



MINUTES (Approved as Amended on 11-5-14)

TIME: Wednesday, October 1, 2014, 4:00 p.m.
PLACE: Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Sean Gaffney (Chair), Scott Winship (Vice-Chair), Chris Beale, Donald Erickson,
Benjamin Fields, Alexandria Teague, Erle Thompson, Stephen Wamback
ABSENT: Tina Lee

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gaffney called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

B. QUORUM CALL

A quorum was declared. Vice-Chair Winship and Commissioner Thompson who had been reappointed by the City Council on September 9, 2014, for another 3-year term, representing the District ~~No. 2~~No. 1 and Development Community positions, respectively, were sworn in by the City Clerk's Office.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Affordable Housing Planning Work Program (Annual Amendment Application #2015-08)

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, introduced Michael Mirra, executive director of the Tacoma Housing Authority and co-chair of the Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group (AHPAG), who provided an overview of the AHPAG's recommendations produced in 2010 and how Tacoma is poised to accomplish goals for affordable housing. Mr. Barnett followed by providing the planning context for affordable housing in Tacoma, including trends, statistics, current initiatives, and components of the planning work program intended to promote housing affordability throughout the City. He then focused on the scope of work for the current phase of the work program, including Residential Infill, Incentives and Bonuses, Upzones, and Permit Process Enhancements.

Concerning the Residential Infill approaches, Mr. Barnett summarized the progress made in the past and the strategies proposed for the future in regards to the following types of site development: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), Small Lots, Great Houses/Duplexes/Triplexes, and Planned Residential Districts (PRDs) and Cottage Housing.

Concerning Affordable Housing Incentives and Bonuses, Mr. Barnett identified three potential opportunities, i.e., Floor Area Ratio (FAR) bonus for downtown area, density bonus for PRDs, and an affordable housing option within the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. He also indicated that key challenges in moving forward with the incentive and bonuses include balancing the community priorities, determining the right density acceptable to the public, and realizing the resource demands.

Concerning the potential affordability requirements with residential upzones, Mr. Barnett indicated that the intents would be to capture increased land value, offset cost of providing affordable units, and increase density; that the AHPAG had recommended at least 10% of the units to be designated as affordable for

the upzone to be permitted; and that whether the requirement should apply to city initiated rezones or only private rezones remains to be resolved.

Concerning Permit Process Enhancements, Mr. Barnett discussed some of the tools recommended by the AHPAG, e.g., permit-ready design library, permit review streamlining, and fee reductions, and how they could be used in a pilot approach tied to affordable projects.

Mr. Barnett reiterated that the objectives of the current phase of the affordable housing planning work program are to identify infill approaches supported by community, promote desired neighborhood character, integrate affordable housing into bonus systems, and identify resource demands.

Discussion ensued. The Commissioners provided the following comments, questions and suggestions:

- Consider adding information to the Residential Infill Table included in the agenda packet concerning the kinds of densities being discussed.
- Is there any anticipation of “Apodments”, which are incredibly small apartments, being part of the discussion or if there is a market pressure in Tacoma?
- Density may not be the best or most desirable method of affordability. Would there be anything beyond density to consider?
- Density and affordability are not necessarily tied to each other. Efforts to create affordable units might actually displace the people who need them farther from the city as has happened in Portland.
- Would the development of Great Houses, Duplexes or Triplexes be superseded by covenants that might restrict lot size or ADUs?
- Could a PRD include something like the row houses seen on the east coast?
- Under the Growth Management Act, zoning must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Do these affordability requirements operate outside of the plan? The new density would still have to be consistent with the plan.
- How was the 10% requirement (per AHPAG) decided upon when the countywide goal is 25%?
- What are permit-ready design libraries and do they take into consideration the character of the neighborhood? (Mr. Barnett: In Portland designers submitted house plans to the city and the city made code changes to accommodate the plans that the public liked. The plans became part of a library of pre-approved infill home design plans. Whether they take into consideration the character of the neighborhood is still unresolved, but the program would be aimed at meeting the approval of the community.)
- In terms of detached ADUs, Puyallup has begun permitting detached ADUs. The detached units are much more visible and more likely to generate community concern. It may warrant a special type of permit to address the kinds of concerns likely to crop up. A parking requirement may need to be considered.
- Cottage housing will need tight ordinances governing design and relevant issues due to visibility.

2. Public Hearing – Capital Facilities Program for 2015-2020

At 5:00 p.m., Chair Gaffney called to order the public hearing concerning the draft Capital Facilities Program (CFP) for 2015-2020, and reviewed the hearing procedures. Ebony Peebles, Office of Management and Budget, Finance Department, provided an overview of the proposal, including a summary of the proposed amendments, the CFP relationship to City’s capital budget, the contents of the CFP document, the City’s budget schedule, and the notification efforts for the public hearing.

Chair Gaffney called for testimony, and seeing no one coming forward, reiterated that the public hearing record will remain open until October 3, 2014 to accept written comments, and closed the public hearing.

