



MINUTES

(Approved 2/17/2021)

TIME: Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT (virtually): 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 AND QUORUM CALL

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

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda for the meeting was approved.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments were not accepted at the meeting.

Ten written comments had been received by 4:00 p.m. in regards to the Tidelands and Industrial Land Use Regulations. All comments were on file at the Department and available on the Planning Commission webpage for review.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Tidelands and Industrial Land Use Regulations

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, stated the purpose of this discussion, which was to select the code concept for development for Issue 4: Mining and Quarrying, Smelting, Coal Export, and Chemical Manufacturing of the Tidelands and Industrial Land Use Regulations. He began the presentation with the general context of the siting of potentially high-risk/high-impact heavy industrial uses, then moved on to explain the Tidelands economy, environment, emergency response, climate and sea level rise, as well as the Groundwater Protection District in South Tacoma area. Mr. Atkinson explained in details each of the four specific uses – (1) Mining and Quarrying, (2) Smelting, (3) Coal Facilities and Export, and (4) Chemical Manufacturing. He presented the definition, findings of typical impacts and policy review, purpose, applicability, and policy options for each. In particular to Chemical Manufacturing, a multi-tier approach for alternative code proposal was offered. Finally, Mr. Atkinson concluded by reiterating staff's request and recommendations to the Commission in terms of code development.

Commissioner Edmonds commented on various aspects of the discussion. She wanted to both support job growth in the Port area and mitigate impacts on nearby neighborhoods. She stated that South Tacoma should not be a heavy industrial zone and that the City had an obligation to mitigate the impacts on neighborhoods within Northeast Tacoma, especially Pointe Woodworth, which she believed should not have been built in the first place. Commissioner Edmonds also made comments on what she perceived as a conflict in the proposed policies, the expeditious timeline the Commission had been given to work on such complex subject, and indicated her preferred policy option for each use.

Commissioner Strobel had questions regarding the last existing mine in Tacoma and how proposed policies would be applied to the mine. He wanted more information on non-conforming use and relevant restrictions.

Furthermore, Commissioner Strobel commented on the uses of smelting and coal. He advised focusing on transshipment or transfer facilities, rather than export, for the topic of coal facilities. He also offered insight on federal regulations on coal shipment in reference to Commissioner Edmonds' comment. Additionally, there were questions about the definition of chemical manufacturing and fire code trigger for conditional use permit.

Subsequently, Commissioner Givens had clarifying questions regarding chemical manufacturing vs. oil refining, which were considered separate categories according to Mr. Atkinson. Commissioner Givens also asked about the draft materials to be released for public review.

Vice-Chair McInnis wanted information on how the rail facility on Schuster Parkway fit in the discussion. He agreed with Commissioner Edmonds about the tight timeline of this project, and suggested revisiting the issue of conditional use permits in the future for deeper analysis. He also indicated that the South Tacoma area was better suitable as a residential zone.

Commissioner Santhuff would like to get feedback from City staff who were experts in hazardous chemicals and environmental conditions, and had questions about the boundaries of shoreline districts as high water mark changed.

Chair Petersen asked about alternatives for mining operations and potential impacts if mining was prohibited. She did not consider mining appropriate for the City, however would not want to see mining companies bankrupt and unable to clean up after their operations. She echoed Commissioner Strobel's concern over focusing on a particular coal industry (export). She also discussed the industrial uses in the South Tacoma area.

The meeting was recessed at 6:59 p.m. and resumed at 7:10 p.m.

Commissioner Karnes continued the discussion by providing general concurrence for staff's recommendations and encouraging high transparency with the community for conditional use permits of these industrial sites.

Moving on to contact disclosures, Commissioner Edmonds reported to the Commission that she had had a conversation with Yvonne McCarty, Chair of Northeast Tacoma Neighborhood Council. Commissioner Strobel had been contacted by members of the Protect Tacoma's Tideflats Coalition and individuals at Tacoma Public Utilities.

In conclusion, Chair Petersen affirmed the Commission's concurrence for staff's recommendations.

2. Improvements to Commission's Operations and Procedures

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, presented four issues to be discussed by the Commission – (1) Land Acknowledgment, (2) Antiracism and Equity Training, (3) Planning Commission Rules and Regulations ("Bylaws"), and (4) Additional Suggestions for Improvements.

Chair Petersen explained her contemplation for the Land Acknowledgment proposal. With the help of Commissioner Strobel and members of the Puyallup Tribe, the proposed Land Acknowledgment, read aloud by Chair Petersen, was drafted with specific reference to the work of the Commission. Vice-Chair McInnis differed that the region was built on the land of many groups including the Puyallup Tribe; while acknowledging the information, he discouraged the Commission from acknowledging one tribe over others. A number of Commissioners provided comments in support of the acknowledgement. It was noted that the Land Acknowledgment would be implemented at the Chair's discretion and not considered for a Bylaws amendment.

Mr. Wung informed the Commission that the City was developing an Antiracism and Equity training program appropriate for members of Committees, Boards, and Commissions following the City Council's Resolution No. 40622. The Commission would be invited to attend the training when it became available.

As for the Commission's Bylaws, Mr. Wung indicated that disclosure of contacts as discussed by the Commission at a previous meeting was actually a provision in the Bylaws. Regarding absences, per the Commission's directive, he provided a periodic report on the number of absences in 2020 for each Commissioner. He also discussed the means in which public comments were being submitted, and proposed a time change for the submission deadline from 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 noon of the meeting day, to allow sufficient time for the Commission to review comments. Chair Petersen agreed. Commissioner Karnes had submitted proposed amendments to the Bylaws pertaining to "Plan References" and "Review of City Programs"; he noted that the Commission could establish a subcommittee responsible for in-depth review of the Capital Facilities and Six-Year Transportation programs. Mr. Wung pointed out that forming a subcommittee would add to the timeline of any project being reviewed; the two aforementioned programs were typically on a tight schedule as they went through the Commission's review process. Also, subcommittee meetings would be public meetings and subject to the Open Public Meetings Act. Further discussion ensued pertaining to alternative approaches and language of the proposed amendments. The Commission decided to refer the proposed amendments to staff for further analysis and reporting back at an appropriate time in the future.

Lastly, the Commission was invited to provide any additional suggestions for improvements. Chair Petersen requested more links, especially for maps, to be embedded in staff reports. Commissioner Givens would like an overview report ("Executive Summary Light") highlighting main issues from the staff reports, and enhanced format of the code available online (e.g. searchable). Another need for improvement was the number of emails to the Commission concerning each meeting and the inclusion of the Zoom meeting information. A sign for break/recess during meeting was also suggested. So was a mechanism to share editorial type of comments with other Commissioners and staff.

E. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETINGS

- 1) Agenda for February 3, 2021 meeting includes:
 - Home In Tacoma Project
 - Tidelands and Industrial Land Use Regulations
- 2) Agenda for February 17, 2021 meeting includes:
 - Impact Fees Program (Joint Session with Transportation Commission)
 - Home In Tacoma Project

F. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

The Commission acknowledged receipt of communication items on the agenda.

Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, reported to the Commission of the following:

- The Fossil Fuel study, as part of the Tidelands and Industrial Land Use Regulations, would be presented at the City Council Study Session on February 9, 2021.
- Additional funding for a neighborhood-planning program was approved by the City Council in the 2021-2022 Biennial Budget. Staff looked forward to discussing the program with the Commission and the City Council.
- Hiring of additional staff was approved. Staff would reach out to Commissioners for assistance and feedback in the hiring process.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 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/