



MINUTES

(Approved on July 21, 2021)

MEETING: Regular Meeting (Virtual)
DATE/TIME: Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 5:00 p.m.
PRESENT: Anna Petersen (Chair), Jeff McInnis (Vice-Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, Ryan Givens, David Horne, Christopher Karnes, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel, Alyssa Torrez
ABSENT: N/A

A. Call to Order

Chair Petersen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum was declared.

Chair Petersen read the Land Acknowledgement.

B. Approval of Agenda

Vice-Chair McInnis moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Commissioner Horne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Public Comments

Public comments were not accepted at the meeting, and Public comments were not accepted for Discussion Item #2, which was the subject of a recent public hearing.

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, reported to the Commission that two written comments have been received, one addressing Discussion Item #1 and one addressing Discussion Item #3.

D. Disclosure of Contacts

There was no disclosure of contacts.

E. Discussion Items

1. Impact Fees Program Update

Jennifer Kammerzell, Public Works Traffic Engineering, provided background regarding the impact fee program.

Kendra Breiland, Fehr and Peers, presented an update on the impact fee program process, including an impact fees review; the project schedule; and responses to Commission questions regarding outreach to Latinx and Centro Latino groups, types of projects funded with impact fees, different geographic zones, and if impact fees would be charged for all uses. She further outlined growth projections, transportation projects, collaboration with significant Tacoma groups, and input from the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force.

Jason Hennessy, BERK Consulting, presented the fire impact fees update, including a flowchart representing the fire impact fee process and typical data sources. He noted that the standard of cover study in 2020 and the future needs study were put on hold because of COVID and need to be completed to implement fire impact fees. He further reviewed Tacoma's current level of service standard, capital needs, and next steps.

Commissioner Givens provided a wish list, including an exemption of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), connecting transportation impact fees to parking, having all uses pay their proportionate shares, developing a tool to calculate impact fees ahead of time, and not using the City of Renton as an example.

Commissioner Karnes concurred with Commissioner Givens about the transportation impact fees being sensitive to the number of parking spaces in a new structure and encouraged the Transportation Commission to take a second look at the concurrency of their transit project list with Pierce Transit and Sound Transit's long-range plans.

Commissioner Edmonds expressed opposition to impact fees in urban areas and asked about paying for capital projects through bonds, why the emphasis is on impact fees, and the equality of projects throughout the City.

Chair Petersen requested clarification on waiving impact fees for low-income housing projects and asked about impact fees on new development versus existing structures with a change of use. Ms. Breiland stated there is an opportunity to waive impact fees for low-income housing projects and explained that the City would develop the code that defines when impact fees are charged.

2. Home In Tacoma Project

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, presented the Home In Tacoma update, including the meeting objectives, what is in the package that will be forwarded to the City Council, the findings and recommendations report, the recommendations letter, and the seven topics summarized in the findings and recommendations report. Mr. Barnett facilitated a discussion regarding the recommendations letter, the Comprehensive Plan, and Housing Action Plan.

Commissioner Edmonds stated that she agrees with the vision of creating options but does not want the letter to be an argument against single-family dwellings, and she was pleased with the findings and recommendations report.

Commissioner Karnes stated the letter could reference Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2050 relating to the strategy of linking transit, housing, and jobs; and asked if the City has obligations to the state for accepting grant funding to assemble the Housing Action Plan.

Commissioner Santhuff asked the Commission if they wished to reference the parallel efforts on considering impact fees and suggested adding a map on the findings and recommendations report representing low- and mid-scale residential development compared to the land use designations.

Commissioner Givens expressed appreciation for the staff's work and the policy language throughout.

Chair Petersen agreed with Commissioner Santhuff about adding a note about impact fees. Commissioner Santhuff suggested adding it to the last paragraph in the conclusion section of the findings and recommendations report.

Chair Petersen made comments regarding addressing the change in typical household composition.

Commissioner Santhuff asked about the historic preservation aspects. Mr. Barnett stated that they received a lot of input from Reuben McKnight, Lauren Hoogkamer, and the Landmarks Preservation Commission to help draft those policies that are in the final recommendations.

Vice-Chair McInnis indicated that he is not quite comfortable with the Home In Tacoma project, but he recognizes and appreciates the hard work that has gone into it.

Mr. Barnett outlined the final draft of the recommended housing growth map, the housing map assumptions, and refinements to assumptions; and facilitated a discussion regarding map confirmation and modifications.

Chair Petersen stated she reviewed the map and did not see any red flags and clarified that they are land use maps that indicate a vision, not zoning maps that can be defined and refined later in the process. She further stated that Mr. Barnett will write a memo for future members explaining the map and why it looks the way it does.

