



MINUTES (Approved on 5-2-18)

TIME: Wednesday, April 4, 2018, 5:30 p.m.
PLACE: Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 1st Floor
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Stephen Wamback (Chair), Anna Petersen (Vice-Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, Ryan Givens, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel
ABSENT: Jeff McInnis, Dorian Waller

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Wamback called the special meeting (due to changes in starting time and location) to order at 5:31 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Wamback dispensed with asking the commission to approve the agenda as agenda amendments are not permitted at special meetings. There were no minutes for approval.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments outside the context of the public meeting accepted.

D. PUBLIC HEARING

1. 2018 Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code

Chair Wamback called to order the public hearing concerning the proposed 2018 Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code ("2018 Amendments"), and reviewed the procedures for the hearing. Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, reviewed the subject of the public hearing. He outlined the background of the application process, the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Use Regulatory Code (Tacoma Municipal Code Title 13) and the amendment process. He summarized the seven applications proposed and explained the various opportunities and ways to provide public comment. The 2018 Amendments package included the following applications/subjects: (1) Car Wash Uses in Neighborhood Centers; (2) Vehicle Service and Repair: Outdoor Storage; (3) S. 80th Street PDB Rezone; (4) Commercial View Sensitive District Height Measurement; (5) Transportation Master Plan – Limited Amendment; (6) Open Space Corridors Project – Phase 1; and (7) Code Cleanups.

Chair Wamback called for testimony. The following citizens testified:

1) Eric Jackson :

Mr. Jackson spoke on Car Wash Uses in Neighborhood Centers. He feels that car washes promote responsible water use in urban cores. The existing Brown Bear Car Wash located on 6th Avenue near Pearl Street is over capacity with a high number and high density of cars using the facility. Car washes allow people living in apartments and multi-family housing access to wash their cars and meet the newer and higher social consciousness. Many apartments are banning car washes on site. Mr. Jackson noted that there was a recent report on King 5 News that Puget Sound Chinook Salmon would soon be on the endangered species list. He feels that public officials should assist in alleviating this issue via zoning and more environmentally responsible use of water.

- 2) Ginny Eberhardt, West End Neighborhood Council:
Ms. Eberhardt, a member representing the West End Neighborhood Council, stated that the council is asking that the car wash application be denied. The Narrows area as a mixed-use center is in the process of revitalization with new businesses coming in. To put a car wash on 6th Avenue would cause traffic on narrow side streets and issues with traffic control in the Geiger School area. Increased and back-up traffic would be hazardous to both students and school bus drivers.
- 3) Lance Odermat, Brown Bear Car Wash:
Mr. Odermat, Vice President of Car Wash Enterprises (Brown Bear Car Wash) spoke on the proposed development of a car washing facility at 6902 & 6918 6th Avenue. He asks that car washes be allowed in the NCX Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use districts with a Conditional Use Permit. The proposed development site is currently in poor condition and a detriment to the neighborhood with trespassing and unlawful activity. They are prepared to demolish the structures and move forward with the project. Prior to investing a large sum of money, he would like an assurance that they will be able to develop the car wash. He understands the hesitation but does not feel that the project would be a detriment to the neighborhood. The project would be a positive development, both state of the art and environmentally friendly with no expense spared on landscaping or appearance. A similar project was completed in May of 2017 in Poulsbo and the project was successful. Mr. Odermat is confident he can achieve the same outcome with this location. He stated that Brown Bear is a family owned and operated company with locations in Tacoma since the early 1970's and has been a stable presence in the community. The existing location on 6th Avenue near Pearl Street is too small, and the building is at its end of life and renovation is not a viable option. At this point the option is either to build the new location on 6th Avenue or relocate to Gig Harbor. Their strong preference is to remain in Tacoma.
- 4) Steve Gillen:
Mr. Gillen is concerned with the sustainable development policies. He feels they diminish property rights, regulate businesses, control water use and other uses and basically will eventually control all aspects of people's live and change the aspect of the community. He feels it is very damaging and the whole society will be changed.
- 5) Anthony Steele, President, Hilltop Business Association:
Mr. Steele voiced concerns on the Commercial View Sensitive District Height Methodology. He suggested more information be given to the community prior to moving forward with the zoning issue. He requested clarification on which areas it would cover. He understands that the zoning action is for a different business district but there is nothing that precludes this zoning from being applied to other districts. He asked that both options in the amendment be made available to the community for review to accurately make comments. Mr. Steele stated that moving forward with the current methodology would actually be a punishment to the landowners, property owners, and business owners on each side of the street. The owners with frontage would be forced to limit their building height as an allowance for the view of the owner across the street. People have invested in their property and now would be told they are precluded from redeveloping their property and adding height to their property for a view. It is important to note that whatever the height requirement is, it is the same for everyone on both sides of the street.
- 6) Mary Smith:
Ms. Smith commented on the Commercial View Sensitive District Height Methodology from the perspective of Old Town residents. She is aware that there are 3 neighborhoods impacted by the methodology and feels that Option #2 is the most favorable for the residents of the 3 neighborhoods. Old Town while a mix of residential and commercial uses, is predominantly a residential area. Option #2 favors the residents in the area just a bit over commercial building developers. The hills slope which is a two way downhill slope creates a complex view which is highly valued and reflected in property taxes. Ms. Smith asks that the Commission take into consideration the fact that after businesses close at the end of the day the residents are there and appreciate their neighborhood and their view. She urged the Commission to select Option #2 and provided signatures from neighbors to City Staff.

