



## **MINUTES**

(Approved on 08-07-2019)

**TIME:** Wednesday, July 17, 5:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Carolyn Edmonds, Ryan Givens, David Horne, Jeff McInnis, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel, Alyssa Torrez  
**ABSENT:** Anna Petersen (Chair)

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

Commissioner McInnis called the meeting to order at 5:06pm. A quorum was declared.

Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division, reviewed administrative items including meeting procedures when the Chair and Vice-Chair are not present and swear-in of Commissioners.

Doris Sorum, City's Clerk Office, swore in Commissioner Torrez (newly appointed) and Commissioner Givens (recently re-appointed).

Commissioner Santhuff nominated Commissioner McInnis as Chair pro tem. The Commission voted in favor of the nomination unanimously.

### **B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the June 5, 2019 and June 19, 2019 meetings were approved as submitted.

### **C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

### **D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **1. Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG)**

Mr. Boudet noted that with Commissioner Waller's resignation, the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) committee made a nomination to City Council to reassign Commissioner Edmonds, currently representing Public Transportation, to District 2 and make the Public Transportation position available for interviews.

Ian Munce, Planning Services Division, provided context for the need of the Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG), which is to give input for transit projects on various aspects such as streetscape improvement, design features, housing vicinity, etc. Mr. Munce referred the Commission to materials provided in their packet for information on the representation of potential members. He also noted that staff hoped to schedule the first TODAG meeting next month before the Urban Land Institute Technical Advisory Panel meeting regarding the Dome District in mid-September. He requested one or two members from the Commission to join the TODAG and welcomed any feedback or questions they might have.

Commissioner Edmonds inquired about the possibility of appointing the Public Transportation representative from the Commission to the TODAG, essentially deferring naming a specific commissioner. Mr. Boudet clarified that Commissioner Edmonds would remain the Public Transportation representative until the City Council makes a decision otherwise and suggested that she take on the TODAG in the meantime.

Commissioner Givens volunteered to serve on the TODAG as it has an urban design component. He recommended having a developer on the committee, to which Mr. Munce noted that staff had been in communication with some developers. Commissioner Santhuff concurred with Commissioner Givens and commented favorably to the Dome District being the focus area for the first step, but also suggested looking at other areas, specifically the Portland Avenue station.

## **2. 2020 Amendment Assessment – Determination**

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, provided opening remarks on the 2020 Amendment package and stated the purpose of discussion, which is to finalize the 2020 Amendment docket and to finalize any modifications of the applications. He then reviewed the annual amendment process and explained criteria in the Land Use Code that the Commission is to consider while making their decision to whether accept, deny, or modify the applications. A timeline of next steps and recap of the four applications were presented. Mr. Atkinson also noted that in a 2-year process, private applications are accepted for consideration, which Heidelberg-Davis Land Use Designation and West Slope Neighborhood View Sensitive Overlay District are.

### **(1) HEIDELBERG-DAVIS LAND USE DESIGNATION**

Larry Harala, Planning Services Division, provided a summary of the application and the information provided in packet to the Commission. From the public scoping process, the comments mostly came from the Central Neighborhood Council concerning information about the proposal and the future of the area under the new designation. If the application is approved for further analysis, staff would ensure the community concerns are well-advised. Mr. Harala also recapped questions from the Commission, emphasizing communication with Tacoma Public Schools. Staff recommendation is to accept the application as proposed. Another scoping option is to re-designate the site as a Mixed Use Center; but in this early stage, the proposed designation is sufficient to allow Metro Parks Tacoma's plan for the soccer stadium project.

Commissioner Edmonds commented that, assuming the application moved forward, she wanted to make sure the skateboard park is not overlooked for its usage and importance to the youth.

Discussion ensued surrounding Commissioner Strobel's question about whether the Commission would actively continue considering the proposal if Metro Parks Tacoma amended or withdrew the application. Mr. Boudet noted that the decision could go either way, dependent on various factors regarding the soccer stadium project and the Commission's standpoint. Commissioner Edmonds expressed her support and offered an alternative perspective that without going forward with the application, there likely would be no fund to support the stadium concept. Commissioner Givens and Chair McInnis voiced their support as well and discussed the scope of project.

Mr. Atkinson asked for verification on concerns and recommendations from the Commission for staff analysis.

### **(2) WEST SLOPE NEIGHBORHOOD VIEW SENSITIVE OVERLAY DISTRICT**

Mr. Harala provided an overview of the application. Community feedback was received both at the Public Scoping Hearing and via emails. The comments are mostly in support of the application. The main concerns are whether to consider nearby areas for the application and whether the application reflects the interest of the whole neighborhood. He explained the intent of View Sensitive District (VSD) in the City code and went

on to present preliminary LIDAR data on potential VSD-20 areas (i.e., VSD areas where the height limit would be reduced from the current 25' to 20'). There are areas in Tacoma that have similar height profiles and characteristics to the Narrowmoor area. Staff recommendation is to accept the application but also look at other areas, specifically through the West Slope area, to broaden the scope.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Givens began by stating that he was uncomfortable with the application moving forward, for the applicant, West Slope Neighborhood Coalition, had not built consensus among the residents before submitting the application. This was concurred by Commissioner Strobel, who also inquired about the definition and intent of VSD, and whether they protect public or private views. Commissioner Horne agreed, noting that he would prefer considering new areas for VSD rather than existing ones and would not want the application to move forward unless it was city-wide. Commissioner Santhuff and Chair McInnis were in support of the application and prepared to proceed with staff recommendation, with a modification of expanding the scope to include areas similar to Narrowmoor. Commissioner Edmonds input that the common concern of the Commission is about the VSD itself, not any specific areas, but the Commission needed to make a decision about the application.

Mr. Harala noted that he had preliminary data, particularly information on how the County taxes properties for view, to share with the Commission. Mr. Boudet gave brief explanation on VSD intention according to the current code, and suggested an interim vote on the application before voting for the packet.

In attempt to reach consensus, Commissioner Givens referred to the One Tacoma Plan and suggested accepting the application with a modification to include Pattern Area Number 1. Commissioner Strobel wanted to carry out a scoping process to understand the VSD before identifying areas to study.

Mr. Boudet explained staff intention for recommending acceptance, noting that it was impractical to spend the next few months adjusting the scope before moving forward. Re-evaluating the VSD as a whole is a broad question and beyond the capacity of the annual amendment process.

Chair McInnis agreed that the topic of discussion should be contained to whether to accept or deny the application. He asked for a show of hands from those in support of moving the application forward in some form. There were three votes (Chair McInnis, Commissioner Santhuff, and Commissioner Edmonds) for moving forward and four votes (Commissioner Strobel, Commissioner Torrez, Commissioner Givens, and Commissioner Horne) against. He stated for the record that no one was in favor of moving the application forward with just Narrowmoor neighborhood. He also asked if there was any other procedure that the applicant might go through to advance their application if the Commission denied it. Mr. Boudet explained that unless the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee deemed the issue a priority and recalled the application, it was generally up to the Commission.

### (3) TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS

Mr. Atkinson gave an overview of the amendments and summarized the public comments. Some of the key requests from the community were prioritization of pedestrians in downtown and consideration for broader walkability and parking for 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor. He also provided a timeline for next steps in the process.

Staff recommendation is to accept the application with the modification to include the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue issue identified in the public comments.

### (4) MINOR PLAN AND CODE AMENDMENTS

Mr. Atkinson stated that the amendments are to update codes and address errors and inconsistencies. He noted that the public comments highlighted concerns about parking in the Dome District and proximity reduction on residential yard space requirements. He also addressed requests from the Commission about bonus incentives in the R-3 and R-4L districts.

