

Members

Donald Erickson, Chair
Sean Gaffney, Vice-Chair
Theresa Dusek
Benjamin Fields
Tina Lee
Matthew Nutsch
Erle Thompson
Scott Winship
(vacant)



Minutes

Tacoma Planning Commission

Community and Economic Development Department

Martha Anderson, Interim Director
Peter Huffman, Assistant Director
Charles Solverson, P.E., Building Official

Public Works and Utilities Representatives

Kurtis Kingsolver, Assistant Director/City Engineer, Public Works Department
Heather Pennington, Resource Planning Manager, Tacoma Water
Diane Lachel, Community and Government Relations Manager, Click! Network, Tacoma Power

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(Approved on 7-18-12)

MEETING: Regular Meeting

TIME: Wednesday, June 20, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

PLACE: Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

Members Present: Donald Erickson (Chair), Sean Gaffney (Vice-Chair), Theresa Dusek, Tina Lee, Erle Thompson, Scott Winship

Members Absent: Matthew Nutsch

Staff Present: Brian Boudet, Ian Munce, Lihuang Wung, Noah Yacker(BLUS);
Josh Diekmann (Public Works)

Chair Erickson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. The minutes of the regular meeting on June 6, 2012 were approved as submitted.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Election of Officers for 2012-2013

Chair Erickson and Vice-Chair Gaffney were re-elected as the Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, for the one-year period from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.

2. Code Streamlining 2012

Noah Yacker provided an overview of the draft "Code Streamlining 2012" packet prepared for public review purposes; the packet consisted of proposed revisions to land use regulations concerning increased SEPA review thresholds, expanded allowances for "live-work" and "work-live" uses in Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts, and the addition of a parking exemption for existing buildings in Commercial Districts.



Concerning the increased SEPA review thresholds, the Commissioners understood that the City Council has provided an affirmation for higher thresholds as allowed by State legislation, contingent upon the public review process conducted by the Commission, and that these are interim measures until their adoption into the Washington Administrative Code in December 2012. The Commissioners were concerned that increasing the threshold for parking to 40 spaces may be inconsistent with the policy of discouraging parking in Downtown and Mixed-Use Centers. The Commissioners also suggested that the issues of stormwater, landscaping, light, glare, and notification be properly addressed.

Concerning the expanded allowances for “live-work” and “work-live” uses in Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts, the Commissioners understood that these land use regulations are intended to increase possibilities for converting buildings to mixed-use, and that the proposed regulations will need to be supplemented with additional code provisions to address such issues as building, design, and fire safety. The Commissioners also made some suggestions, such as providing illustrations of live-work/work-live design, considering trial allowances in Downtown first before expanding them citywide, and examining the impacts to the bonus/incentive palette.

Concerning the addition of a parking exemption for existing buildings in Commercial Districts, the Commissioners provided some comments, such as that taking out parking when taking over a building could impact existing and future parking. They also suggested that the table should be footnoted to clarify that existing parking cannot be removed if it is required parking for an adjacent or nearby building.

The Commissioners agreed that the draft “Code Streamlining 2012” packet, as presented, may be distributed for public review and will be subject to modifications after the public hearing process. A vote was passed to that effect. The Commission also set July 18, 2012 as the date for a public hearing.

COMMUNICATION ITEMS

Chair Erickson acknowledged receipt of the following information/announcements:

1. City Council Public Hearing on June 26, 2012, concerning the Proposed Medical Cannabis Land Use Regulations, as recommended by the Planning Commission.
2. Cancellation of the Planning Commission’s meeting on July 4, 2012 (designated national holiday).
3. Applications for amending the Comprehensive Plan and/or Land Use Regulatory Code for 2013 due by June 29, 2012.
4. Planning Commission Tentative Agenda for July 18, 2012.

COMMENTS BY LONG-RANGE PLANNING DIVISION

None.

COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.