- 7) Mike Fleming, West Slope Neighborhood Coalition:
Mr. Fleming addressed the Commercial View Sensitive District Height Methodology. He spoke on behalf of the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition in opposition to the amendment and changing the methodology. The amendment, per the staff report, was supposed to create more parity amongst parcels. The parity was for frontage property along 30th Street per the application by the private requestor. In the two current proposed options, there is a significant disparity, via the building height limitations. On one side of the street the owners are allowed to build 3 levels of floor space while on the other side of the street only 2 levels of floor space are allowed, providing 50% more floor space. Mr. Fleming and the Coalition feel that the best solution is to use the existing variance process and not to change the amendment. The issues of the one person can be addressed and the property can be examined and the variance process allows input from the neighbors and those in the vicinity. Amending this regulation would mean developer could proceed without any notification to others about what was going on. This is a significant issue for the Coalition.
- 8) Jeff Bell, Jeff's Used Tires:
Mr. Bell, owner of Jeff's Used Tires on 6th Avenue, commented on the "Outdoor Tire Storage." He indicated that he has been in this business since 1995, and that the site was a car wash that could not be converted without spending millions of dollars. Mr. Bell opened Good Used Tire Store which is open 7 days a week providing affordable services to many customers, enabling people to keep their cars rolling. Outdoor storage is very important and a building to house the tires would be very expensive and cost prohibitive. He felt that a fence to block the public's view of the tires and plants to beautify the outside between the privacy fence and sidewalk would be fine. Mr. Bell is opposed to closing the site down after 23 years. He thinks the site would remain vacant if he was forced to close and move as the cost for development of the property is extensive. He thinks only a bigger corporation would be able to develop the site.
- 9) Stacey Gillette:
Ms. Gillette commented on the Commercial View Sensitive District Height Methodology. She indicated that her concern was the intent of the amendment and the attempt to promote parity among parcels in the C-2 district. Ms. Gillette's primary concern was the Proctor area, specifically 34th and Proctor. She would like to see consistency in building height requirement as the height limit is only on one side of the street in this area. Ms. Gillette requested additional information as to why this was done. She believes this is an example of where consistency in code is needed. She proposed an expansion of the View Sensitive Overlay District to the entire 34th and C-2 Proctor District area. She also stated that she would like to eventually see the area as a C-1.
- 10) Rick Rosenblatt:
Mr. Rosenblatt spoke about the Open Space Corridors. He feels that while it is important to protect trees, wetlands, and the items in the proposal; the amendment is quite severe. The cut back as to what property owners can do with their property down to 35% is a very dramatic reduction in the use. He likened it to planning to build a house and then deciding to build a tiny home. Mr. Rosenblatt closed by reiterating that the amendment was severe.
- 11) Loretta Ramos:
Ms. Ramos lives a little over a block from the proposed car wash location at 6902 & 6918 6th Avenue. She agrees that the current car wash on 6th Avenue near Pearl Street is landlocked and extremely busy. She was interested in the subject site for her own personal mental health practice. She has spoken to a project manager affiliated with Brown Bear Car Wash about acquiring the building and spoken with City staff about the homeless population that has taken up residence at the site. She is unhappy with the lack of site containment and security. She feels that Brown Bear has made no effort to enclose the site and manage the homeless issue at the site. She is worried about the homeless people living on the site.
- 12) Dean Wilson, Chairman, West Slope Neighborhood Coalition:
Mr. Wilson, Chairman, West Slope Neighborhood Coalition expressed the Coalition's concerns about the car wash issue. He indicated that they are worried about the noise and congestion. He stated that they do not perceive a cogent reason why there should be an across the board

