

Members

Jeremy C. Doty, Chair
 Thomas C. O'Connor, Vice-Chair
 Chris Beale
 Peter Elswick
 Donald Erickson
 Sean Gaffney
 Scott Morris
 Ian Morrison
 Matthew Nutsch



Minutes

Tacoma Planning Commission

Community and Economic Development Department

Ryan Petty, Director
 Peter Huffman, Assistant Director
 Charles Solverson, P.E., Building Official

Public Works and Utilities Representatives

Jim Parvey, City Engineer/Assistant Director, Public Works Department
 Heather Pennington, Water Distribution Engineering Manager, Tacoma Water
 Diane Lachel, Community and Government Relations Manager, Click! Network, Tacoma Power

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(Approved on 4-6-2011)

MEETING: Regular Meeting and Public Meeting

TIME: Wednesday, March 2, 2011 4:00 p.m.

PLACE: Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 1st Floor
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

Members Present: Jeremy Doty (Chair), Thomas O'Connor (Vice-Chair), Peter Elswick, Donald Erickson, Sean Gaffney, Scott Morris, Matthew Nutsch, Ian Morrison

Members Absent: Chris Beale

Staff Present: Donna Stenger, Jana Magoon, Steve Atkinson, Elliott Barnett, Brian Boudet, Sue Coffman, Shanta Frantz, Philip Kao, Karla Kluge, Reuben McKnight, Shirley Schultz, Barbara Serry, Lisa Spadoni, Diane Wiatr, Lihuang Wung, Noah Yacker (Building and Land Use Services); Josh Diekmann (Public Works); Susan Clark (Tacoma Water)

Chair Doty called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. There were no minutes to approve

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Critical Areas Preservation Ordinance (CAPO) Update

Ms. Karla Kluge, Building and Land Use Services, reviewed the process used to develop buffer method determinations and mitigations review in the existing code. She stated that there were several methods that were evaluated by the focus group and that ultimately a type of "hybrid" determination worked best. Ms. Kluge discussed what would need to be taken into consideration to make mitigation work. There were two options that were highlighted – mitigation banks and in lieu fee programs. The Commissioners were interested in knowing if these options were entirely successful in practice. Ms. Kluge was able to answer these concerns and stated that mitigation banks were successful and had been around for some time, while the in lieu fee programs are new and have not been evaluated thoroughly as to effectiveness.



2. Development and Permitting Activity Reports

Ms. Sue Coffman, Division Manager of Building and Land Use Services (BLUS Permit Center), summarized the number of building permits according to each different type and the valuation of the work. Specifically, Ms. Coffman gave a breakdown as to the number of commercial, residential (new construction and remodels) as well as mechanical and plumbing permits that were issued for the year (2010) as well as land use permits. She also displayed a chart that showed the number of permits that were issued over a ten-year period.

Ms. Jana Magoon, Land Use Administrator gave a detailed review of some recent land use permits that had some controversy or were of special note to citizens, e.g., Murray Morgan Bridge and Tacoma Lawn and Tennis Club. In her conclusion, she brought out that the permitting activity for land use permits was down but that this was not just a result of the economy but also the result of the recent Code changes which reduced the number of permits.

Ms. Lisa Spadoni, BLUS, gave an update on the status of some current projects. She highlighted the issuance of permits for the LeMay Car Museum, the proposed mixed-use project in the 6th Avenue mixed-use center, "Mark on the Ave.", the Elks Project in the Tacoma Central mixed-use district, and UW Tacoma. Ms. Spadoni reviewed the current trends seen by her section such as inquiries for medical marijuana dispensary.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. 2011 Annual Amendment Package

Chair Doty called the public hearing to order at 5:06 p.m., and stated that the subject of the hearing was 2011 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code, and described the procedures for receiving oral testimony. He also stated that written comments may be provided in letters, faxes, e-mails, or on the Comment Sheets provided by staff, and submitted by Friday, March 11, 2011, 5:00 p.m. He called on Ms. Donna Stenger to provide a staff presentation.

Ms. Stenger provided a brief overview of the legislative requirements and process for the drafting of the annual amendments and a summary of the following proposed revisions for 2011:

- #2011-01 – 49th and Pine Intensity and Zoning Change
- #2011-02 – Historic Preservation Plan and Code Revisions
- #2011-04 – Water Level of Service Standard
- #2011-05 – Transportation Element
- #2011-06 – Regional Centers & Safety-Oriented Design
- #2011-07 – Park Zoning and Permitting
- #2011-08 – Regulatory Code Refinements
- #2011-09 – SEPA Regulations Amendment

Ms. Stenger also summarized the technical analysis, environmental evaluation and public review process for these proposed revisions, as well as the notification efforts for the public hearing.

Chair Doty called for testimony.

- **Joe Quilici:**
Mr. Quilici submitted and read a letter regarding the Historic Preservation Plan and Code Revisions (Amendment #2011-02). He gave a concise history of the character of Tacoma's neighborhoods and said that the code should protect and preserve neighborhoods. He felt that this amendment will help the neighborhoods preserve their own character and would like to see it pass. He suggested that the amendment language be changed to reflect that conservation districts should supersede other codes.
- **Ted Turner:**
Mr. Turner would like to have his neighborhood added as a conservation district, even though it does not quite meet the current criteria in that it is considered a "stand alone neighborhood" and not abutting a historic site. He would like to make sure that Amendment #2011-02 takes into account neighborhoods such as the one he lives in and that each neighborhood be judged by a Historic Preservation Officer. Mr. Turner also submitted a letter for the record.
- **David Zurfluh:**
Mr. Zurfluh, Chairman of West Slope Neighborhood Coalition, representing some 300 residents, indicated that the residents would like to have their neighborhood designated as a conservation district. He went over the statistics that he felt would make a case for being a part of a conservation district. Mr. Zurfluh also submitted a letter for the record.
- **Tom Rickey:**
Mr. Rickey indicated that the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition would like to be included in the conservation district amendment. Since his neighborhood has been designated a "stand alone neighborhood", they went through the steps to make it an historic district but found that they actually fit more of the criteria for being designated a conservation district. He felt that the current amendment will accomplish the goal of the neighborhood coalition. Mr. Rickey also submitted a letter for the record.
- **Mike Fleming:**
Mr. Fleming indicated that he and his wife wholeheartedly support the implementation of the conservation district amendment. He provided the rationale for why his neighborhood should be allowed to be a part of a conservation district. He also urged the Commissioners to accept the updates for the sake of all the neighborhoods in Tacoma and not just the neighborhood that he lives in. Mr. Fleming also submitted a letter for the record.
- **Jori Adkins:**
Ms. Adkins indicated that the Historic Preservation Plan amendment is an important tool to preserve the character and "heart" of Tacoma and save some of the older buildings in downtown and not let them be torn down as has happened to some buildings.
- **Paul Casey:**
Mr. Casey, representing the applicant for the S. 49th and Pine Intensity and Zoning Change (Amendment #2011-01), indicated that this amendment offers a diverse means of preserving the residential character of the neighborhood. He also submitted a traffic study which indicates that the proposed uses would be more compatible with the neighborhood than the uses currently allowed on the property.

- **Mark Holcomb:**
Mr. Holcomb, in support of the S. 49th and Pine Intensity and Zoning Change, indicated that the site should be changed from two zones to one zone, as proposed. He feels that it is a “good fit” with the area and with the goals of the Growth Management Act.
- **Mark Gary:**
Mr. Gary, MultiCare Health System, indicated their general support for the goals in the proposed Historic Preservation Plan and Code Revisions, but indicated there are several areas that need some scrutiny before adoption. He stated that their attorney felt that some of the language was unorthodox and not clear enough as to what would be considered a conservation district and what is a historic district. Mr. Gary also submitted a letter for the record.
- **Kathy Russell:**
Mrs. Russell stated that her main objection to the passing of the S. 49th and Pine Street amendment was because of traffic concerns. She felt that if the amendment were allowed to pass this would just bring too much traffic. She asked that the City take a better look at this and institute some measures to control this.
- **Victoria Geehan-Shilley:**
Ms. Geehan-Shilley, a resident of many years of Narrowmoor II, would like to see the conservation district pass in order to preserve the quality of life that both she and her family have enjoyed for many years in her unique neighborhood. She felt that the inclusion of Narrowmoor II would act as a model and a symbol of what a conservation district should be. Mr. Geehan-Shilley also submitted a letter for the record.
- **Mark Langford:**
Capt. Langford, Tacoma Police Department, was in support of the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) component of Amendment #2011-06, as a tool for preventing crime in neighborhoods. He believed adequate design will go a long way toward reducing crime.
- **Gary Knudson:**
Mr. Knudson encouraged the adoption of the Historic Preservation Plan as an important policy tool to help preserve and protect neighborhoods, encourage communication between developers and citizens, and preserve commercial buildings. He indicated that Tacoma has many areas that would benefit by passage of this amendment.
- **Donna Buck:**
Ms. Buck, speaking in support of the CPTED component of Amendment #2011-06, saw it as a safety issue. She talked about lighting as one example of CPTED applications that has had a very beneficial effect on fighting crime in her area.
- **Tilinda Grote:**
Ms. Grote was in support of Amendment #2011-06 for the CEPTED features that helps cut down on crime. She has put the principles into practice and feels that this is an important step for the City to move into the future.

