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**MINUTES** (Approved as Amended on 6-6-18)

**TIME:** Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 5:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North 733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Stephen Wamback (Chair), Anna Petersen (Vice-Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel, Jeff McInnis  
**ABSENT:** Dorian Waller

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL**

Chair Wamback called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. A quorum was declared.

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

The agenda was approved.

The minutes of the April 18, 2018 meeting were reviewed. Commissioner McInnis pointed to the statement on page 3 that he had made as part of the discussion on the C-2 VSD Height Methodology issue, that “a developer in a view area would come in with the understanding of the fabrics of the area”, and suggested that an amendment be made to the statement to clarify that “fabrics” refers to the status quo of the development requirements. The minutes were approved as amended.

The minutes of the May 2, 2018 meeting were reviewed. Vice-Chair Petersen pointed to the statement on page 2 that she had made as part of the discussion on the Outdoor Tire Storage issue, that “tires should be stored in a building and that the proposal as it stands would give non-conforming uses a conforming status”, and suggested that an amendment be made to the statement to clarify that “non-conforming uses” refers to such uses that are both legal and not legal. The minutes were approved as amended.

**C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following citizens provided comments on the agenda item relating to Residential Infill Pilot Program:

- 1) Ken Miller:  
Mr. Miller indicated that he had recently asked the Assessor-Treasurer Office for the number of home owners who are low income and/or disabled seniors and found out that across the city there are more than 3,000 single family homes owned by people meeting that description. He explained that for people that have been in their homes for a while and earn \$40,000 or less a year, the accessory dwelling unit (ADU) offers a unique opportunity. For someone whose income is constrained, hiring someone to do household repairs and chores is difficult. Mr. Miller asked the Planning Commission to bear in mind these households when thinking of expanding the ADU pilot, as ADU's would be a benefit to the city.
- 2) Beverly Bowen-Bennett:  
Ms. Bowen-Bennett indicated that she agreed with Ken Miller. She commented that in three years she will be 78 and her home will be paid for, where there is a large yard. She lives in the area for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan. She wants to build a cottage dwelling for someone who is not as physically able as her right now, and she knows she is not alone in that sentiment. Ms. Bowen-Bennett said that there are real people that need to be considered with these plans – people who are living in low income households who are senior citizens and would benefit from ADU's.

## D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### 1. 2019-2024 Capital Facilities Program

Kristina Curran, Office of Management and Budget, gave an overview of the Capital Facilities Program (CFP) and the roles of staff, Planning Commission, City Manager and City Council in the development and amendment of the CFP. She presented the proposed amendments to the six-year CFP from 2017-2020 to 2019-2024, focusing on the Proposed Project List, which included 55 new projects and 119 carried-over projects. Ms. Curran reviewed the prioritization tiers and how projects were prioritized based on staff's review. She discussed how proposed new projects would leverage grant funds, align with Council priorities, enhance existing facilities, and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She also mentioned some of the Removed Projects, Completed Projects and Future Projects. Upon concluding her presentation, Ms. Curran requested that the Planning Commission consider releasing the Proposed Project List for public review and setting June 20, 2018 as the date for a public hearing.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

