



MINUTES (Approved on 5-1-19)

TIME: Wednesday, March 20, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
PLACE: Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North 733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Stephen Wamback (Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, Ryan Givens, Jeff McInnis, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel, Dorian Waller
ABSENT: Anna Petersen (Vice-Chair), David Horne

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Wamback called the Planning Commission's meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

C. JOINT SESSION OF PLANNING COMMISSION AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

The subject of the joint session being transportation related, it was decided that Co-Chair Jane Moore of the Transportation Commission would preside over. Co-Chair Moore called the joint session to order. A quorum of the Transportation Commission was declared. Commissioners introduced themselves.

1. Public Comments

Comments were received from the following citizens regarding the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) project:

- Jori Adkins – Ms. Adkins lives in the Dome District, and believed the TDLE will affect the district significantly and should go underground. There are multiple transit services in the area, but only two streets running north-south because of the many facilities and various construction in the area. The Dome District had worked with multiple entities on the Amtrak Station Design, which had worked well, but this time the TDLE isn't a light rail; it's a heavy train that only works well in suburban areas with wide open streets. She believed the TDLE with elevated tracks and stations would be too detrimental to the transit-oriented development opportunity and the heavy density of urban living in the Dome District.
- Chris Karnes – Mr. Karnes is a co-chair for the Sustainable Tacoma Commission and a member of the Citizen Oversight Panel for Sound Transit. His primary concern is the lack of parking associated with the TDLE in Tacoma area. People will be relying on high capacity transit for accessing the TDLE, so the need to site the project for a short walk from other modes of transportation is absolutely critical. Mr. Karnes also indicated that among the alternatives currently presented by Sound Transit, TD-3 and TD-4 Off-street options are the worthiest of the attention.

2. Tacoma Dome Link Extension

Austin Neilson and Claire Chase from Sound Transit provided a briefing of the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) project. The presentation included:

- Project Overview and Timeline;
- Alternatives Development Process, which includes Early Scoping, Pre-Screening, Alternative Evaluation – Conceptual Level 1, Alternative Evaluation – Detailed Level 2, and Scoping;

- Results of the various phases of the Alternative Development Process; and
- Next Steps.

Ms. Chase highlighted the results of Level 2 Evaluation, indicating that for the Tacoma Dome station area, TD-2 and TD-3 are alternatives with more potential, and TD-1 and TD-4 (with three variations) are alternatives with greater challenges. Similarly, for the East Tacoma station area, ET-3A/3B are alternatives with more potential, and ET-1, ET-2, ET-5 and ET-6 are alternatives with more challenges. Mr. Neilson reviewed the next steps for the TDLE, which included, tentatively, EIS Scoping period from April 1 to May 1, the Elected Leadership Group's (ELG) meetings on May 31 and June 14, and the Sound Transit Board's decision in July 2019 on the preferred alternative and other alternatives for EIS.

3. Discussion

Brian Boudet, Manager of the Planning Services Division and the City's lead in the planning and environmental analysis phase of the TDLE, noted that the City Council had received a similar briefing of the TDLE at the study session on March 19, 2019. He highlighted some of the comments made by the Council, e.g., (a) multimodal connectivity in the East Tacoma station area, especially for pedestrians and with the area on the south side of I-5; (b) the lack of parking for both the East Tacoma and the Tacoma Dome station areas; (c) the need for more adequate connections between the Tacoma Dome station area and the Downtown Core; (4) acknowledging the Tacoma Dome area is a regional transportation hub with great transit-oriented development potential and opportunity; and (5) acknowledging the community's interest in advancing the underground ("cut-and-cover") alternative into the EIS process.

Discussion ensued. Sound Transit staff responded to a number of questions raised by members of the Planning and Transportation Commissions, relative to such issues as impacts to business operations, vehicular access in the station areas for pick-up and drop-off, connection to bus stops, impacts and delays to freight/trucking mobility, pedestrian safety and street crossings, population and traffic projections, and the lack of parking.

Commissioner Santhuff of the Planning Commission brought up a set of specific comments, concerns and suggestions, including: (1) "sense of place" and "urban form/fabrics" are not being referenced; (2) the vision and zoning for the East Tacoma station area should be revisited based on the impact and potential benefits of the station location; (3) impacts on development should be minimized; (4) future extension of the TDLE to the Tacoma Mall area should be considered; (5) need to understand the impacts (visual and otherwise) of elevated station and track alignment on the Dome District and any potential extension; (6) introducing a new transportation system such as the TDLE will have significant negative impacts, so the below-grade alternative should be evaluated in the EIS process equally as elevated alternatives; and (7) as currently presented, alternatives TD-2, TD-4 (elevated or underground), and ET-3 are more preferred.

Discussion concluded with the suggestion that the Planning Commission and the Transportation Commission could provide their thoughts to the City Council for incorporation into its recommendation to Sound Transit. Potentially, a joint task force could be formed to formulate the thoughts for review and approval by both Commissions at the next joint session that could be scheduled for April 17, 2019.

