



Neighborhoods and Housing Committee Minutes

<http://www.cityoftacoma.org/NH>

Tacoma Municipal Building, Room 248, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, Washington 98402

June 2, 2014

Chair Walker called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Council Committee Members Present: Boe, Ibsen, and Walker.

Council Committee Members Absent: Lonergan (arrived at 4:40 p.m.)

Approval of May 19, 2014 Minutes

Council Member Boe moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 19, 2014. Seconded by Council Member Campbell. Voice vote was taken and carried. The minutes were declared adopted.

Proposed West Slope Neighborhood Conservation District

At approximately 4:36 p.m. Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer, stated today's briefing is on a proposed new conservation district overlay zone, to be located in the "West Slope" neighborhood in Tacoma's west end. He stated in 2013, representatives from the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition submitted a request to the City to establish a new, free-standing conservation district in the west end, intended to help protect the views and special character of the neighborhood. He reviewed the key issues for the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Tacoma Planning Commission to consider and provided a preliminary schedule through May of 2015. Council Member Boe noted the term "view sensitive overlay" may imply that views are being protected and asked Planning staff in attendance to consider that when changes are being considered. Discussion ensued regarding whether there are any examples of another conservation district in this situation; the Council's strategic priorities regarding density and affordable housing; the covenant restrictions for the plats in the West Slope Neighborhood. Chair Walker asked if the City has a history of working on policies with covenants that have racially-restricted language in them and asked staff to look at the impacts if the City were to move forward with the conservation district.

2014 Noise Enforcement Code Changes

At approximately 5:10 p.m., Lisa Wojtanowicz, Division Manager, Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), stated the NCS Department is requesting a recommendation to forward proposed changes to the Noise Enforcement Code within Tacoma Municipal Code Chapter 8.122. She stated in 2008, the City adopted the current noise enforcement code section and City staff has bench marked with other cities within the state and across the country to ensure the City's noise code provides a comprehensive approach to noise issues. She provided background information on types of noise; she then reviewed the external review, peer city review, and the consultant review.

Ms. Wojtanowicz stated general Code changes would include the addition of a definition for continuous sound, the addition of a Section 8.122.005 to clarify the general purpose of the Code, clarification that variances are to be considered for a limited duration, the addition of a provision for a person to appeal the Director's decision regarding a variance, changes to the penalty portion of the Code to allow for an escalation of penalties for repeat offenses within a 12-month period, and the addition of a provision to exempt golf course maintenance activities. She then reviewed specific changes in detail.

Discussion ensued regarding how the peer city review compares to the geography of Tacoma, how staff can assure that accurate noise measurements are being taken, variances or grandfathering for ongoing operations, and concern over creating non-conforming use situations.

Ms. Wojtanowicz concluded with the draft schedule, stating once this Committee makes a recommendation to move the proposed changes forward, they need to be reviewed by the Department of Ecology (DOE) for review. She stated once the DOE has completed its review, the proposed changes would go before the City Council for final consideration. Discussion ensued regarding the length of the appeal process and if penalties are issued during an appeal process. Council Member Lonergan noted the absence of outreach to the Port and requested clarity or more information on cities with waterways and exemptions for port-related activities and watercrafts. Chair Walker requested staff address the questions and concerns raised today and return to the Committee. Council Member Boe discussed his concern with the Land Use Code and Noise Code conflicting with each other.

Topics for Upcoming Meetings

Christina Watts, City Manager's Office, stated the next meeting is June 16, 2014 and topics include derelict buildings and an overview on the Minimum Building and Structures Code update.

Other Items of Interest

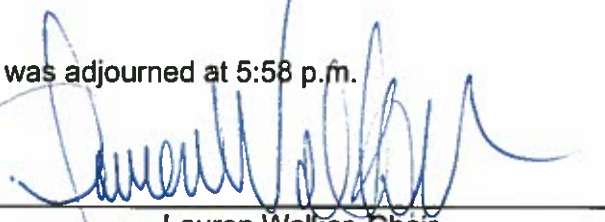
There were no other items of interest.

Public Comment

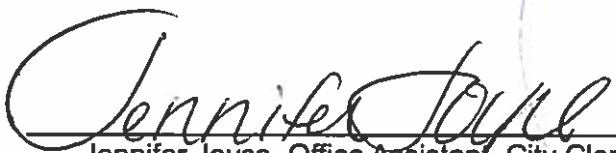
Public comment was heard from Louise Bray, Schnitzer Steel Industries.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.



Lauren Walker, Chair



Jennifer Joyce, Office Assistant, City Clerk's Office