- Commissioner Santhuff asked for clarification of what active vs. inactive means for a project. Ms. Curran responded that an active project is one that existed in previous CFP document and is at least partially funded, and an inactive project is one that existed in previous CFP and is currently unfunded. Commissioner Santhuff recommended that the clarification be outlined in the public review document.
- Commissioner Santhuff commented on the project of "Fire Station #5 (Tideflats)", wondering why a new station is proposed while the community's concerns and the city's policies are about preserving historic properties. Katie Johnston, Budget Manager, provided that one of the City Council's committees will be reviewing this project and deliberating options. Ms. Curran added that the intent and the need are to have an operating fire station on Tideflats, which is why multiple options are being considered.
- Commissioner Santhuff commented on the "Site 8 Building Demolition" project and wondered if the appropriate review has been done on the property, and if it should not be demolished, because it's considered historic. He also commented that the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan has identified a lot of capital projects and only one is included in the CFP's Future Project List. He suggested that the subarea plan be more properly reflected in the CFP.
- Vice-Chair Petersen suggested that clarification be provided on which projects are linked together that may be in separate tiers; for example, 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge appears in both Tier 1 and Tier 3. She also asked for clarification in regards to public safety projects, i.e., 1) about Fire Station #15, the replacement as a Tier 1 project and the restroom addition as a Tier 3 appears incongruent; and 2) about the Emergency Operations Storage Facility, why it is a Tier 2 and not a Tier 1 project. Ms. Curran responded that part of that decision was initial staff recommendation, and another part is that the TFD Facility Master Plan has been identified as the highest priority for public safety at this point and added to the Tier 1 new project list, and would provide a comprehensive review to better inform some of the other needs that have been identified.
- Vice-Chair Petersen also asked for clarification on the Tacoma Dome Renovation Project and additional improvement projects. Ms. Curran pointed to page 66 of the attachments and indicated that according to the scope of work that is currently funded, the initial project is going to renovate the dressing room and restroom, provide a new loading dock, fire, security, audio, and lighting upgrades, and renovate the exterior HVAC. The additional security projects will be funded later after an assessment for the type of security need and how much of it is needed so they can be more strategic in asking for that funding.
- Commissioner Edmonds asked if the Transportation Commission has a role in the list of capital improvement projects. Ms. Curran answered that yes they do; that the Transportation Commission works with staff to develop the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is derived from the Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The TMP is also an element of the Comprehensive Plan, so in that sense, both the TIP and the CFP are really under the privy of the

Planning Commission. The projects that the Transportation Commission identifies in the TIP make the list of transportation projects in the CFP.

- Commissioner Edmonds inquired about the origin of the projects, asked if all the projects ever proposed are entered onto the list, and wondered why North East Tacoma seems to be dramatically absent in the CFP. Ms. Curran responded that projects are primarily generated by staff, with input and ideas from members of the community; that staff ultimately puts proposals forward for projects, with appropriate internal vetting and subject to the Planning Commission's review; and that staff are always looking to try and get better about the equitable distribution of the city's resources.
- Commissioner Strobel commented that the Transportation Commission not only selects projects that go into the TIP and CFP, but also is the steward of the criteria for selecting such projects.
- Commissioner McInnis asked if the Utility Projects are held off in the Tier 1, 2, and 3 process, and if they have a prioritization system. Ms. Curran responded that most utilities have their own separate capital improvement program process because their considerations are somewhat different and larger, as they tend to have more advanced asset management and asset replacement programs. They're doing greater analysis and looking at the likelihood and consequence of failure. Those types of factors play into their asset management plan, and they are doing constant inspections. So what is reflected in our CFP document is their commitment to capital improvement in their areas of service.
- Commissioner McInnis continued to comment that there are some Comprehensive Plan tie-in questions that don't get answered, such as "Is the project required/mandated by law?" He suggested this is a pretty significant consideration that the public should be aware of. He was also concerned about how the CFP is going to be presented to the public. He wondered if a mapping or a web-based interactive system could be implemented to allow customers/citizens to view project information. Ms. Curran responded that her team has been wanting that function for a very long time but don't have the GIS data that they would need. The GIS data is not always a location, or an intersection – so a lot of the projects would need to be manually mapped.
- Commissioner Strobel recommended that the Puyallup Bridge replacement should be bumped up to a Tier 1 project, as the bridge has a sufficiency rating of 19/100, and at one point it was at an 8/100, critical for immediate repair. It carries a significant amount of daily traffic - around 20,000. Ms. Curran responded that the bridge currently has two sections that are funded and will be replaced, and a study has been requested to figure out how to fund the rest of the bridge.
- Commissioner Santhuff commented that Tacoma Avenue and the streetscape is a bit of an embarrassment to citizens who live downtown. He commented that there are nice projects going up right now on Tacoma Avenue, but there needs to be a bigger vision for how we build out that streetscape and incentivize development.
- Commissioner Edmonds commented that she would like bike lanes going from North Tacoma to Downtown Tacoma.
- Chair Wamback commented that staff is doing well with project prioritization. He thinks that citizens should be reminded that a Tier 1 project doesn't necessarily mean the project is funded yet, and there are already projects in a Tier 2 that have current funding. So a Tier 2 that's active may be getting more funding than a beginning stage of a Tier 1. One of the important reasons for including things in the CFP and also having them score as a Tier 1 is that that could leverage outside funding. The proposed project must be ranked in the program before the funds can become available. He continued on to explain that he saw a lot of new projects with homelessness and low income, but saw some projects that he doesn't believe the city has the funding such as the Foss Waterway project. It struck him as a tad tone deaf to be talking about the Foss Waterway when there is not enough space in our Stabilization Center. He was also surprised to see projects that made the Tier 1, and didn't have all the questions about it answered. He is not happy about a Tier 1 with blanks.

