



MINUTES (Approved on 5-2-18)

TIME: Wednesday, March 21, 2018, 5:00 p.m.
PLACE: Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Stephen Wamback (Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, Jeff McInnis, Brett Santhuff, Dorian Waller,
Andrew Strobel
ABSENT: Anna Petersen (Vice-Chair)

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Wamback called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was approved. The minutes of the regular meeting on February 21, 2018 were reviewed. Commissioner Givens suggested an amendment to “2018 Annual Amendment Package” on page 2 to reflect that (a) as part of the discussion on “Lot Size Averaging”, clarification was made that the permitted minimum sizes of lots were not being changed; and (b) as part of the discussion on “Weather Protection Requirement”, a request was made for staff to research whether extending a 5-foot awning from a building over the sidewalk in Downtown Tacoma would require a Right-of-Way permit. The minutes were approved as amended.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was none.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Planning Commission Work Program, By-Laws, and Operations

Brian Boudet, Manager, and Stephen Atkinson of the Planning Services Division, facilitated the Planning Commission’s review of the 2017-2019 Planning Work Program, Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) Chapter 13.02, and the Commission’s Rules and Regulations (i.e., By-laws). Staff was seeking feedback and guidance from the Commission on: (a) planning work program issues, including projects to review in the 2019 Amendment cycle, potential off-cycle projects, and high-priority projects for the Commission; and (b) process and procedures issues, including improvements to the assessment and analysis processes for plan and code amendments, and improvements to the Commission’s workload and operations.

Mr. Boudet noted that the discussion on the planning work program issues would help set priorities for the 2019 Amendment cycle and inform the development of the 2018-2020 Planning Work Program. The work would be reflected in the Commission’s 2017-2018 Annual Report to be supplied to the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability (IPS) Committee in June-July 2018.

Commissioner Edmonds asked how priority projects are determined and how different priorities from Commissioners and Council Members are reconciled. Mr. Boudet responded that the Commission develops the planning work program, setting project priorities based on community’s issues and needs, City Council’s mandates and directives, Commission’s goals and workload, Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, relevant legislative requirements, and other factors. The IPS Committee and the Council may modify the work program, and Council mandates and directives generally have a higher priority.

Mr. Boudet reviewed the progress of the Comprehensive Plan implementation, the status of the current 2017-2019 Planning Work Program where some high-priority projects had been delayed due to four Council initiatives (interim regulations), three potential project tracks for 2018-2020 (i.e., off-cycle projects, 2019 Amendment, and 2019-2020 projects), and other projects in waiting (e.g., Downtown Subarea Plan updates and annexation planning). Commissioners provided the following questions, comments and suggestions:

- Commissioner Edmonds asked for clarification for JLUS. Mr. Boudet explained that JLUS stood for Joint Land Use Study, which covers the JBLM accident potential zone (APZ) in a small part of South Tacoma where high density development shouldn't be encouraged.
- Commissioner Edmonds asked for clarification for off-cycle projects. Mr. Boudet explained that those are projects not grouped into the annual amendments and are of different scope and timing, such as the Residential Infill Pilot Program Phase 2 and the Affordable Housing Initiatives.
- Commissioner Strobel announced that he had received a direct invitation from the Mayor to participate in the Affordable Housing Group on behalf of the Planning Commission.
- Commissioner Givens inquired about the scope of the Residential Infill Pilot Program Phase 2. Mr. Boudet stated that the Council voted for an expansion of the pilot program (Phase 1) to respond to the high interest in the accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and to improve the process to meet with code requirements. Commissioner Givens suggested that the code should be implemented by, say, 2020, instead of keeping the pilot program continuously and endlessly.
- Commissioner McInnis suggested moving the JLUS item up on the priority list for 2019 Amendment. Commissioner Santhuff concurred and suggested other high priority items such as Open Space Corridors Phase 2 (Geohazards) and Commercial Zoning Updates. Chair Wambach also noted the need to move up the JLUS item and commented that there might be a need for a moratorium for certain uses within the APZ and the project may need to be broken into two phases.
- Commissioners Strobel, Santhuff, McInnis and Givens and Chair Wambach commented on Sound Transit's Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) project, and suggested that (a) the City should be proactive in land use and zoning reviews in preparation for the project that Sound Transit has devoted a lot of resources to; (b) TDLE should be incorporated into the consideration for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) or into the Downtown Subarea Plan Integration project; (c) the South Downtown Subarea Plan should be revisited, the boundaries of South Downtown adjusted (eastward to Puyallup River), and the TDLE station areas reviewed in coordination with the Tideflats subarea planning; (d) this is an opportunity for the City to be uniform and ensure that the zoning works for both the City and Sound Transit; and (e) the City should have a strategy for station area planning.

Mr. Atkinson reviewed the proposed changes to TMC 13.02 concerning the Assessment phase of the plan and code amendment process. He indicated that based on previous comments from Commissioners and the experience during the current 2018 Amendment process, staff is proposing changes to the Assessment phase in order to better facilitate the Commission's decision making on whether to accept or deny applications before finalizing the amendment docket. The proposal would add to the Assessment phase (a) preliminary staff analysis of the application, including area of applicability, policy review, objectives, and options for review; and (b) a public hearing to solicit public comments on the staff assessment report. Chair Wambach appreciated the proposal and commented that it would provide an official record of public comments supporting the Commission's decision of accepting or denying an application.

Mr. Boudet discussed the Commission's By-laws and asked for Commission's comments. Chair Wambach requested staff to provide additional information on how other commissions and committees of Tacoma and other cities address the issues of attendance and excusal of absences and propose appropriate revisions to the By-laws and TMC for the Commission's consideration.

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, provided the following reports:

- The Public Review Document for the 2018 Amendments was provided to the Commissioners in preparation for the Informational Meeting on March 28 and the Commission's Public Hearing on April 4, 2018.
- The City Council held a public hearing on Temporary Homeless Shelters Regulations on March 20 and would conduct a study session and the 1st reading of ordinance on March 27, 2018.
- Regarding the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan and EIS project, there will be an Informational Session on April 16, 2018 to prepare interested citizens for the City Council Public Hearing on April 24, 2018. The IPS Committee reviewed the Planning Commission's recommendations in February and made some modifications. Chair Wambach requested that staff provide more detailed information about the modifications and the evolution from the Commission's recommendations regarding such issues as the boundaries of the Regional Growth Center and the height in the Madison district.
- Regarding Sound Transit's Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE), Commissioner Santhuff had been selected for the TDLE Stakeholder's Group and would act in a citizen/Commissioner role. Also, the IPS Committee reviewed the subject in late February and some of their comments included that this project is within the context of a larger system that has multiple modes happening; that this is not just about getting to Seattle but also about getting to Tacoma; and that through this 18-month alternative analysis process, the City should advocate for broad consideration of alternatives that meet the local, regional, and City goals.
- City Council appointed Justin Camarata to the interim position for District 2, which generally represents a portion of the North End, Northeast Tacoma, the industrial area around the Port of Tacoma and Downtown Tacoma. Council Member Camarata will serve in that position until Council Member Robert Thoms returns and resumes his duties, or until December 31, 2018, whichever occurs first.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.