



## University District Development Association (UDDA) Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 5, 2025, from 5:06 – 5:29 PM, Catalyst Bldg, Rm 309, and Via Zoom

**Board Members Present:** Neil Christopher Apeles, LaVerne Biel (Zoom), Lois Bollenback, Catherine Brazil, Mayor Lisa Brown, Emilie Cameron, Colleen Fuchs, Megan Hulsey, Chuck Murphy (treasurer), Lindsey Myhre (Zoom), Stacia Rasmussen (Zoom), Marvo Reguindin, Rob Sauders, Katy Sheehan (chair), Jonathan Teeters, Dennis Wagner, County Commissioner Amber Waldref (Zoom), Erin Williams-Hueter (Zoom)

**Board Members Absent:** Kevin Brockbank, Brooke Kiener, Greg Repetti (vice chair and secretary), John Sklut, Thomas Tellefson, Council President Betsy Wilkerson

**Staff:** Juliet Sinisterra (CEO), Alden Jones

**Presenters:** Mithun and EcoNW 400-Block Architectural Services Phase 1B team (Zoom)

### JOINT PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION: UDPDA and UDDA Board Members

#### U Vision 2044 Activation Updates and Scorecard Highlights

Sinisterra provided the following updates:

1. **U Incubation Village Feasibility Study**—Thanks to a CERB \$75K matching grant, contracts are underway with Crossroads Resource Center, d&b Creative, and The Grain Shed to assess the viability of a local food processing center and worker-owned folk market and maker spaces. Additionally, an IRFP was released for a larger-scope planning study around job creation, conceptual site analysis, and nationwide case studies.
2. **201 W Main Avenue**—Although some developers have indicated that prevailing wage requirements are an impediment, renewed developer interest may result in re-releasing the previous RFQ for workforce housing. We are working with legal counsel for guidance on the next steps (surplus property, addressing deed restrictions).
3. Commerce and Community-Minded Enterprises (CME) **Childcare Study**—The survey was distributed to partner organizations; focus groups begin mid-March.
4. The University of Idaho Urban Design Studio project for a **Division Gateway Extension** is underway. UDPDA is partnering with DSP, SBA, and the city (\$1K contribution from each) to support. A stakeholder event is planned for March, and a final presentation will be held in May.
5. Sinisterra then walked the board through **Scorecard** highlights.
6. **400-Block**—Avista extended the ROFO to June 22, 2025. Discussions about relocating the Verizon cell tower before the proposed property purchase are ongoing. Sinisterra is talking with the city about using Boxcar site/city property proceeds (approximately \$500K) and Sprague Ave underage (roughly \$600K) for Riverside Park development. Mithun and EcoNW teams will present today.

#### Presentation: Next Generation Conceptual Plan 2065

Before the in-depth 400-Block presentation, Sinisterra shared slides summarizing the recently completed [Mithun Next Generation Conceptual Plan 2065](#), informed by the [Just Communities Protocol](#) (centering on racial and climate justice and metrics to shape equity and resiliency outcomes). She described the extensive community engagement process and six key nature-based/node-centric takeaways from those interactions (cycle of life food hub, heal the river and reforest, multi-cultural maker district, Main Ave culture corridor and Sherman heart, innovation commons, and



energy district thermal analysis). She described Spokane Public Schools' interest in the plan and a direct mail piece planned for late spring/early summer.

Comments from board members ensued:

- Murphy asked about using the triangle parcel near Superior (owned by the city) as a nature-based park. Sinisterra said she is working with the city on a Complete Streets grant for Superior for street trees and that the Parks & Recreation Department is pursuing a grant for open space.
- Mayor Brown stressed the importance of involving key partners early in specific concepts. The nodes in the plan provide an opportunity to tap the expertise and leadership of higher ed partners (WSU agriculture, UW forestry, GU civil engineering, nature-based design, and arts and culture, EWU business, etc.). Partners provide responsibility and skin in the game (research, student labor, faculty know-how, grant opportunities), vs. UD tackling alone.

### **Presentation: 400-Block Sprague Avenue Phase 1 Concept Design Final**

The Mithun and EconW teams (via Zoom) presented [400-Block Sprague Avenue: Phase 1 Concept Final Presentation](#), including a recap of the conceptual site design, program areas (office and recreation buildings and parking), massing diagram, site strategy, exterior renderings, draft cost analysis/budgets with phased incremental funding, draft financial feasibility analysis, and key takeaways and findings on individual buildings and the overall development. In short, given budget assumptions and current economic realities, the recreation building (particularly the climbing gym) will be tough to pencil and unlikely to support its share of land costs or maybe development costs even with low-cost debt (bond financing), patient capital/grant funding (philanthropy), new market tax credits, and additional TIF revenue. The proposed development would need substantial subsidy to drive amenity value elsewhere in the district.

Comments from board members ensued:

- All impressed and excited about conceptual designs.
- Suggestion to attract anchor institution(s), rerack with partners with aligned interests (YMCA, WSU nutrition and exercise physiology, WSU and EWU student gym, Spokane Public Schools (SPS), Community School, etc.).
- Concern around life sciences startups' ability to pay more than \$50/sf rent when other options exist.
- Question about considering a mixed-use/residential option, but feasibility testing showed that it is more expensive.

Sinisterra said the next steps include the EAC's deeper dive and presenting to McKinstry/Dean Allen, Scott Morris, YMCA, SPS, and Spokane Public Facilities District. Murphy noted that it may not be the right time to proceed, but controlling the land is a priority.

### **Call to Order, Welcome, and Administrative Actions**

- After the joint UDPDA/UDDA session, Chair Sheehan called the UDDA business meeting to order at 5:06 PM, noted the quorum present, and welcomed new 2025 board members (Apeles, Hulse, Reguindin, and Tellefson). As an FYI, she pointed out the Executive Action Committee (EAC) draft January meeting minutes. She



described the new 2025 board meeting format with an overlapping, joint UDPDA/UDDA presentation/discussion session between respective business sessions to save time and avoid duplication.

- Sinisterra mentioned her Gonzaga Institute for Climate, Water, and the Environment talk this evening and the Innovative Urbanism Symposium (IUS) lunch presentation by Mithun at the Steam Plant on February 26.
- Murphy provided a **2024 year-end financial summary**. Combined net income and expense resulted in a net loss of \$3,366 primarily due to non-renewal and delay of corporate contribution revenue, early termination of the Urbanova lease, and payroll-related benefits associated with paid internships and board-approved annual bonuses.
- Sheehan requested a **MOTION to approve the UDDA draft October 2, 2024, meeting minutes, and the UDDA financials as of December 31, 2024** (Brown), seconded (Murphy), and passed unanimously.
- Sheehan shared that Jeffrey Samson has accepted the UD Director of Finance and Grants Administration role, which starts on March 3.
- 30-second updates from members followed.

Sheehan adjourned the meeting at 5:29 PM.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Juliet Sinisterra'.

Juliet Sinisterra, CEO (for Greg Repetti, Secretary)

Date: 3/7/2025