



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

Date: January 12, 2016

Commission Members Present: Chrissy Cooley, Felicity Devlin, Sarah Chessman, Nick Cutting, Alyssa Illich, Philip Coughlan, Peter Hickman

Commission Members Excused: Jeff Bessmer, Ellen Moore, Rus Higley, Agnes Pate

Others Present: Kristin Lynett, Emily Watts, Lowell Wyse, Jim Parvey, Ron Stuart, Ron Owes

- **Roll Call**
 - The meeting was called to order at 3:32 pm.
- **Approval of December 8, 2015 Meeting Notes**
 - The December meeting notes were approved with no changes.
- **Review of January Agenda**
 - The January agenda was approved previous to an item added during the meeting.
 - Potential Topics for 2016 STC Work Plan
- **Methanol Plan EIS Scoping Process- Ian Munce, Planning and Development Department**
 - Ian Munce gave a summary of the process moving forward with the methanol plant EIS scoping project. The project does not qualify for federal review or direct state government review, so delegation to conduct the SEPA has been given to the City of Tacoma, as no other agencies wanted to take it on.
 - The first step is scoping in order to identify key issues as presented by key stakeholders and the public during the comment period which ends February 17th. There have already been comments from East Tacoma and there will be two public meetings.
 - A draft EIS should be completed by a third party consulting firm this summer; after which there will be time for further public comment via one to two public hearings; then a final EIS should be ready by the end of 2016.
 - It was asked who the third party is that will be hired. It is from a number of big name groups that we wouldn't be surprised to hear would be conducting it.
 - It was asked if the pipeline project would have a separate process. This is a difficult question to answer and is unclear at this time.
 - Audience member Ron Owes introduced himself as a resident of Tacoma who lives nearby and smells a refinery and pulp mill already. He is concerned about the smell this will pose. He also asked how public comment will be received and how they are interacting with the public. Is it only through the internet? It was made clear that under the webpage there is a "hot topics" section that is updated with information on the project as we move forward. It also contains all of the scoping and public meeting details.

- A question was asked about why FERC has jurisdiction. It is unclear at this time whether they do or not – this is yet to be determined.
- Mr. Owes asked whether or not the ships from the methanol plant will be going to China. It was brought up that the shipping is a different issue. The permitting process on the City's side has to do with the physical terminal space itself. Actual permitting for shipping is done by the Coast Guard. However, shipping concerns can still be included in the EIS if it is found to be an issue during the scoping process.
- Jim Parvey asked if the EIS is about getting all the facts about the issue on the table. Ian replied that yes, the EIS serves this purpose.
- An audience member asked if the methanol plant will be held up to the standards in the Tacoma Environmental Action Plan. Ian explained that all of the issues are being brought up to the public to the best of their ability. It is up to the public to bring up any issues that the City has missed.
- Kristi Lynett asked how many people are expected to attend the public meeting. Ian explained that the convention center is capable of holding 400 people and 1,300 notices were sent out in Tacoma. They will insist on a three minute comment period for each person, however, people can submit as much comment as they want on the website until February 17th.
- It was mentioned that Northeast Tacoma was identified as being closely affected. Why that area? Ian explained that it was the area closest to the site. They did their best to get word out not only that area but as much of Tacoma as possible. It was then asked what else has been done as to outreach. Ian explained that nothing other than newspaper ads and the website.
- It was asked if there would be people to translate the public comment into concerns that are included during the scoping period. Ian explained that the EIS will be a guiding document. They take public comment until February 17th then after the draft EIS document is created there will be further comment at public hearings.
- It was asked whether you could put stipulations in the proposal for the methanol plant. Ian explained that the EIS could propose either *not* building the plant, building the plant, or building the plant on a different scale. There are options to include explanation for changes due to issues in stormwater, air pollution, etc.

