



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

DATE: June 8, 2010

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Anderson, Dr. Jane Moore, Elaine Ott, Phil Coughlan, Bliss Moore, Dale Anderson, Jim Gawel, Louise Bray, Steven Garrett, Julia Petersen, Ken Schmidt

OTHERS PRESENT: Amber Simonsen, Michael P. Slevin III, Kristi Lynett, Lisa Rennie, Bob Mack, Erin Dealey, Ken Peachey, Les Gershman, Catherine Taylor

▪ **Approval of the May 11, 2010 Meeting Notes**

The May 11, 2010 meeting notes were approved and adopted.

▪ **Review and Approval of the June Agenda**

The June agenda was reviewed and approved.

▪ **Personal Introductions – Julia Petersen and Steven Garrett**

Personal introductions were made by Julia Petersen and Steven Garrett, recently elected STC members each to serve 3-year terms (2010 – 2013). Julia Petersen is the Program Coordinator for Downtown: On the Go! Steven Garrett spent the majority of his career with WA State University as extension faculty.

▪ **Pierce Transit Alternatives Presentation- Amber Simonsen**

Pierce Transit has been going through a process to redesign the way they deliver service across Pierce County. Pierce Transit has been around for 30 years and has also been hit by the current economic recession. This provides an opportunity for them to plan for the future and do things better, and also take a look at how the recession would impact the way they deliver service.

Amber Simonsen, Pierce Transit Executive Project Director, shared information on the two alternatives that they have developed (Alternative 1 – Reduction Plan; Alternative 2 – Growth Plan). The process dates back over a year ago as part of a value activity exercise, which was instrumental in allowing Pierce Transit to design a system that focuses on economic development and getting folks to basic life needs/social services.

Pierce Transit receives the majority of their funding from local sales tax in Pierce County (.6%), with the remainder of their revenue made up of fares and grants. They are seeing more of the monies coming in from the fare box actually being applied to operations.

Pierce Transit has taken a number of cost savings measures over the past three years (layoffs, cutting unproductive services, capital projects) which still leaves them facing a \$68 million gap by the end of 2012.

Alternative 2 – Growth Plan, Pierce Transit's objective is:

- To serve centers with high population and employment promoting economic development

- 15-minute peak hour commuter services
- Limited stop express on Pacific Avenue
- All day 15-minute service on trunk routes
- Sounder and community connectors

Alternative 1* – Reduction Plan, Pierce Transit’s current recommendation is:

- To provide service across the entire service area
- 30-minute service becomes 60-minute service
- 15-minute trunk route service becomes 20/30 minute service
- Some all day service eliminated or peak only
- Limited weekend routes, 60-minute service

*Alternative 1 requires about a 43% reduction in the number of service hours on the street.

In comparing the two plans in service hours and ridership, anytime someone leaves their car at home they save about 20 lbs of CO₂ emissions per day (approximate, informal study). Knowing that the difference in estimated ridership is 3.8 million people that would be taken off the bus and be forced into cars would be adding 20 lbs of CO₂ per person per day or 68 million pounds each day.

Pierce Transit has been doing a lot of outreach as of May 2010 on these two alternatives, which are still in draft mode. On June 14, there will be a public hearing with Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners who will be listening to testimony from the public. A final decision will be made in July 2010. The STC will draft a letter of support for Pierce Transit’s Alternative 2 – Growth Plan.

▪ **Report on May 26 EPW Committee Presentation**

STC members in attendance at the May 26 EPW Committee meeting were Bill, Julia, Jane and Ken along with City staff Lisa, Bob and Kristi. The discussion was around the Climate Action Plan and the Commissions role; how the STC is able to advocate and support implementation of the CAP. Council members stressed they would like to see some policy coming out of the group. There are two clear policies in the two-year strategies: an environmental purchasing policy and a municipal green building standard. Staff has been working with Purchasing and the Green Team for the last six months to develop these two policies. Council would look forward to seeing these two policies completed by the end of summer. The Council was open to having the Commission review the CAP with the intention of possibly reprioritizing their focus.

City staff also revisited the sustainability framework; sharing the draft vision and draft principals with the EPW. There may have been some concern about what is actually meant by sustainability. It was suggested that it might prove helpful to have a joint meeting between STC and the EPW to discuss and better define what sustainability really means to Tacoma. City staff will organize a joint meeting within the next couple months.

▪ **Development of STC Work Plan**

Staff from various sections of the City will be made available to the STC providing updated information and/or data on the four strategies within the work plan.

Subcommittees will be formed representing three of the strategies: reuse and recycle, energy efficiency in buildings, homes and industry, and moving people and goods more efficiently. Staff will email the work plan to the STC for their first and second choice on which strategy subcommittee they prefer to participate.

Additional columns will be added to the work plan document depicting ghg reduction estimates, barriers, and updates.

▪ **Staff Report**

- A waste characterization study will be presented to the EPW by Solid Waste Staff. At some future date, Solid Waste will present this information to the STC (example: what percent of the residential/commercial waste stream is made up of recyclable materials and better identify those materials so they could be recycled if there was the capacity to do so.
- Effective July 13, 2010, STC meetings will commence at 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm
- STC member social will be organized for a July date.

- Education and communication – staff working towards holding a big sustainable event sometime next year.
- Ms. Dealey will be instrumental in working with the STC on the small grant program.
- Staff's priority this summer will be working on Tacoma's Municipal Building standard.

▪ **Public Comment**

- Mr. Peachey gave a summation of the comments he heard from the May 26 EPW presentation with regards to today's meeting discussions. What gets measured gets attention. Believes the Council was asking for measurements related to baseline data. The word sustainability hinges too much focus, rather than climate change. Sustainability will occur if we deal with climate change and its impacts, but it needs to be measured and get measurement into businesses and the community. The STC is a resource in that process.
- Les Gershman, a representative of Cascadia Green Building Council's local branch, presented an open invitation for the STC's attendance at a July 28 program at the Center for Urban Waters. They will be hosting a joint event with a local AIA group, and have invited a speaker, Clark Brockman, to talk about how Tacoma can be a more sustainable community. Mr. Brockman will be looking at some of his tours of communities in Scandinavia that are similar to Tacoma with an overview of what our City might be doing. Part of his focus will be on carbon emissions.

▪ **Objectives for Next Meeting**

- Presentation on Solid Waste strategies and CAP update
- CAP and Commission policy discussion

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, July 13, 2010, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building North, 733 Market Street, Room 16.