- Commissioner Givens commented that he is concerned how this will be presented to the public. He would like to see an open house that would allow the citizens to be walked through the information. Chair Wamback concurred. Ms. Johnston provided that the Budget Office had conducted some early engagements including a telephone survey and will be doing online engagement this summer regarding community priorities and areas where people want to see investments made. Commissioner Givens commented that if you're going to ask people to testify on a proposal, there needs to be an open house to explain what's in the proposal. Commissioner McInnis commented that community engagement is typically the public educating the city on what they'd like to see, but there should also be a part about the city educating the public on why the process looks the way it does. Chair Wamback added that the scope of the hearing is to reflect the priorities of the Comprehensive Plan and that the open house concept would help people continue and expand their ownership of the Comprehensive Plan and ensure that the Commission is doing the work of the citizens. Commissioner Edmonds suggested having more specific details of where the projects would be located to help citizens fully digest the projects. Ms. Curran responded that sometimes the detail is not available when the project is added to the Comprehensive Plan and sometimes the first step in funding a project is to flesh out what that need is. She also suggested it would make more sense to have public engagement when the proposed CFP comes out in October.
- Vice-Chair Petersen made a motion to release for public review of the proposed amendments to the CFP with the minor clarifications and modifications that the Commission has provided and to set a hearing date for June 20, 2018. Commissioner McInnis seconded the motion. Commissioner Givens wondered whether or not there's going to be a workshop or open house. Commissioner Strobel agreed with Commissioner Edmonds' comment, and spoke about creating a mapping exercise and document packet that is more digestible for the public, and that can break the funding plan down in a more precise and understandable way for the public to use. Discussion ensued, and the Commission requested that staff consider conducting an open house a week or an hour prior to the public hearing. Chair Wamback called the question, and the Commissioners passed the motion unanimously.

## 2. Residential Infill Pilot Program – Phase 2

Lauren Flemister, Planning Services Division, presented the preliminary scope of work for the second phase of the Residential Infill Pilot Program, an extension from the initial phase per the request of the City Council. A main purpose of the Program is to increase more housing choices and create smaller footprints. She reviewed the four types of infill development considered, i.e., Detached Accessory [Swelling-Dwelling](#) Units (DADUs), Two-Family Housing, Multi-Family Housing, and Cottage Housing, as well as how each type had been received during the initial phase. Ms. Flemister reviewed three potential options for the second phase consideration, where Option 1 (minor) would continue the pilot program until all 12 spaces are filled, Option 2 (moderate) would increase the number of DADUs from 3 to a range of 12-15, and Option 3 (major) would pull DADUs from the pilot program and allow them outright through code amendments. She also reviewed additional topics concerning tiny homes, lot size standards, and incentives/affordability.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

- Commissioner Edmonds commented that she likes tiny homes and would like to pull ADU's out to be its own project, and put tiny homes in the pilot program instead.
- Commissioner Strobel asked about some of the lessons learned from the initial phase and what the public's response has been thus far. Ms. Flemister answered that the language in the pilot needs to be loosened up regarding the ADU – as only one has been built; that there have been process and administrative lessons learned; that Cottage House component was not quite working; that there was some confusion between the pilot program and the permitting processes; and that the biggest lesson learned is that the number was not right on the DADU's.