- **Environmental Action Plan Update**

- Kristi introduced the Environmental Action Plan updates stating that IPS is under the impression that the STC is very involved and knowledgeable about the action items. It is recommended that all Commission members review and have good understanding of them.
- The EAP will be presented to IPS on January 27th at 4:30pm in TMB North Rm 16. A summary will be presented and match what was on the website where we received 90 comments; our consultants are finalizing the results.
- It is recommended that you pick your top priority action because Councilman Mello has asked about it. He wants to know what the STC believes to be the highest priority because all 67 actions will not be funded, as we have a biennium budget. We will need to identify which actions will need budget funding requests for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.
- For each action, a budget and timeframe will need to be developed.
- It was noted that it's difficult to understand which actions are just policy and which require funding.
- All 67 actions could end up in the five-year plan, but it is necessary to identify which should happen in the first two to three years.
- The STC noted that their decision in identifying which was the highest priority in each section was affected by their knowledge of what was already on track and being addressed.
- Just because an action wasn't voted for doesn't mean it isn't important or that effort to see it will be abandoned.
- It was noted that some actions could possibly be combined or clumped together. Some were more specific than others and multiple items could be addressed under a broader action title.
- It was noted that sources of funding varies for each action, so voting for one action doesn't necessarily mean you're taking funding from a different action.
- Chrissy noted that at the third climate conversation people were confused on what gleaning meant but once the definition was explained, it was generally agreed this was a good idea. There is concern that people taking the survey online might not know what it means.
- Phil mentioned his firm helped create some of the things under the climate resiliency and risk assessment. He would like to emphasize the importance of the Puyallup River flood planning as it poses such a high risk. He believes the City should advocate to those upstream, and that there is room for improvement for collaborative efforts.

- Felicity mentioned that many of the action items felt non-negotiable and that they should be necessary actions regardless of the plan.
- Jim Parvey noted that some things may not be listed or does not have specifics included but to remember that this is a living document.

Environmental Action Plan Targets

- Not all of the data is yet included. The data in red has an equity lens.
- Kristi and Jim have a meeting at TPU to finalize the kWh usage.
- It was asked whether existing buildings and new construction were both included.
- It was asked if for #2, they were quantifying funding or savings. It is important to understand whether the level of funding would be maintained. Kristi and Jim will look into this.
- It was noted that the numbers were a bit confusing. For example, the goal is to decrease waste generation by .5 not decrease waste generation to .5. It might be better to be consistent but sometimes using a % is better, sometimes using the number is better. They are working on getting infographics.
- The goal to maintain the number of solids in stormwater was questioned as to whether it included catch basins or just pipes. Jim believes it is probably both.
- The climate preparation figures are more of yes or no questions as to whether the actions have been completed.
- Is it possible to reword the tree canopy goal so as to incentivize both vulnerable and non-vulnerable areas? Jim believes it could be reworded to include both.
- It was asked whether they could include more underground electric lines so that larger trees could be planted and increase tree canopies. This could be added to the cost benefit model and included in the life cycle.
- Lowell needs to check whether buildings that had energy star/LEED certification were included or only those with current certifications are included.
- Councilman Mello has requested a carbon budget, but this won't be ready by the end of the month; most likely to be ready by the end of the year. He would also like to see Tacoma be completely carbon neutral. It is Kristi's opinion that these actions will get us to the 40% reduction rate from the 1999 levels, but that is all.
- It was highly recommended that all STC members attend the 4:00 pm, February 27th IPS meeting. There will be two new IPS members present, Councilman Robert Thoms and Councilman Conor McCarthy.

• **Subcommittee Report-Outs**

Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee

- Subcommittee has been discontinued.

Electric Vehicles Subcommittee

- There was no update from this subcommittee. Jim did however note that there is still work to be done in this area with regard to addressing charging electric vehicles in the right of way (public/private).

Outreach and Education Subcommittee

- Current efforts are related to responsible bags.

Responsible Bags Subcommittee

- The world record-setting event is happening January 23rd and 24th. There will be training workshops for site coordinators and supplies are being gathered. It is highly encouraged that all members attend and help spread awareness through outreach. To participate you don't need to know how to sew.
- The disposable bag survey closes on Friday, January 15th. Encourage people you know to take the survey; so far we've received over 1,700 replies.
- February 24th we'll be sharing the bag results with IPS and giving staff recommendations.

Green Building Subcommittee

- There was no update from this subcommittee.

Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee

- There was no update from this subcommittee.