Commissioner Givens expressed concerns related to the map. Commissioner Karnes made clarifications regarding the lines that were added to the map for transit and stated the map conforms to what Pierce County is doing. Commissioner Edmonds echoed Commissioner Givens's concerns about the map.

Several Commissioners further discussed concerns regarding northeast Tacoma, density, and transit routes and frequency.

Commissioner Santhuff suggested editing the map by limiting mid-scale residential in northeast Tacoma and revise the area around the school and community center. Chair Petersen stated she does not support that change. Commissioner Karnes concurs with Commissioner Santhuff regarding the area around the school.

Commissioner Santhuff suggested getting a show of hands to identify how many commissioners are comfortable moving forward with the map as it is. Discussion continued regarding walkability, one-block and two-block criteria, and what should not be included on the map.

Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, suggested adding a statement to the findings and recommendations report stating that there will be additional opportunities for adjustments to the future land use map. Chair Petersen agreed to adding that language and moving forward as is.

Mr. Barnett stated that he would add that policy language in and reviewed the near-term code changes and the next steps, including forwarding the recommendations to the City Council.

Commissioner Torrez moved to send the recommendations packet to the City Council with the suggested edits agreed upon by the Commission. Commissioner Karnes seconded the motion.

Commissioner Edmonds asked for clarification on if the map was included. Chair Petersen confirmed it was the whole package. Commissioner Edmonds indicated that she would vote against the motion primarily because the land use map still needs modifications. Commissioner Strobel felt the Commission's process for the project has been rushed but understood the need to respond to the Council's directive. In anticipation of some nay votes, Vice-Chair McInnis suggested including a letter (i.e., a minority report) in the recommendations packet to the City Council.

The motion passed with the following votes:

Ayes – Horne, Karnes, Petersen, Santhuff, Strobel, and Torrez

Nays - Edmonds, Givens, and McInnis

The Planning Commission recessed at 7:19 p.m. and reconvened at 7:27 p.m.

3. 2022 Amendment – Assessment of Applications:

- **Application: “South Tacoma Economic Green Zone”**
- **Application: “Minor Plan and Code Amendments”**

Larry Harala, Planning Services Division, provided an overview of the 2022 Amendment process and timeline, what the assessment includes, what the determination looks like, and an outline of the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone application and the minor plan and code amendments application. The Commission had reviewed the other two application for the 2022 Amendment at the previous meeting on May 5, 2021. Chair Petersen outlined the Commission's responsibilities at this point of the process.

Commissioner Strobel asked if the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone application included a letter from the neighborhood council. Mr. Harala stated that it was in the packet. He added that staff is requesting the Commission to set the date for a public scoping hearing on the application and that the applicants will be invited to present at the scoping hearing (for approximately 5-8 minutes each).

Mr. Wung indicated that the Commission will hear from the applicants and community members about the applications at the public scoping hearing, and at subsequent meetings, staff will reflect on what was heard and offer some preliminary suggestions about options the Commission may consider for each application.

Commissioner Givens moved to release the four applications and assessment reports for public review and set June 16, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. as the date and time for the public scoping hearing. Commissioner Karnes seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

F. Upcoming Meetings (Tentative Agendas)

- (1) Staff proposed the cancellation of the June 2, 2021, meeting. The Commissioners agreed to cancel the meeting.
- (2) Agenda for the June 16, 2021, meeting includes:
 - Equity Index and Mapping Presentation
 - 2022 Amendment – Assessment of Applications (Public Scoping Hearing)
- (3) Agenda for the July 7, 2021, meeting includes:
 - Impact Fees Program Update
 - 2022 Amendment – Assessment of Applications (Debriefing of Hearing)

G. Communication Items

The Commission acknowledged receipt of communication items on the agenda.

- (1) Mr. Boudet informed the Commission of the following:
 - The Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability (IPS) Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. includes interviews for the Planning Commission Interviews and new members may be joining the Commission at the first meeting in July.
 - The initial presentation to the City Council for the Home In Tacoma project is scheduled for a study session on June 8, 2021.
 - At the May 18, 2021, City Council meeting, the Council sent the Commission's recommendations regarding the Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations to the IPS Committee for review and gave them a deadline of the end of August to work through and get a recommendation back to the full City Council.
- (2) Status Reports by Commissioners – TOD Advisory Group, Housing Equity Task Force:
 - Commissioner Karnes reported that the Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Group received feedback from group members about the Portland Avenue station options and will be forwarding a report to the Transportation Commission with a summary of the comments. He further reported that TODAG is also nearing completion of a white paper plan for transit-oriented development.
 - Commissioner Karnes reported that the Housing Equity Task Force is drafting a letter concerning Home In Tacoma and is working on anti-displacement strategies.
- (3) Mr. Wung stated that Mr. Barnett needs to finalize the Home In Tacoma package around Memorial Day, and requested that Commissioners provide their comments and minority report language within the next few business days.

H. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.