- **Jeanine Peterson:**
Ms. Peterson of the Hilltop Action Coalition, a strong advocate for CPTED principles, spoke on crime prevention. She said that even though these may appear to be simple steps they are important in crime prevention and if incorporated properly in design plans would accomplish much good.
- **Art Grant:**
Mr. Grant expressed concerns about the proposed S. 49th and Pine Intensity and Zoning Change. He was mainly worried about the additional young adults that would be brought to the neighborhood with the proposed development of approximately 150 multifamily units. Currently, there is no safe place for all the new teenagers that have moved to the neighborhood to go and that would be worsened with the increased housing proposed. He did not believe the City has the tools and capability to appropriately address that issue.
- **Elly Johnson:**
Ms. Johnson indicated that if the S. 49th and Pine Intensity and Zoning Change is to be approved that there should be traffic calming put in place along South Pine Street. She suggested adding such things as roundabouts, speed bumps, etc., to accomplish this.
- **Tony Abuan:**
Lt. Abuan, Tacoma Police Department, expressed some concerns about any additional park space associated with the S. 49th and Pine Intensity and Zoning Change and Amendment #2011-07 (Park Zoning) because the potential for them to allow gang activity. He noted the negative impact that neighborhoods sometimes have when open spaces are turned into parks, which also become unfunded mandates for enforcement. He would like the Commissioners to consider that point when looking at these amendments.
- **Diane Walkup:**
Ms. Walkup is an enthusiastic supporter of the revisions that are put forth in the Historic Preservation Plan and Code Revisions. She stated that the revisions would only be a positive step in preserving older neighborhoods and act as a tool toward making sure that neighborhood buildings are not made targets for demolition. The proposed components of the amendment will be wonderful tools to help accomplish this.

Chair Doty concluded the public hearing at 6:26 p.m.

GENERAL BUSINESS (continued)

3. Master Program for Shoreline Development

Mr. Stephen Atkinson began by providing the Commission a brief summary of the City Council joint committee meeting of the Environment and Public Works and Economic Development Committees. On February 23rd the joint committee heard public comment on the Preliminary Draft Shoreline Master Program. Mr. Atkinson and Ms. Stenger provided a summary of the comments that were heard at that meeting. Following a brief discussion of the City Council committee meetings, Mr. Atkinson provided an overview of the City's draft Cumulative Impacts Analysis. Mr. Atkinson explained that under the shoreline guidelines, local jurisdictions are required to evaluate and consider cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable future development in the shorelines of the state (WAC 173-26-186(8)(d)). The purpose of evaluating cumulative impacts is to ensure that, when implemented over time, the proposed SMP goals,

policies and regulations will achieve no net loss of shoreline ecological functions from current “baseline” conditions. Mr. Atkinson pointed out that baseline conditions are established and described in the City of Tacoma Shoreline Inventory and Characterization Report (ESA Adolfson, 2007). He then described the methodology and conclusions of that report, including:

- (a) Current circumstances affecting the shorelines and relevant natural processes;
- (b) Reasonably foreseeable future development and use of the shoreline; and
- (c) Beneficial effects of any established regulatory programs under other local, state, and federal laws.

In conclusion, Mr. Atkinson reported that “when the anticipated uses in the shoreline are considered together with the regulations that would apply, in most cases there would be no change from the existing level of ecological functions. The cumulative actions taken over time in accordance with the City’s proposed TSMP are not likely to result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions from existing baseline conditions. In concert with implementation of restoration actions in the city and other on-going state and federal programs, the regulatory provisions of the proposed TSMP would serve to maintain the overall condition of shoreline resources in the city and in certain circumstances improve the overall condition.”

The Commissioner’s asked several follow up questions during the presentation to clarify that the Cumulative Impacts Analysis will not be considered part of the Master Program but a supporting analysis, clarification on impacts from overwater structures and log rafting, as well as providing guidance on some language changes in the text.

COMMUNICATION ITEMS

Chair Doty acknowledged receipt of the following:

1. Public Review Booklet concerning the Proposed Code Revisions for Billboards, prepared for the Planning Commission’s Public Hearing on March 16, 2011

COMMENTS BY LONG-RANGE PLANNING DIVISION

Ms. Stenger made an announcement of the following topics to be discussed at City Council meetings and a reminder of the upcoming public meeting concerning the proposed billboard regulations:

1. “Affordable Housing strategies”, Neighborhoods and Housing Committee, March 7, 4:30 p.m. Room 248;
2. “Billboard Regulations”, Joint Meeting of Economic Development Committee and Environment and Public Works Committee, March 8, 3:00 p.m. Room 248;
3. “Shoreline Master Program Update”, Joint Meeting of Environment and Public Works Committee and Economic Development Committee, March 9, 4:30 p.m. Room 16; and
4. Billboard Regulations Informational Session (in preparation for the Planning Commission’s public hearing on March 16), March 9, 6:00 p.m., City Council Chambers

COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.