- **Possible Topics for 2016 STC Work Plan**

- Phil would like to ensure that disposable plastics are included, not just disposable bags. It will be included for discussion later in the year. Jim noted that the Materials Management Plan may address some of this topic.
- Chrissy would like to ensure that something on equity is included. Perhaps getting someone who could speak on this topic and give the group a crash course on environmental justice.
- Nick would like to note that the group should be interacting with other commissions. Perhaps they should all gather together because at the moment it feels disjointed. It'd be beneficial to get a better sense of the number of people who volunteer their time with commissions; there may be people in other commissions who could talk on topics we'd like to discuss, such as equity.
- STC members are encouraged to visit other commissions and introduce themselves. We could even create a commission exchange program where information and a commission staff are sent to a different commission to give a presentation. There could even be a work party in the summer or on Green Tacoma Day or Earth Day.
- Chrissy mentioned the work being done on the restaurant scorecards and buying local. Restaurant scorecards identify businesses that purchase locally, such as the Sustainable Connections Program in Bellingham. Phil noted that the program could be modeled on an award program and the scorecard used to see if they qualify. However, Jim made sure to note that we have restrictions on how we can promote businesses; it could tie-in with community and economic development.
- Need to make sure there wasn't anything on last year's work plan that didn't make it.

- **Commission Rules of Procedure Review**

- The Commission rules act as bylaws for the group. They were adopted on February 10, 2015 after being updated.
- Now is the time for election of new officers and feedback on current bylaws.
- Everyone agrees with the bylaws and responsibilities as set forth for officer, chair and vice chair.
- Change the duties of an officer: Add/replace City Climate Action Plan to City Sustainability Policies.
- Purpose: Update to encompass more than Climate Action Plan.
- Updates to Commission member's expectations and guidelines: Change IA to "by readying" and "prepare for meeting by receiving all provided materials and other outside committee meetings as appropriate."
- Duties: The time commitment is not spelled out in the bylaws; include four to eight hours a month.
- Clarify budget recommendations: Outline which are priorities, given the biennium budget.
- There is a clause in the bylaws about attendance, as some people have missed meetings. It was noted that we have to ask IPS for interims, but a position must be open for this to occur. Three consecutive unexcused absences are grounds for removal from the Commission. The motion to remove the word "consecutive" from the bylaws has passed. Three unexcused absences in a 12-month period are grounds for removal from the Commission.
- Nick will contact those who may not be returning to the Commission while Agnes will remain the student representative.
- It was noted that it is difficult for IPS to respond to STC questions about positions.
- Nominations for the chair position include Chrissy and Nick. Chrissy accepts the nomination but Nick is unsure about whether he will or will not accept the nomination.
- It was questioned whether chair and vice chair positions should be kept or switched to co-chairs like last year. With co-chairs there are two names on outgoing documents and gives a bit more impact.
- Nominations have been tabled until the next meeting.

- **Staff Updates**

Kristi Lynett

- There are three new employees joining the Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability. A six-month AmeriCorps member at EnviroHouse, a new college intern to replace Lowell Wyse and a new urban forestry supervisor.
- The South Sound Sustainability Expo is still moving forward. Some of the sponsors include the Port of Tacoma and Pierce Transit. There will be two workshop areas, a bigger media swap, a forum on sustainability tips, two kids' corner areas and a "p.s. I love you" octopus mascot. The giant stuffed octopus will stick to the convention center window and there will be a cardboard octopus pledge activity. Participants will take their picture as the octopus, take a photo, and have a tear away pledge

sheet they take with them; there is a new screen print. Next year is the 10th anniversary of the Expo and thoughts right now are to expand to Tollefson Plaza.

Jim Parvey

- Jim noted he has been invited to speak to several City groups on the forestry 30x30 goals.

- **Public Comment**

- Ron Owes shared his comments and noted that urban forestry should integrate birds and fish because of how canopy affects the stream temperature. There are many people along the streams in Tacoma that enjoy the wildlife and one could incorporate how much canopy is needed along the water to mitigate global warming. He also noted that earthquakes have a large impact on saturated soil which is a problem here in WA with large rains, and urban forestry should also take this into account. Ron also noted that Tacoma should plan for an increased water level, meaning increased saturation of the soil. Earthquake preparation should be a priority.

- **Objectives for Next Meeting**

- Review disposable bag survey results.
- Phil will speak to the Material Management Plan.
- Finalize the work plan

- **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 pm.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, February 9, 2016, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 9th Floor Visibility Center.