



MINUTES (approved as amended on 1-8-14)

Part I. Field Trip

Time: Wednesday, December 18, 2013, 2:30 p.m.

Location: Point Ruston LLC, 5219 N. Shirley St., Suite 100, Ruston, WA 98407

Present: Sean Gaffney (Chair), Scott Winship (Vice-Chair), Chris Beale, Tina Lee, Alexandria Teague, Erle Thompson, Stephen Wamback

Absent: Donald Erickson, Benjamin Fields

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Gaffney called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m. and declared a quorum present.

B. FIELD TRIP – Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center (Annual Amendment Application #2014-01)

Loren Cohen of Point Ruston LLC and J. J. McCament of McCament & Rogers hosted the Planning Commission's visit of the Point Ruston development site. Mr. Cohen provided an introduction of the company, the history of the old ASARCO site, the company's development plan for the site, and the intent of the request for designating that portion of the site within the City as a Mixed-Use Center. Discussion ensued as the Commissioners toured the site on a van. The field trip ended at 3:30 p.m. and the Commission took a recess.

Part II. Regular Meeting

Time: Wednesday, December 18, 2013, 4:00 p.m.

Location: Visibility Center, 9th FL, Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street

Present: Sean Gaffney (Chair; excused at 6:00 p.m.), Scott Winship (Vice-Chair; excused at 4:25 p.m.), Chris Beale, Donald Erickson, Tina Lee, Alexandria Teague, Erle Thompson, Stephen Wamback

Absent: Benjamin Fields

C. RECONVENE AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Gaffney reconvened the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and declared a quorum present. The minutes of the regular meeting on December 4, 2013 were approved as submitted.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center (Annual Amendment Application #2014-01)

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, presented the revised staff analysis on the application for designating that portion of the Point Ruston development site within the City as a Mixed-Use Center (MUC), largely in response to the Commission's inquiries and suggestions made at the previous meeting on October 16, 2013. He indicated that the proposed MUC designation meets the policy intent and direction contained in the Comprehensive Plan in most regards, with the possible exceptions of providing affordable housing options and of providing alternatives to car travel – particularly transit. Mr. Barnett stated staff's view that the issues of the application are understood, and recommended that the proposal

be released for formal public comment. He also passed out a memo prepared by the applicant which discusses these issues.

(Vice-Chair Winship was excused at 4:25 p.m.)

The Commissioners were supportive of sending the application and staff report out for public comment, though some reiterated their questions or concerns about the housing affordability issue, the fact that the site is not yet developed, the market reality for the site, the lack and uncertainty of current and future transit services, and that planning for 500 parking spaces over and beyond the code requirement is against the principle of multimodal transportation, among other issues. The Commissioners voted unanimously to move the application and the revised staff analysis report as presented, along with the applicant's memo, for public review in February-March 2014.

2. Urban Forestry Landscaping Code Update (Annual Amendment Application #2014-10)

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, provided a progress report on the code development in response to the Commission's direction and questions from the November 20, 2013 meeting, as well as on ongoing stakeholder outreach. He stated that the main issues on which staff have been working include Small, Medium, Large Tree definitions and sliding scale; minimum tree spacing, soil volumes and unpaved areas; the self-managed agencies approach (a.k.a., Landscape Master Plans); determining appropriate "key corridors" in industrial districts for purposes of adding Street Tree requirements; and determining appropriate ratios for incentives and bonuses. He stated that staff felt it made sense to provide this update now in order to get the Commission's direction before drafting proposed code language. He indicated that staff will continue the code development effort and conduct some "road testing" of the current proposal with hypothetical development proposals. Mr. Barnett also stated that staff anticipate the need to make some adjustments to the code's existing landscaping distribution requirements in order to ensure that the "Small, Medium, Large Tree Size" approach will function as intended.

