City of Seattle - University of Washington Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes
Meeting #106
May 11, 2010
University of Washington Tower
4333 Brooklyn
Seattle, WA 98105
22nd Floor

Members and Alternates Present

Matt Fox, U-District Community Council
Heather Newman, Laurelhurst Community Club
Kirsten Curry, Laurelhurst Community Club
Eric Larson, Roosevelt Neighbor’s Dam
Neal Lessenger, UW At-Large
Ashley Emery, UW

Daniel Kraus, UW Staff Rep
Elaine King, Montlake Community Club
Hien Dang, UW Students

Staff and Others Present

Steve Sheppard, City DON
Chuck Budnik
Theresa Doherty, UW Regional Affairs
Barbara Quinn, University Park Community Club
Reta Gonzales-Cunneutubby, City DON

I. Opening of Meeting/Approval of Agenda/Housekeeping

A. Approval of Minutes for Meeting #105 – the minutes for #105 were approved without substantive changes.

B. Approval of Agenda – The agenda was approved without major modification.

II. Review of CUCAC 2008 and 2009 Annual Report

Steve Sheppard informed the Committee that the Final Annual Report will be larger than the copy that was forwarded to them. The final report will include minutes from all meetings during the last two years. He also noted that some of the past minutes contained errors that had to be corrected and that Department of Neighborhoods staff would go back through the minutes to clean up grammatical and spelling errors. He noted that he would forward these corrected minutes with the next draft of the annual report and suggested that Committee members briefly review them to make sure the content has not been changed. Unless there are major content changes the revised minutes will simply be substituted for the previous versions.
Mr. Sheppard directed the Committee’s attention Part 3 – Future Areas for Focus. He noted that Theresa Doherty, the Co-chairs of the Committee and Steve have looked at the draft and now want the Committee members to see if it generally captures what they think they would like to look at outside of their normal scope of project reviews over the coming year or two. He noted that this would essentially become the CUCAC work program.

Mr. Sheppard noted that the charge of CUCAC allows the Committee to advise the City and University and to be involved in and review issues that relate to the planning in the broader University area, so CUCAC has a very broad role potentially, as long as it doesn't detract from CUCAC’s primary role in regards to reviewing progress towards implementing the provisions of the Campus Master Plan.

Mr. Sheppard noted that he had provided members asked the Committee members and briefly reviewed each major area as follows: 1) Review of the effects of UW acquisition and Leasing; 2) Review of impact of SR 520 in the area around the Montlake triangle; 3) Open Space and Landscape Planning; 4) The effects on the Neighborhood of UW Expansion Outside of the Immediate Seattle Campus Areas (South Lake Union and Northwest Hospital); and 5) Planning for Changes in the West Campus area as a Result of the Construction of the New Student Housing

Mr. Sheppard asked if there were any additional areas or if some of the items listed they didn’t want to deal with.

Kirsten Curry stated the Laurelhurst Community Club’s is suggesting two additional area of focus: 1) Traffic Impacts; and 2) Public Safety. She noted that the first area is a growing concern for her organization. This relates to the cumulative effects of growth of background traffic associated with the University and expected increases of traffic related to the expansion of University Village and at Children’s Hospital.

She also noted that public safety is becoming a major concern and read a statement from the Laurelhurst Community Club,

“The LCC would like to see a commitment by UW to increase public safety and ensure efficient commuter connection both pedestrian and automotive particularly to light rail and the Burke-Gilman that doesn’t further inhibit vehicle traffic along Montlake Boulevard and the 45th Street Viaduct.”

Neal Lessenger stated that he generally agreed with the position expressed in the Laurelhurst Community Club’s statement, but thought that the statement should be amended to encourage the University to work with other responsible agencies to do those things. He noted that the University can't ensure public safety all by itself.

Matt Fox stated that he thought that the statement appeared to be more a specific position than an area of focus. He suggested that the issue is transportation planning. He noted that the issue area concerning the SR520 plan might get at this but that it might be preferable to expand this issue area to deal more broadly with the overall traffic issues.

Neal Lessenger disagreed and stated he believes LCC has a legitimate concern area about a lot of changes coming up both to the 45th Street Viaduct, which is closing for the summer, and with the changes around the Sound Transit Station.
Theresa Doherty stated they are both right. The UW can’t do it alone, especially the public safety piece as the University has no control over the Seattle Police Department. She suggested that as CUCAC advises both the City and University that CUCAC might want to direct this issue more towards the City with the University participating in a supporting role.

Kirsten Curry stated that a great deal of discussion had occurred within the LCC concerning this issue and the suggested wording. She noted that the goal is to explore ways in which the University could better their planning so that greater attention is given to issues relating to greater public safety not just within the campus but as people are transitioning in and out of the campus.

Steve Sheppard suggested the following wording:

“That the CUCAC list of issues include its involvement in increased efforts between both City and University to address Traffic and transportation issues, including both pedestrian and vehicular and safety issues, that are resulting from increases in both private and University development in the greater University District.”

Elaine King stated that she would like to expand the language of point 2 to include bascule bridges that are proposed to connect that area across the canal.

