



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

Date: April 14, 2015

Commission Members Present: Ken Campbell, Sarah Chessman, Chrissy Cooley, Ellen Moore, Felicity Devlin, Alyssa Ilich, Agnes Pate, Holly Williams

Commission Members Excused: Phil Coughlan, Nick Cutting, Karen Hamilton

Others Present: Jim Parvey, Emily Campbell, Kristin Lynett, Laura Wisdom, Steven Atkinson

- **Roll Call**
- **Approval of March 10, 2015 Meeting Notes**

The March notes were approved.

- **Review of April Agenda**
- The April agenda was approved.

- **Subcommittee Report-Outs**

Materials Management Subcommittee

- The Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS) is beginning the Disposable Bag Ordinance work plan, and have started to develop content for a City webpage and feedback survey. The webpage will include material from the 1-page fact sheet that the STC produced. OEPS hopes the webpage will launch in May 2015.
- Members of the Commission can let people know about the survey opportunity and assist in giving presentations and updates to Tacoma business districts in May 2015.
- OEPS plans to review community feedback gleaned from the survey at the June Commission meeting, and to use that meeting as an opportunity for the community to give further input on the possible ordinance. The June 10th Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) Committee meeting will be another opportunity for members of the public to provide input.
- Kristin reached out to the business district liaisons about the upcoming disposable bag presentations, but has not yet received responses.

Outreach Subcommittee

- Sarah reported that the committee has connected with neighborhood councils, and that the outreach event in May will have donuts.
- Felicity is collecting material donations from Commission members prior to the event.
- The Commission wants to have the Sustainability App Cards (produced for the Sustainability Expo) to distribute at the May event.

Electric Vehicles

- Several stakeholders were present at the Vision-to-Action planning meeting last Friday (4/10). A positive outlook was given from the funding perspective. The initially-set date of June 24th for the Electric Vehicle event no longer works because of a conflicting event; the Commission is looking at June 17th as a possible new date.
- **Comprehensive Plan Update Presentation—Steven Atkinson, Planning Division**
 - Steven Atkinson gave a presentation updating the Commission on the City's Comprehensive Plan.
 - Background: Every jurisdiction is required to have a Comprehensive Plan. This Plan looks at 2040 projections, strives to accommodate growth, and aims to build bridges between things such as land use, transportation, and economic development.
 - Multi-county planning policies try to drive growth into already developed urban areas. Downtown Tacoma and the Tacoma Mall are designated growth areas, and Tacoma's growth is expected to add 127,000 residence and 90,000 jobs by 2040 (growth rate of 1.6%).
 - A Commissioner asked if the Comprehensive Plan will include a Climate Adaptation Plan/Study, and Kristin informed that Cascadia Consulting is currently conducting a climate risk assessment for the City.
 - Steve explained that the Plan addresses sustainability under the categories of land use (by supporting compact, complete communities), transportation (by providing multi-modal options), housing (denser housing choices), parks and open space and economic development. The Plan is also looking to take on an ecosystem services standpoint, thus taking into account multiple benefits of the natural environment such as aesthetics, recreational opportunities, air and water quality, and fishing economy.
 - The City will consider the best available science in the Plan, including updates regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation, important habitat corridors and steep slopes. The City is looking to put in place more regulations on management of these resources, especially to address a gap in open space management policy and open space site development standards.
 - Steve would like to see critical issues and policy approaches identified that utilize the natural boundaries of Tacoma's nine watershed basins.
 - The City is starting to develop and utilize a new designation system that identifies open space classifications that are more meaningful than previous low-medium and high-density classifications.
 - Previously, the Comprehensive Plan included actions but didn't clearly indicate where the resources for implementation should come from. The City's upcoming Environmental Action Plan provides an opportunity to be more specific with these actions.
 - Steve encouraged Commission members to provide input on these policy elements. Other opportunities for Commission member's input on the Plan include the upcoming community workshops—4/16, 6-8pm at Stadium High School and 4/23, 6pm at the Tacoma Nature Center—and at a Public Hearing in August/September. In addition to looking at the draft elements of the Comprehensive Plan, Commissioners are also encouraged to look at the old Open Space Plan. They may also take the tacHOMEa Survey which is designed to gather information about neighborhood housing to inform policy, and see if specific design standards should be applied to different neighborhoods around the City.
- **Discussion and Recommendations on Transportation Master Plan**
 - Jennifer Kammerzell gave a presentation on the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) at the March STC meeting. It would be very timely for the STC to submit comments on the TMP this month. Kristin is looking for a consensus on comments to send to the IPS Committee, and said that a letter to IPS can be drafted after this meeting. She iterated that providing input on the TMP is part of the STC workplan. Kristin clarified that Commission members can provide line-item comments, policy comments, and general feedback, and that IPS may ask if the Commission thinks the TMP sets adequate sustainability goals and targets.
 - The group reviewed the 1-page summary of the TMP.

- Commission member's comments and questions included:
 - Questioned the discrepancy between the estimate of Tacoma's projected population growth provided by Steven Atkinson in Public Works, and the estimate provided in the TMP.
 - Commented that the TMP seems to mark a change in direction from only worrying about transporting cars quickly, to prioritizing more modes of travel, especially sustainable modes like walking, biking and transit. The member was glad to see the green transportation hierarchy in the Plan.
 - Inquired about electric vehicles (EVs) in the Plan, and asked if they were aware of the STC EV Subcommittee's efforts to inform stakeholders and to inform EV codes. It was clarified that the TMP doesn't include language on code changes, though the Plan leaves room for improvement of such codes.
 - Likes that roads running through neighborhood centers don't seem to emphasize automobiles, making it more comfortable for walking and biking.
 - Wondered how involved Pierce Transit is in informing future transit routes. Kristin said that the Transportation Commission chair works with Pierce Transit, so they are likely heavily engaged. Downtown On the Go representative Laura Wisdom explained her understanding that transit priorities don't mean that those routes must be travelled by buses.
 - The group suggested focusing more on light rail and bus, rather than EVs, because it will impact more people and because light rail has been so successful in other cities.
 - Questioned where funding would come from for infrastructure improvements.
 - Overall, the STC was impressed by the Plan. Kristin will check about the projected population discrepancy.
 - Kristin mentioned her comments on TMP performance measures and targets that ensure the City meets its transportation goals. The group looked at the Existing and Recommended Commute Trip Mode Split table of the document which projects to 2030, and Laura explained that Downtown On the Go only has Commute Trip Reduction goals through 2015.
- **Retreat Discussion; Clarity and Consensus on Goals, Outcomes and Timeframe**
 - A Doodle Poll was sent out and all but one person can make the retreat on June 30th, starting at 4pm and lasting for 3-4 hours. Three new STC members will be arriving next month, so the STC will need to wait until they start to determine when the retreat will be held.
 - Kristin highlighted that it is good for any group to review their purpose, accomplishments, successes and challenges, and to think about how they can be more effective in meeting their purpose. She reviewed some of the Commission member's ideas about the purpose of the retreat. These included: understand the use of subcommittees; understand the ways to fulfill the STC's purpose; review the role of the STC as a whole and as individual members; develop a sense of comradery and solidarity; understand expectations and limitations; understand the process of how they can make change with Council and the City.
 - The group agreed that having an outside facilitator would be best. Members can make recommendations about who this person will be. One member recommended Ms. Quan. Kristin said that it may be possible to utilize someone who recently completed the facilitator training put on by the Puyallup Watershed Initiative.
 - Kristin suggested creating a subcommittee to meet with the facilitator to develop an agenda for the retreat. