



City of Tacoma  
Planning Commission

Chris Beale, Chair  
Scott Winship, Vice-Chair  
Donald Erickson  
Benjamin Fields  
Sean Gaffney  
Meredith Neal  
Anna Peterson  
Erle Thompson  
Stephen Wamback

**MINUTES** (Approved on 1-21-15)

**TIME:** Wednesday, January 7, 2015, 4:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North  
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

**PRESENT:** Chris Beale (Chair), Scott Winship (Vice-Chair), Donald Erickson, Benjamin Fields, Sean Gaffney, Meredith Neal, Anna Peterson, Erle Thompson, Stephen Wamback

**ABSENT:**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Beale called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

**B. QUORUM CALL**

A quorum was declared.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting on December 17, 2014 were approved as submitted.

**D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. Recreational Marijuana Regulations**

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, presented the draft Planning Commission recommendations ready to be forwarded to the City Council. The final recommendations packet includes the Commission's letter of recommendation, Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report, proposed code changes, and a map of recreational marijuana zoning. Mr. Barnett also handed out a track-change version of the draft letter of recommendation, including some potential minor additions to reflect the comments made at the City Council's public hearing on January 6, 2015, on medical marijuana enforcement strategies.

Mr. Barnett reviewed the final proposal from the Planning Commission, including clarifying the applicability and an expansion of areas where production and processing would be allowed. He added that Urban Horticulture, a land use which had been added to the zoning code during the interim marijuana regulations process, would also be allowed in any areas that marijuana production and processing is extended to. The proposal also includes non-code recommendations, particularly regarding developing a City Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for review of applications.

Mr. Barnett then discussed whether Washington State Liquor Control Board's prohibitions against products being visible conflicts with City transparency requirements, which had been a question from the previous discussion. His research found that there is no direct conflict, though the City could improve communication with marijuana retailers about this issue. The state rule only prohibits marijuana products from being visible from the public right-of-way. The city transparency standards require that there be a view into the usable part of the building and a certain percentage of transparency along the street frontage. Both requirements could be met without blanking out windows. He stated that staff does not see a need for code changes, but that the issue could be addressed through better communication which can be accomplished through the new SOP.

The Commission requested that the draft letter, as presented, be amended to add that the City should advocate at the state level against any requirements that conflict with the intent of an active streetscape. The Commission also directed a few other refinements to the letter. Commissioner Erickson motioned to approve the entire recommendations packet including the modified letter, and forward it to the City Council for its consideration. Commissioner Wambach seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **2. Land Use Designation – Phase 2**

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, continued the Commission's discussion on applying the proposed new Land Use Designations. The Commission had previously discussed an approach to rectifying current inconsistencies between the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Code as well as an approach to specific land use types, including educational facilities, Planned Residential Developments (PRDs), and parks and open spaces. Mr. Atkinson then presented a series of draft maps that applied the proposed Parks and Open Space, Institutional Campus, Single Family Residential, Heavy Industrial, and Light Industrial Designations and which designated the existing PRDs in accordance with the existing zoning classification under which the PRD was established.

During the previous discussion the Institutional Campus designation had been focused on the larger facilities like hospitals, universities, and high schools that draw people not simply from the neighborhood, but from the greater region. He noted that hospital specific zoning already exists, providing a basis for the designation. The designated areas were shown on the map and some of the specific campuses were highlighted, including those within the boundaries of Mixed-Use Centers (MUCs).

Mr. Atkinson noted that they were not proposing a PRD designation but had identified inconsistencies between the intensity and the zoning. The default solution was to make the designation reflect the zoning, except in cases where they are located within a MUC or Open Space. On the final map the PRDs would blend into the background.

The areas colored grey on the map identified where the significant policy issues remained. The items that would be addressed next included: corridors, smaller business districts, single family zoning within low and medium intensity areas, and cleanups of right-of-way and parcel lines.

The Commission had multiple questions and comments on the proposals, regarding the coordination with the MUCs review and the relationship between the Parks and Open Space Designation and the Shoreline Designation. The Commission also suggested modifying the Institutional Campus Designation to include the term "major" and to better differentiate these designated areas on the map. There was also significant discussion about whether the current single family intensity accurately reflects the current land use patterns in areas where the neighborhood includes existing multifamily development. Staff then discussed the role of the Designations as a prescriptive measure for how future development should occur rather than a strict description of what currently exists. Lastly, the Commission asked if a future PRD would require a Comprehensive Plan amendments and staff responded that PRDs do not have their own designation, and typically are based on the existing zoning, therefore, they would not require a designation change if supported by the zoning and the Comprehensive Plan.

## **E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS**

Brian Boudet, Manager of the Planning Services Division, reported that the City Council's public hearing on January 6<sup>th</sup> concerning enforcement strategy options for medical marijuana businesses had been well attended by the public which had provided feedback similar to what had been heard by the Planning Commission at the December 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing concerning the permanent regulations for recreational marijuana.

Ian Munce, Planning Services Division, provided an update on the Tideflats Emergency Response and Intelligent Transportation System (ER/ITS) Study. He reviewed that over the past several years the

Planning Commission had been working on a Container Port element for the Comprehensive Plan and was now moving into the implementation phase. The Container Port element had been done jointly with the Port of Tacoma which had also done a strategic plan that had concluded more work needed to be done in terms of public safety, access, and infrastructure. Staff reached out to public and private sector partners and put together a \$600,000 scope of work to fund an emergency response and intelligent transportation system that will allow emergency response vehicles to respond to the Tideflats with real-time traffic data to coordinate routes for response. The first draft of the ER/ITS is finished and will be out in spring to show how the ITS and Emergency Response elements could be implemented. He anticipated that in two years they might be ready for a subarea plan. He informed the Commission of the upcoming public meeting for the project to be held on January 12<sup>th</sup> at the Fabulich Center.

Mr. Boudet discussed the Letter to the Community that informed stakeholders of the 2015 Annual Amendment and various significant planning projects which aimed to assess interests.

Mr. Boudet noted that the agenda for the upcoming Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup> would include Water Ditch Trail Update, Land Use Designations, and AHPAG Membership and Tenure Update; and that the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting on January 21 may include the Transportation Master Plan and the Mixed-Use Centers Review.

#### **F. ADJOURNMENT:**

At 5:16 p.m., the meeting of the Planning Commission was concluded.