Matt Fox noted that earlier drafts of the report included as item that stated: CUCAC review of present and projected development and evaluating possible plan amendments based on the last 10 years of development that the UW has experienced. He noted that this was dropped and somehow incorporated into SR 520 issue. He suggested that the previous working should be retained. Therese Doherty stated that she believed that the University Annual Reports cover this issue adequately and that it is therefore unnecessary to include essentially duplicating this effort as a part of CUCAC’s work program. Others noted that this issue would seem to be more of a CUCAC interpretation of the data already presented and not a duplicative effort. Matt Fox noted that there might be some issue areas that evolve out of this effort. He gave the example of development of larger parking garages that are not included as part of the overall square footage of development. Ms. Doherty responded that this is technically how parking is dealt with for every development and that only that portion of a building that is in uses other than parking are considered as development under the overall development lids. Mr. Fox responded that he understood this but disagreed with that practice.

After further discussion the Committee directed that both the LCC suggested area for possible focus and the re-insertion of the review as requested by Mr. Fox be included in part three of the report for further consideration at an upcoming meeting.

Steve Sheppard will revise Part 3 – Future Areas for Focus to include items brought up and send out to members for review and CUCAC will try for approval at the next meeting.

III. Review of Campus Master Plan Annual Report

Theresa Doherty briefly went over the University of Washington Master Plan Seattle Campus Annual Report. Ms. Doherty noted that this is the 11th report for the Seattle Campus Master Plan. This is in response to the first amendment to the 1998 City University Agreement and covers the period January to December 2009. The report includes a discussion of the University's capital budget and them lists
all sites that were either under construction or in some phase of design. She noted that there are a few projects in the report that are still on hold.

The report looks at development on each of the four sectors of campus and looks at the minor or major amendments that were requested. There were five minor amendments requested last year. She also noted that the report looks at leasing activities and that leasing has been reduced over the period. When the lease lid was still in place the lease lid was 550,000 gross square feet in the primary and secondary areas. As of 12/31/09 the actual leasing in that area was 539,000 gross square feet. The University is still below the cap even though that cap no longer applies. Ms. Doherty also noted that the University remains under the Caps for AM and PM trips. The University remains under those caps by a significant amount. This has been achieved in large part from the University's success in encouraging students, faculty and staff to utilize various HOV alternatives.

She called attention to the section about the different projects the UW is involved in off-campus.

- New Husky Neighborhood Assistant Program. Students work in the neighborhood to provide residents with information, resources and opportunities to improve the environment.
- UWPD Incident Prevention Teams. Work in the area north of 45th.

Providing information for some sections such as residential and commercial real estate conditions and vacancy information is the responsibility of the City of Seattle’s Department of Planning and Development (DPD). DPD has not haven’t forwarded some of this information and therefore some of the data parented was received in 2005.

IV. Update of Square Footage on Campus That Has Been Developed or Reserved For Development

Theresa Doherty briefly went over the handout of the CMP Square Footage May 2010 Update. Ms. Doherty noted that this is a more detailed graph than what was in the Annual Report. It was a couple of years since this committee went over this particular chart and it hasn’t changed much. Ms. Doherty noted that the table shows that there is significant capacity remaining for the Central Campus and somewhat less for the West, South and East Campuses.

V. Update on Presidential Search Process

Theresa Doherty handed out a copy of an email from Herb Simon, Chair, UW Board of Regents to faculty and students outlining the process for hiring a new president. She noted that the University must find both a new president for the Seattle Campus but also one for the Tacoma Campus as well. It will probably take about a year to find a new president.

VI. General Updates

A. University Developments – Theresa Doherty: Last couple of months has been emailing Committee members’ weekly updates regarding the University developments, nothing new to report.

B. City Actions – Steve Sheppard: No new City Actions.

VII. New Business/Other Business
Neal Lessenger brought up the Rainier Vista Pedestrian Overpass issue. He asked for some information on this process and whether the University was comfortable with the current design.

Theresa Doherty responded that about two years ago the University presented its concept to CUCAC. At that time the University wanted to consider lowering pacific place and running the Rainier Vista from the Triangle garage. Sound Transit looked at several options including a tunnel under Montlake including a pedestrian overpass and at grade crossings. After consulting with the University and others, Sound Transit decided to pursue a pedestrian overpass and brought that concept to various City agencies. They received some negative responses on the sky bridge, but eventually the City approved the Skybridge contingent upon Sound Transit working with the University to look at other options. Sound Transit and the University met over the last six months and came up with a Rainier Vista Land bridge which includes a third at-grade crossing of Montlake. Analysis was done on this and provided to the Federal Transportation Administration who has objected to the third at-grade crossing and directed that changes be made and additional environmental analysis be done. Concurrently the State Department of Transportation came forward as part of their SR520 work and indicated that they were still considering depressing the roadway. Ms. Doherty noted that because of all of this, The actual solution is still not determined and the situation is still very fluid and still evolving. She stated that the University will bring this issue back to CUCAC once additional information is available.

VIII. Adjournment

No further business being before the Committee the meeting was adjourned.