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Divisions, presented a draft letter of recommendation for the Commission's consideration. The letter indicated that the Commission is forwarding the CFP to the City Council with some reservations, in that the Commission felt that there has been limited time for review of the CFP, that there is a lack of in-depth analysis on how the new projects are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and that the Commission's review may not be adding significant value to the City Council's process for selecting, prioritizing, and funding of capital projects. The letter also indicated that the Commission will conduct further discussion on how the City's capital facilities planning process may be improved, and how the Commission can contribute more to the process (for example, helping the City Council develop and implement criteria for the selection and prioritization of capital projects).

Mr. Wung indicated that the Planning Commission is expected to deliver its recommendation on the CFP in a timely manner in order for the City Council to meet the statutory requirements, and the associated tight schedule, for adopting the biennial budget. Given that, he suggested that the Commission consider approving the draft letter, pending written comments received through October 3. Chair Gaffney indicated that he would be willing to sign the letter after October 3 if no written comments were received. With a general consensus, the Commission concurred.

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Follow-up Items:

(1) Billboard Community Working Group

Commissioner Wamback, the Commission's designated representative to the Billboard Community Working Group, provided an update on the first meeting (on September 22) of the group that consists of 18 voting members plus alternates and brings a diverse set of perspectives. He disclosed that his employer, Pierce County, owns a billboard on Pacific Avenue and is aware that he is on the working group. He also requested the Commission to designate an alternate representative to the working group since the current alternate, Commissioner Thompson, has opted out. Commissioner Beale volunteered, and was so designated by the Commission with a unanimous vote.

(2) Recreational Marijuana Interim Regulations

Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division Manager, reported that the City Council adopted an ordinance on September 30 to extend the current interim regulations for six months, from November 2014 to May 2015. The Council is also considering permanent regulations and has requested that the Planning Commission make a recommendation through an expedited process. Chair Gaffney expressed confidence that the Commission would be able to move the process along. The Commission also briefly discussed some of the issues, such as the concentrations of marijuana retail facilities, enforcement, taxes, and the lack of direction from the State particularly with regards to medical marijuana collective gardens.

(3) Joint Meeting with the Transportation Commission on September 17, 2014

Mr. Wung stated that at the joint meeting on September 17, due to time limitations, the Planning Commission (PC) and the Transportation Commission (TC) were only able to review nine proposed policies for the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) under the Land Use and Transportation category and the 20-Minute Neighborhoods concept. He asked the Commission to provide feedback. The Commissioners provided the following comments:

- The consultant for the TMP delved right into the land use issue that is really the PC's responsibly and beyond the TC's scope; the maps illustrating the 20-Minute Neighborhoods concept seemed to be changing the density and boundaries of the Mixed-Use Centers that might not be consistent with the PC's understanding.

- There needs to be better coordination between PC and TC on the TMP and better clarifications on the relationship between the two commissions.
- Transportation vision, policies and the associated multimodal network should fit into the land use vision, policies, and zoning designations. However, it did not appear that being the case. The TC did not appear to have a consensus on the remarks of Mr. Leighton, co-chair of TC, that land use should drive transportation.
- Members of PC and TC are all volunteers appointed by the City Council. PC, however, is also identified in the State law and has certain additional responsibilities. Staff needs to assist the PC in being more assertive and more engaged in the TC's process for the TMP and other relevant projects.
- It was not clear whether and how the Mobility Master Plan is going to be integrated into the TMP.
- The consultant for the TMP should be guiding us but did not appear to have fulfilled that role.
- Staff should look into how to enhance the process, whether it's to form joint subcommittees or to have more joint PC/TC meetings.

(4) Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability (IPS) Committee's on September 24, 2014

Mr. Wung reported that at its meeting on September 24, the IPS reviewed the Planning Commission's Accomplishments in 2013-2014 and Planning Work Program for 2014-2016. The IPS's review focused on the applications contained in the 2015 Annual Amendment package, including the private application on the McKinley Mixed-Use Center Boundary Expansion that the Commission had declined. The IPS provided some comments, concerns and suggestions, but no objection to the Commission's conclusions and decisions concerning the assessment of the annual amendment applications made on September 17, 2014.

(b) Informational Items:

The Commission acknowledged receipt of information regarding (1) the City Council seeking citizens to fill two Planning Commission vacancies representing "Environmental Community" and "Public Transportation."; (2) agenda items for the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee's meeting on October 8, 2014; and (3) agenda items for the Planning Commission's meeting on October 15, 2014.

(c) Additional Notes:

Mr. Boudet encouraged the Commissioners to participate in the *Conversation RE: Tacoma 2014 Lecture Series* that had begun on September 18 and is continuing through November 2014.

Mr. Boudet mentioned that staff will set up individual meetings with the Commissioners within the next few months over lunch or coffee/tea providing individual Commissioners an opportunity outside of the regular meetings to discuss issues, concerns, thoughts and suggestions they may have for the City and staff.

Commissioner Fields encouraged the Commissioners to attend the American Institute of Architects Regional Conference in Tacoma on October 2–4, 2014. He had talked to the AIA officials to reduce the registration rate to \$25 for the Commissioners.

It was noted that this was the last meeting of Commissioner Teague, who had resigned (for moving out of town), effective October 1, 2014. Her service and contributions were truly appreciated.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.