- Commissioner Givens commented that he liked Option 3 and the idea of tiny homes, that consideration should be given to modular standards, and that there should be a marketing program to get the word out to citizens and developers.
- Commissioner Santhuff wondered if property owners of single family homes in different zoning districts such as downtown and R-4 can take advantage of the pilot program. Ms. Flemister responded that the majority of people that call her are in R-2, and she had a site visit at a non-profit organization who was downtown, and they could have already built this. Commissioner Santhuff expressed he'd like more results to factor in. He then wanted to see more DADU's built. He enjoys the review process that's been developed with the pilot - of finding a way to vet the projects, getting quality designs, and making sure they are good with the neighbors. He indicated his preference for Option 2, but with a quantity much larger than 12-15, e.g., 40, or 5 per Council district.
- Vice-Chair Petersen commented that a findings report may be hard to produce for the initial phase due to the small sample available; that there should be no cap on the DADU's, or just allowing them outright; that there is such a need for housing that it takes too long to build these; and that design and aesthetic is key.
- Commissioner Edmonds wondered that when the team was developing the pilot program, if they took a look at design standards in other cities. Ms. Flemister responded that the obvious mistakes would be caught and make improvements where possible.
- Commissioner Edmonds asked how Option 2 with an eliminated cap would speed up the process. Vice-Chair Petersen explained that right now there can be three, and it takes years for those three to be completed, and then the process starts over. By allowing the volume to increase, more people can start. As of now there is a list of people who can't start or can't do anything because of the limit to three.
- Commissioner Givens expressed that this is a great time to allow ADU's for those who have equity in their home.
- Chair Wamback expressed that there are already hundreds of illegal detached ADU's. He expressed that one of the potential reasons for a low number of applications is because people are doing this anyway because they need to. He thinks that design review is being used as an example of upper middle class privilege, to prevent people from having houses that they need. The design review is excessive, and there needs to be a solution where ADU's are allowed by right. His suggestion is to get a community working group together from neighborhood councils, the Commission, the development community, senior citizens, and low income citizens, etc., to work for 6-9 months on issues regarding design. He stated, "We need to house people today". He's very strident that density is our destiny. If the city won't allow ADU's, there will have to be a massive upzoning in Tacoma because there is not enough space for a growing population. If we want to preserve and protect open spaces, agricultural lands, and recreational amenities in the south Puget Sound, then the city has to densify, and ADU's are a good way to do that. He expressed that the pilot program may have been set up for failure, as no real data can be derived from 12 samples with 75,000 single family properties in the city. Neighborhoods are changing, and it doesn't help to coddle the neighborhoods to avoid change. Ms. Flemister also commented that she too, does not want design review to be a barrier. After she has the opportunity to speak with the City Council, she'd like to bring forward some options about keeping them for a period of time and sunseting them, or looking at different ways until there is a data collection needed to write appropriate standards. She suggested that maybe after a period of time, depending on what option moves forward, that it would just be administrative and keep the review committee intact until there are more data points. Chair Wamback commented he'd like to create a working group similar to the Billboards Community Working Group, and educate, have shared learning experiences, and have a conversation around some difficult issues.
- Vice-Chair Petersen wanted to reemphasize her opposition of parking rules for the ADU's – that there shouldn't be parking rules. In regard to design review, she cautioned that it can be a barrier

especially if it's an owner occupied home. She suggested that staff-level design review would be more appropriate than the committee-level review which might be of less accountability.