amendment that would affect all neighborhood centers because one person applied for a car wash in the Narrows district on 6th Avenue. The Coalition generally opposes the amendment and does not feel car washes belong in neighborhood centers.

13) Ken Kingsbury, West End Neighborhood Council:

Mr. Kingsbury, a member of the West End Neighborhood Council, commented on the Car Wash Uses in Neighborhood Centers, indicating that he opposes the car wash going in. He has lived in the area for over 4 decades and has seen the neighborhood change. He is concerned with the potential traffic overflow and feels there would be constant overflow on to 6th Avenue which would trickle on to the side streets. Another concern is the inability for emergency vehicles to access the streets if cars are backed up. He does not feel this would be good for the community especially as it begins to turn around and develop.

Seeing no one else coming forward, Chair Wamback reiterated that written comments would continue to be accepted through April 6, 2018.

Chair Wamback asked the Commission if they had any questions or suggestions for additional information to bring back to the Commission. The Commissioners requested clarification from Staff on what areas are impacted by the Commercial View Sensitive District; would amendment apply to all VSDs or other business districts. Also requested were examples to allow the Commission and public to better understand the View Sensitive District Height Methodology, more information on the "Do Nothing" option, and what a variance process associated with the option would entail. Mr. Atkinson reiterated that at the next meeting staff would prepare summarized testimony, provide written comments received, identify issues and staff responses, and provide options for the Commission's consideration. The Commission concurred. Chair Wamback formally closed the public hearing at 6:25 p.m.

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS

Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, provided the following reports:

- Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan Update – A SEPA Addendum was included in the agenda packet to provide more description on the proposed changes made by the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability (IPS) Committee to the draft subarea plan and associated zoning regulations as recommended by the Planning Commission. The City Council will conduct a study session and a public hearing on April 24, 2018. Staff will conduct an informational meeting on April 16, 2018 for interested citizens to learn more about the project. Staff is also working on holding a meeting with stakeholders in the development community to address the question: "Will the market bear the inclusionary zoning concept proposed?"
- Planning Commission Bylaws concerning Absences – Based on benchmarking research, staff is suggesting some changes to the Bylaws, which must be preceded by similar changes to the Tacoma Municipal Code 13.02.010. Said code changes will be incorporated in the Code Cleanups application of the 2018 Amendments for the Commission's consideration at the next meeting.
- Homeless Temporary Shelter Regulations – The City Council has rescheduled the final reading of adopting ordinance from April 3 to April 10, 2018 to allow more time for discussion on multiple amendments to the ordinance.
- Sound Transit's Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) – The City Council will consider a resolution on April 10, 2018 to enter into a Partnership Agreement with Sound Transit on the TDLE project. The Planning Commission's comments on the project as expressed at the meeting on February 21, 2018 will be reflected in the resolution. Commissioner Santhuff reported that the TDLE Stakeholder's Group had met on March 28, 2018 and that Sound Transit will hold an open house on April 17, 2018.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.