that the Environmental Board is a separate city Board and not involved in the Planning Policy Commission process; Issues regarding parks, economic vitality, and tree code, in example, are taken to the appropriate Boards prior to coming to Planning Policy.

COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS asked for further clarification that the Environmental Board works through issues first. Leeson replied yes, and that the Planning Policy Commission primary purview is over housing and land use, and the land use code. There are other advisory Boards and Commissions that cover other areas such as parks, transportation, and the environment. Recommendations are made to the Planning Policy Commission which makes the final recommendation to City Council if part of the Comprehensive Plan or Land Use code. If not, Planning Policy is not involved.

- d) **Title 18 Policy Amendments (D)** (00:36)
Presented by
Christen Leeson, Principal Planner

Leeson presented Amendments.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if there are current conversion projects to multi-family. Leeson replied that there is one that has not been applied for yet. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if there are examples in other cities. Leeson replied that Seattle is working on conversions of vacant office buildings, and that examples will be researched. CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification that if a Home Depot became vacant, it could be converted to residential, and Leeson replied yes.

COMMISSIONER MILLENDER-IRWIN asked why parking is restricted to be as-is when there is an opportunity to expand for multi-family housing. Leeson replied that the parking is a state requirement, not an option, and that there is more state legislation coming restricting parking further to encourage reliance on transit rather than cars.

COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH asked how zoning is affected where residential is not allowed. Leeson replied that housing is allowed in almost every zone, and that housing would supersede zoning. COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH asked if there is land zoned Industrial and stated that Seattle does not allow residential in Industrial. Leeson replied that there is Industrial zoning that the State has not addressed, and that when new guidance is released it will be checked, but as stated currently, residential must be allowed. CHAIR VOISS stated that the Permitted Use Table and Review Process Table amendments are housecleaning and that this is the formal process to reinstall.

VICE-CHAIR PATTERSON asked how the Review Process Table requirements are being met at this time. Leeson replied that Public Hearings are advertised and every meeting Agenda is on

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the city website. VICE-CHAIR PATTERSON asked if Commission Agendas will continue to be posted although not a requirement and Leeson replied yes, and that large projects such as the Comprehensive Plan are larger notices on as many platforms as possible. Residents of a neighborhood are notified of Neighborhood Plans via postcards.

COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS asked for clarification regarding the re-use of a large building footprint for housing. Leeson replied that building *envelope* is the correct term, and that if increasing height, regulations must be met.

COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH asked if an envelope would not have residential windows or plumbing for multiple units. Leeson replied that the framed exterior structure must remain, but windows can be changed and more lines added to become livable. COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH asked if holes can be cut in a cement wall and Leeson replied yes. CHAIR VOISS stated that a commercial property would most likely be sold to another commercial owner and asked why the idea came about. Leeson replied that there is a push not for density but for housing and not necessarily in Issaquah. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for the opinion of staff. Leeson replied that the idea is a state requirement. COMMISSIONER MOHL BAROUH stated that Issaquah is in the path of growth and that a push for the idea may have come from areas in the state that are not in the path of growth to address old buildings. CHAIR VOISS stated that Issaquah expansion is limited by topography.

Leeson replied that the Amendments would be on the Agenda again late May 2025.

5. Reports (01:57)

a) Council Update

Leeson stated that there were no updates.

6. Other Business/Announcements

There were no announcements.

7. Adjournment

CHAIR VOISS adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary