



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

DATE: April 9, 2013

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Holly Williams, Dan Dzyacky, Bliss Moore, Nick Cutting, Ellen Moore, Bill Anderson, Phil Coughlan, Karen Hamilton

COMMISSION MEMBERS EXCUSED: Carol Shiflett, Jane Moore

OTHERS PRESENT: Elliott Barnett, Jim Parvey, Alysen Laasko, Kristi Lynett, Bill Smith, Lisa Rennie, Bob Mack, Catherine Taylor

▪ **Approval of the March 12, 2013 Meeting Notes**

The March 12, 2013 meeting notes were approved and adopted.

▪ **Review of the April Agenda**

With the inclusion of an update on the Prairie Line Trail project, the April agenda was approved.

▪ **Prairie Line Trail Update – Elliott Barnett**

The Prairie Line Trail is a mile-long corridor of rail that runs through downtown Tacoma. The City's project area starts at South 25th Street (brewery district); runs through the UWT campus; crosses Pacific Avenue and runs in-between the Tacoma Art Museum and United Way Building; then heads towards the water via the 15th Street vehicular ramp.

Between 1873 and 2003, this area was an active rail corridor; the first transcontinental rail connection to the Puget Sound. Because of the gentle grade it is conducive for bikes and pedestrians, and creates the opportunity to provide an alternative to the straight up-the hill routes that characterize downtown. It is also an opportunity to take one of the signature spaces of downtown and turn it into a public space.

This project also affords a great opportunity to do some stormwater improvements. UWT is planning their section of the trail, and in coordination with the City is cleaning a huge section of the water.

Planning and Development staff is in the middle of the conceptual design for the project. Between March and early May, their staff will be meeting with various City groups to solicit input/comments on items they should be looking at in this next version of the design. In late May, staff will finalize the conceptual design, which will then go to Council study session in early June. Following June's study session, the final design will be submitted to engineering staff.

Phil will start a draft letter of support to Planning and Development Services for the Prairie Line Trail project and forward to members for additional input.

▪ **Mandatory Recycling Research Discussion – Alysen Laasko**

Ms. Laasko presented a brief overview on the basic matrix of her mandatory recycling research, which was reported in-depth at the March meeting. The main focus of the overview is to allow the

members the opportunity to ask questions in order to determine if there are any next steps for taking the research forward.

A total of 12 cities were confirmed to have mandatory recycling; from those, six cities were actually researched (Honolulu, Portland, San Antonio, San Diego, Seattle, San Francisco).

- Honolulu had the earliest mandate (1990) and are the most unique; they've actually had six separate laws
- Portland had their first commercial mandate in 1997 and updated in 2008; recycling must be offered to multi-family; very little enforcement or tracking
- San Antonio recently had a service requirement put in-place (2012); recycling must be offered to multi-family; recycling rate was 36% - program too new for post-recycling rate
- San Diego (2008); recycling rate was 60% - post-recycling is 68%; all sectors must recycle; there is enforcement, and have given out the most fines (#30)
- Seattle has given out fines to multi-family; all sectors must recycle
- San Francisco offers recycling and composting for all sectors; currently no enforcement since trying to bring everyone under composting

It was suggested to get a subgroup together to look at a combination of options that might be available. From there, come up with some recommendations for discussion and forward those as policy recommendations to Council. As part of the subgroup, members would discuss items the City is currently doing and where the gaps might be that something of a mandatory nature can help to fill. The subgroup consists of Phil, Bliss, Nick, and Holly, with coordination through Environmental Services staff.

■ **Green Code Discussion – Kristin Lynett**

The discussion was around the regional green code development process that Tacoma participated in. Staff determined that TPU Water was moving forward with their portion, and that the mandatory Waste Management Plan was waiting for input from Environmental Services. There was further discussion about possible plans to do a voluntary Waste Management Plan utilizing Green Halo as an online backup for that effort. The suggestion was made about providing some incentive so that contractors would want to do the voluntary Waste Management Plan. City staff will want to meet with the MBA prior to implementation. A request was made for volunteers to look at the output.

■ **Environmental Services Update – Jim Parvey**

Solid Waste is looking at converting their fleet to compressed natural gas (CNG). The City is trying to partner with PSE to develop a utility rate for them to provide CNG to the landfill utility. Currently, if the City were to purchase gas from PSE, they would have to put in their own compressor facility and operate and maintain that. The City is about 90% to completing the design of a time-fill station that would be used to fill the garbage trucks in the evening. Fleet vehicles will be switched over gradually. There is a 10-year replacement cycle for refuse trucks, and as trucks come off that cycle they would be replaced with CNG trucks. The preliminary schedule: 10 trucks 2013-2014; 17 trucks 2015-2016; 24 trucks 2017-2018; convert everything over (33 trucks) 2019-2020, which includes the long-haul vehicles that go to LRI.

The Organics-to Energy program ties in with diverting food waste and organic waste from the landfill and processing it. The City is in the early stages of a pilot study where they will take garbage from commercial facilities to the landfill, run it through processing equipment, then ship it by tanker truck to the Central Treatment Plant twice a week for injection into the digesters. The processing equipment is currently being built and is expected to arrive in May; the pilot study will begin in June. One of the benefits is that it will increase the City's biogas production. Meanwhile, staff is looking at the beneficial uses for biogas and are exploring two options: 1) scrub the gas and put it in the PSE pipeline; or 2) find an operator (there are a couple of potential sites on the tideflats) that would want to provide CNG for trucks, then work with PSE for them to supply gas to that facility, the City would then add their gas to the gas coming from PSE.

Under the Wapato Healthy Homes project, the City has partnered with InSinkErator that has come out with a food grinder which the City will install in 100 Wapato area homes as a study on composition of waste.

▪ **STAR Sustainability Assessment Update – Kristin Lynett**

By April 25, staff will have approximately 90% of the assessment completed. Of all the categories, there may be one to four Outcomes but the City is doing really well on all the Actions. The deficiency of Outcomes is because the data is not necessarily being tracked; additional data collection is needed.

Members previously discussed having a joint commission meeting re: STAR. On behalf of the STC, staff will send out a joint meeting invitation to other City Commissions for Thursday, April 25, 5:30 to 7:00 pm. A draft agenda will go out to members.

▪ **2014 Commission Work Plan – Kristin Lynett**

City staff comments

There are some general expectations from Council and management about what Commissions should be doing. There are also some expectations of members on what they want to get out of, and what they want to bring to, the Commission and the work for the City. Staff would like to feel that members are aware of what theirs or others expectations are, and are comfortable with those expectations.

Co-chair comments

If the Commission chooses to be the driver of sustainability in the City, it will require members to meet more than once a month. It is important for members to review information that staff provides, think about information that they want from staff, and consider it in a context that is going to help the Commission inform policy recommendations, then move and act on those.

Member comments

- It is difficult to work through multiple emails to interpret what tasks are being requested and/or how much time it may take to accomplish given tasks.
- It would be helpful if email subject lines included “action required” to better draw attention.
- Members are more apt to anxiously participate in tasks where their strengths are highlighted.
- Return to having subcommittees. Though it takes additional time, subcommittees may be a way to help focus efficient use of time, as well as areas of interest and skill.

▪ **Staff Updates**

There were no staff updates

▪ **Public Comment**

There was no public comment

▪ **Objectives for Next Meeting**

- STAR Sustainability Assessment and
- 2014 Commission Work Plan

▪ **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, May 14, 2013, 3:30 to 5:30 pm, Tacoma Municipal Building North, 733 Market Street, Room 16.