



**MINUTES** (Approved 5-7-14)

**TIME:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014, 4:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North  
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Sean Gaffney (Chair), Scott Winship (Vice-Chair), Chris Beale (excused at 5:50 p.m.),  
Donald Erickson, Tina Lee, Alexandria Teague, Erle Thompson  
**ABSENT:** Benjamin Fields, Stephen Wamback

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Gaffney called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

**B. QUORUM CALL**

A quorum was declared.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting on April 2, 2014 were approved as submitted.

**D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

The items on the agenda were switched in order to accommodate the presenters' scheduling conflicts.

**1. 2014 Annual Amendment Package**

Staff members from the Planning Services Division facilitated the Planning Commission's review of the Revised Public Comments and Staff Responses and Suggestions Report (hereinafter referred to as the "Revised Staff Report"), focusing on the changes to the first edition of the report in response to the Commission's requests and inquiries raised at the last meeting on April 2, 2014.

Regarding Application #2014-07 Container Port Element, Ian Munce reported on the follow-up discussion with the Chamber of Commerce to address their concerns that had been brought up after the closing of the comment period on March 21, 2014. In response to the concern of "Transitional Zone" and the ambiguity it might generate, staff proposed changing the designation of "Transitional Zone" to "Industrial/Commercial Buffer Area" as allowed by the legislation. The Commission concurred.

Regarding Application #2014-11 Plan and Code Cleanup, Cheri Gibbons reported on the follow-up discussion with the Master Builders Association concerning the proposed setback and building height requirements for pipestem lots. After some discussions, the Commission expressed general support for maintaining the current proposal. Brian Boudet, Planning Manager, also noted on two other modifications as contained in the Revised Staff Report, i.e., clarifying the Designated Pedestrian Streets within the South Downtown Subarea Plan boundaries, and correcting the boundaries of the Downtown Regional Growth Center. The Commission concurred with the modifications.

Regarding Application #2014-01 Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center, Elliott Barnett presented the following proposed policy, developed with the assistance from the applicant and aimed at linking affordable

housing with the multi-family tax exemption program; the Commission reviewed the language, provided minor modifications (as shown in underlines), and approved it as amended:

*In keeping with the City's focus on providing affordable housing in all City neighborhoods, the Multi-Family Tax Exemption program will become available within the Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center (MUC) upon the adoption of a Development Agreement that establishes the provision for such housing within the MUC. Essential elements of the Development Agreement shall include, but not be limited to, (i) establishing goals for the provision of affordable housing and a diversity of housing choices within the MUC (i.e., range of product types, size and price points, including housing affordable to families that are at or below the Area Median Income); and, (ii) establishing a mechanism for monitoring the fulfillment of such goals (i.e., reporting requirements).*

The Commission also received a briefing from J.J. McCament, representing Point Ruston LLC, on their action plan on achieving affordable housing goals.

Regarding Application #2014-06 Affordable Housing Policies and Regulations, Mr. Barnett clarified the applicability of the proposed street tree requirements for small lots. The Commission had a brief discussion and expressed no further concerns.

Regarding Application #2014-10 Urban Forestry Landscaping Code Update, Mr. Barnett presented the three modifications as contained in the Revised Staff Report, concerning the tree planting credits for self-managed agencies, the tree planting setback requirements for narrow strips, and the planting of native plants in/near habitat corridors. Discussion ensued, and the Commission concurred with the modifications.

Regarding Application #2014-09 Sustainability Code Amendment, Stephen Atkinson presented four alternative approaches to addressing the electric vehicle infrastructure requirements for multifamily housing developments: (1) clarifying the original approach, (2) reducing the amount of applicable parking, (3) requiring conduit only for multifamily, and (4) no minimum requirements. Mr. Atkinson provided an overview of how other jurisdictions are approaching the issue and that there is a disparity between approaches. During the discussion, the Commission expressed comfort with the proposed electric vehicle infrastructure requirements for non-residential developments, but expressed concerns about the applicability to multifamily housing developments. The Commission was concerned about the cost and uncertainty implications (be it for initial installation, add-ons or retrofitting), and the effectiveness of such infrastructure in encouraging future tenants to purchase and use electric vehicles, among others. The Commission discussed the possibility of requiring the conduit only to facilitate the extension of future wiring. However, Commissioner Thompson indicated that even with the approach of requiring conduit only, putting in electric capacity upfront would still be required by code. The Commission requested that staff revise the draft to apply the requirements to non-residential development only, to amend the intent statement to encourage residential uses to plan for electric vehicle infrastructure, and to conduct additional research to determine the possible implications of requiring conduit for a multifamily development.

Also regarding the Sustainability Code Amendment, Mr. Atkinson stated that staff was proposing additional provisions to clarify that short-term bicycle parking serving parks and open space/natural areas may be located and distributed throughout the park to serve multiple access points and outdoor recreation facilities. The Commission concurred.

Lihuang Wung stated that at the next meeting on May 7, 2014, the Commission is expected to complete the review of the 2014 Annual Amendment and consider making a recommendation to the City Council and that staff will prepare a Draft Letter of Recommendation and a Draft Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report for the Commission's review and approval.

## **2. Development and Permitting Activity Report**

Shirley Schultz, Development Services Division, provided a Development and Permitting Activity Report for 2013, highlighting building permits, land use permits, and major projects. Of the 5,365 building permits issued in 2013, 3,420 were residential and 1,945 commercial. Ms. Schultz presented the data in various ways – by number of permits per month, by valuation of permits per month, by comparison of yearly totals between 2006 and 2013, by permit categories, and by geographical locations associated with the permits. For the 256 land use permits issued in 2013, she also displayed the numbers by categories and geographical locations. As to major projects, she highlighted commercial investment projects of over \$500,000 and gave examples of projects occurring within Mixed-Use Centers. Ms. Schultz concluded with a note on the trends of permitting activity and upcoming projects.

## **E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS**

Mr. Wung provided the following information:

- (a) Agenda for the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting, April 23, 2014
- (b) Agenda for the Planning Commission meeting, May 7, 2014
- (c) City Council public hearing on the Draft Hilltop Subarea Plan, April 29, 2014

## **F. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.