Staff recommendation is to accept the application with the modification to include the three aforementioned issues.

In summary, Mr. Atkinson reiterated staff recommendation of the four applications and reviewed the preliminary discussion of the Commission to accept the (1) Heidelberg-Davis Land Use Designation, (3) Transportation Master Plan Amendments, and (4) Minor Plan and Code Amendments applications and to

deny the (2) West Slope Neighborhood View Sensitive Overlay District application. He asked for further discussion if any, and requested a motion from the Commission.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion to finalize the docket for 2020 Amendments to include the (1) Heidelberg-Davis Land Use Designation, (2) West Slope Neighborhood View Sensitive Overlay District, (3) Transportation Master Plan Amendments, and (4) Minor Plan and Code Amendments with the staff recommendations. Commissioner Santhuff seconded the motion.

Commissioner Givens asked if the Commission could decide on the scope of each project after finalizing the docket. Mr. Boudet explained that it was important to keep the scope in mind while deciding. This assessment process is basically the scoping process.

The Commission voted on the motion and it passed 4:3. Chair McInnis, Commissioner Givens, Commissioner Santhuff, and Commissioner Edmonds voted in support of the motion. Commissioner Strobel, Commissioner Torrez, and Commissioner Horne voted in opposition.

Mr. Boudet clarified that the staff recommendation for the scope of the VSD application was to, within the existing VSD areas, look for areas of consistent development patterns.

Given the close vote, Chair McInnis wanted staff to make sure to take into consideration issues identified by opposing Commissioners.

The meeting was recessed at 6:49pm and resumed at 6:56pm.

### **3. Planning Commission Annual Report 2018-2019 and Work Program 2019-2021**

Mr. Boudet gave opening remarks. He went over the 2019 projects, emphasizing the annual amendments and detailing each. Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) were also mentioned. Despite being a small project, it was significant. It was the third time in 20 years that the City looked at DADUs and decided to move forward this time. Other highlighted projects were Open Space Current Use Assessment, Airport Compatibility Overlay District, and Tacoma Dome Link Extension. He also commended the Commission for having meetings in different areas in the community.

Mr. Boudet provided an overview of each project in the Work Program 2019-2021. He presented a chart displaying sequencing of the projects and their timeline. The chart helps keep track of ongoing projects and avoid having too many at once. One common issue is people getting notified of too many issues at the same time that leads to confusion.

Commissioner Santhuff asked about the Commission updated bylaws, specifically the attendance policy, and if there would be any consequence on absences. Mr. Boudet stated that he would check and get back to the Commission, also noting that it was generally left to the Chair to communicate with the Commissioners. Commissioner Santhuff also questioned if the issues that the Commission had worked on, in particular the Portland Avenue corridor, would show up on the future work programs. Mr. Boudet explained that the hope was to add more corridors to the Subarea Plan, but they needed funding before being put on the Work Program.

### **E. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETING (AUGUST 7, 2019)**

- (1) Urban Design Studio
- (2) Residential Infill Pilot Program 2.0
  - a. Mr. Boudet noted that Residential Infill Pilot Program 2.0 might not be on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **F. COMMUNICATION ITEMS**

- (1) Mr. Boudet reminded the Commission that the IPS committee made a nomination to City Council to reassign Commissioner Edmonds, currently representing Public Transportation, to District 2 and make

the Public Transportation position available for interviews. Commissioner Edmonds expressed concern about her potential change of position, stating that there was a lack of open application process and communication to the District 2 community.

- (2) The Elected Leadership Group for Tacoma Dome Link Extension met and made a recommendation to the Sound Transit Board to consider underground station options in the Tacoma Dome area. Various other agencies expressed opposition to the recommendation.
- (3) Affordable Housing Actions Strategies are now having quarterly updates provided to the City Council.
- (4) Commissioner Torrez gave self-introduction with brief bio on education and work background.

#### **G. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27pm.

*\*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/)