The Commissioners generally concurred with staff's approach to date. They reiterated their concern in regards to inspection, enforcement and maintenance and asked staff to continue to work with Code Enforcement on that issue. They discussed that it would be desirable to incentivize private property owners to help maintain trees on public rights-of-way; expressed interest in seeing a proposal for street tree requirements for M-2 and PMI districts; suggested that the width of planting strips in the current proposal, i.e., 4 feet, is not adequate for larger trees; and, reiterated that street trees should be placed in the right-of-way whenever possible, including in planted medians.

3. Temporary Homeless Camps Permitting Process

John Harrington, Development Services Division, facilitated the Commission's continued review of the proposed amendments to the Tacoma Municipal Code intended to establish the permitting process and development standards for temporary homeless camps run by religious organizations. He presented the revised version of the proposed code amendments, largely in response to the Commission's inquiries and suggestions made at the previous meeting on November 20, 2013.

(Chair Gaffney was excused at 6:00 p.m., and Commissioner Erickson was designated as the Chair Pro Tem to preside over the meeting.)

Discussion ensued. The Commission made the following modifications to the revised version of the proposed code amendments: (a) allow no more than two camps of up to 100 residents each operating within the City at any given time; (b) require any camp be located within ¼ mile of a transit stop; (c) clarify that a camp may only return to "the same church owned site", not to "the same parcel of land", after the allowed time lapse; and (d) require minimum 2-foot separation on side and rear of tents.

The Commission unanimously approved the proposed code amendments, with said modifications, for public review purposes and set January 22, 2014 as the date for a public hearing.

4. Hilltop Subarea Plan and EIS

Brian Boudet, Manager of the Planning Services Division, facilitated the Commissioners' review of the Revised Draft Hilltop Subarea Plan, dated December 2013, compiled with Appendix A – Proposed Amendments to Tacoma Municipal Code Chapter 13.06: Zoning. It was noted that this version was largely the same as the version handed out at the last meeting on December 4, 2013, with the primary changes being the incorporation of some additional background information and revised maps and the inclusion of the limited, proposed code changes. Upon completing the review, the Commission unanimously approved the document for public review purposes and set January 22, 2014 as the date for a public hearing.

5. Mixed-Use Centers Code Review (Annual Amendment Application #2014-04)

Brian Boudet, Manager of the Planning Services Division, provided an update on the Mixed-Use Centers Code Update project, which is designed to evaluate the existing regulatory standards applicable within the centers and identify potential barriers to achieving the desired development. The project focuses on evaluation of the existing development requirements applicable within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use Centers, and particularly those applicable to mixed-use projects in the core of these districts.

Mr. Boudet indicated that prototype development scenarios are being utilized to help identify potential barriers and alternatives that could be pursued, either on a temporary or permanent basis. He presented the schematic plans for the prototype building form and layout. The prototype is envisioned as a mixed-use project located on a relatively small lot (100-feet wide) along a Core Pedestrian Street within a Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center. Three test sites for the prototype project have been selected from three centers – Proctor, Hilltop, and 56th & South Tacoma Way. These sites reflect different areas of the City and different circumstances in relation to certain standards, such as stormwater requirements.

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, provided the following information:
 - Agenda for the Transportation Commission and Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group joint meeting, December 18, 2013
 - Agenda for the Planning Commission meeting, January 8, 2014
 - Agenda for the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting, January 8, 2014
- (b) Mr. Wung presented “Planning Commission – Year in Review 2013”, summarizing the Commission's activities and accomplishments in 2013. He expressed staff's appreciation to the Commissioners for their service and advice. The Commissioners also commended staff for their professionalism and dedication.
- (c) Mr. Boudet reported that the South Downtown Subarea Plan was adopted by the City Council on December 17, 2013.
- (d) Commissioner Lee stated that she will be attending a class at the University of Washington Tacoma on 10 consecutive Wednesdays, starting January 8, 2014, and will be missing or only attending part of the next few meetings until early March.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.