4. Adjournment of Joint Session

Co-Chair Moore adjourned the joint session at 6:25 p.m.

After a brief recess, the Planning Commission's meeting was resumed at 6:34 p.m.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for the February 20, 2019 meeting were approved as submitted.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

F. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Shoreline Master Program – 2019 Periodic Review

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, Teresa Vanderburg, lead consultant from ESA, and Shannon Brenner, Development Services Division, facilitated the Planning Commission's continued (from February 20, 2019) review of the subject, focusing on two outstanding topics: (1) proposed updates to geologically hazardous area standards; and (2) proposed updates related to regulatory review of vegetation removal not associated with a development.

Ms. Brenner introduced issues relating to geological hazards. She reviewed the improved mapping regarding geological hazards which showed the susceptibility for these areas. Ms. Vanderburg reviewed the recommended updates to the Shoreline Master Program (SMP), with respect to: classifications and subcategories, buffers and standards, and new regulations relating to erosion and landslide hazards. Mr. Barnett reviewed the stakeholder engagement strategy, including DOE consultation on the proposals, some 2019 amendments outreach/workshops, and the proposed joint City/DOE public hearing on May 1, 2019. Ms. Vanderburg reviewed some of the updated information regarding floating homes, and why they removed that text from the SMP, and discussed the State Review.

Upon conclusion of discussion, Commissioner Edmonds made a motion to release the packet for public review and comment, Commissioner McInnis seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Implementation

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, reviewed the project approach, and the future land use map (FLUM) based on existing policies. He noted that they have potentially lost certain developments because the zoning hadn't been put in place earlier. He suggested that the next steps would be to release the proposals as-is with general cleanups, set the hearing, then finish the cleanups for public release.

Mr. Atkinson also provided a report of the 2019 Amendment Open House Series that staff had conducted in February and March 2019. He identified the themes of comments received at the open houses, including:

- Existing density not recognized
- Impacts to schools, police, fire
- Parking impacts
- View impacts to east side
- Desire for infrastructure improvements or amenities
- Mix of opinions on new density

Mr. Atkinson also provided the growth context, the zoning context, and the neighborhood context associated with this project. He also reviewed the Tacoma FLUM Story Map (an online tool) in full detail, including categories, criteria, and tabbing features. He reviewed some of the potential cleanups for the mapping. The Commission acknowledged that this is an excellent tool.

Discussion ensued regarding whether or not this proposal should be released for public review. Chair Wambach noted that, with new tools and maps added throughout the project, the project has evolved from the original scope of cleanup into conversation itself. He suggested that this project be released for public review and packaged with a notion that this is still a work in progress and a decision has not been made.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion to release the proposal for public review, Commissioner Santhuff seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. 2019 Annual Amendment Package

Mr. Atkinson reviewed the 2019 Annual Amendment process that had started in May 2018 and has resulted in the following six public-initiated applications having been released by the Commission for public review: (1) Future Land Use Map Implementation; (2) Shoreline Master Program Periodic Review; (3) Affordable Housing Action Strategy Incorporation into Comprehensive Plan; (4) Historic Preservation Code Amendments; (5) Manitou Potential Annexation; and (6) Minor Plan and Code Amendments.

Mr. Atkinson requested that the Commission release the entire package for public review and set a date for the public hearing to receive public comments. After some discussion, it was decided that the Commission would conduct two public hearings – Public Hearing No. 1 on May 1, 2019, concerning the Future Land Use Map Implementation, and Public Hearing No. 2 on May 15, 2019, concerning the other five applications; that Public Hearing No. 2 would be conducted in five consecutive sessions, pertaining to each of the five respective applications; that the first session in Public Hearing No. 2 concerning the Shoreline Master Program Periodic Review would be a joint public hearing with the Department of Ecology; that both public hearings would begin at 6:00 p.m., following an informational meeting conducted by staff from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. for interested citizens to learn more about the subjects of the hearings; and that the locations of the hearings are to be determined.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion to that effect, Commissioner McInnis seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

G. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETING (APRIL 3, 2019)

Mr. Boudet reviewed the contents of the two planned agenda items for the next meeting on April 3, 2019, i.e., Residential Infill Pilot Program Phase 2, and Urban Design Program. The Commission concurred. The Commission also suggested that the Tacoma Dome Link Extension be added to the agenda for the Commission to consider formulating a joint letter of comments with the Transportation Commission, and that Commissioner Santhuff would compile the comments he had made at the joint session today into a draft letter as a base for the Commission's review on April 3.

H. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

The Commission acknowledged receipt of the information as provided on the agenda. Mr. Boudet also provided that the City Council had adopted the Detached Accessory Dwelling Units Regulations on March 19, 2019, and that the City Council will conduct a study session on March 26, 2019 to receive a work plan update on the Tideflats Subarea Plan.

I. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 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/