- Commissioner Strobel commented that he hoped that tiny homes will be further analyzed, because they have limited benefits when dealing with certain populations. When dealing with density, they don't always compliment versus denser housing types of affordable housing and transitional housing projects. He commented that tiny homes are not the most efficient use of funds ~~in order~~ to address those types of populations with that style of housing and would like more information before that gets put into the pilot program. Ms. Flemister explained that from a sustainability standpoint across the board, the tiny homes like those built in Seattle without plumbing or electricity, which are very much like sheds, they are not suitable. There have been many conversations with people that tiny homes would not be the best direction, including projects like homelessness. There are some models of tiny homes, which have bathrooms, at a minimum, that have been considered, that are equipped with a suitable site design, and accessory dwelling units structures that are of higher quality and more expensive. If it's on wheels, it has to meet Labor and Industry (L&I) standards (city code does not currently support tiny homes on chassis), and if it's on a permanent foundation, it has to meet the city standards - both of which are stringent. Commissioner Strobel commented that he believes people get caught up in the buzz of tiny homes and not the feasibility of them. There should be consideration of more permanent long term housing. Ms. Flemister said there is very little information about code for tiny homes.
- Chair Wamback wanted to clarify with Commissioner Strobel that what he wanted to dispel, was the illusion that tiny homes would be the solution for housing the homelessness. Commissioner Strobel answered that was part of what he was trying to convey.
- Chair Wamback expressed that the only options in the city shouldn't be single family homes, apartment complexes near the mall, or high rises in the Proctor district - there needs to be more options, and being open to tiny homes, ADU's, co-housing, cottage housing, etc. That is the type of progressive continuum that he would like to have kick start the housing conversation.
- Commissioner McInnis commented that tiny homes should take more thought, and the Commission should do more work as it's too early to put them in the program at this moment. Right now the focus should be allowing more DADU's, as offered in Option 2 or 3.

As the Commission concluded the discussion, Brian Boudet, Planning Manager, indicated that the next step is to present the scope of work to the City Council's Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee and receive feedback and direction. He commented that the reason why Option 3 exists is because there have been similar concerns from the Council, that there may be another phase for the pilot program, and that it could be years before there is a permanent conversation.

## **E. Communication Items**

The Commission acknowledged receipt of the Communication Items on the agenda.

Mr. Boudet commented that he wanted to clarify that the fire station being talked about as part of the CFP discussion is Fire Station #5 on the Hylebos Peninsula, not the one on the Foss Waterway and that there is an ongoing conversation at the City Council level regarding the potential demolition of the historically designated structure.

Mr. Boudet reported that the City Council adopted the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan on May 15, 2018, with three amendments to what the Planning Commission had recommended, i.e., 1) Inclusionary Zoning Requirements, requiring residential projects 15-units and larger to provide 10% of their units as affordable units; 2) Parking Requirements, reducing the minimum parking requirements for residential uses from 1.0 to 0.5 stalls per unit in the subarea, eliminating parking requirements for affordable housing units created per the Inclusionary Zoning program, and eliminating parking requirements for all non-residential uses in the subarea; and 3) Map Clean-up. Mr. Boudet also indicated that there was one other topic that the Council brought up but did not move forward with the amendment -

the Open Space Requirement, which would likely be included in the Commission's Work Program for the next biennium.

Chair Wamback asked if the city had a sponsor program to help private property owners whose parking lots are encroached upon by people who don't have parking in their multi-family units. For example, in the Tacoma Mall area, there are people who live in the two high-rise apartments that park in the mall parking lot. As we build more, because of density, there's not enough on street parking to meet the demand. If the city is getting rid of the parking requirement, is it solely on the other private property owners to have to take on the financial burden of calling and paying a tow company to remove vehicles from the property? Mr. Boudet answered that at some level this is a much more philosophical question about whether it's the city's responsibility to ensure parking, but the quick answer is no, there is no proactive program to protect people's parking from being used.

Commissioner Strobel commented that it's been difficult to begin planning for certain areas if parking is not syncing up with those plans. The fact that we haven't explored any other new areas in Tacoma to analyze demand parking or time parking continues to create these newspaper stories and such. He believed there should be a process to address that somehow. Mr. Boudet answered that it would be tricky to set up a proactive concept, as most businesses are pretty resistive, because until there's a problem there's no incentive to take action. That would drive the question of will the City provide more on street parking and off street garages like there is downtown.

## **F. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

*\*These minutes are not a direct transcription of the meeting, but rather a brief capture. For full-length audio recording of the meeting, please visit:*

[http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/committees\\_boards\\_commissions/planning\\_commission/agendas\\_and\\_minutes/](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/committees_boards_commissions/planning_commission/agendas_and_minutes/)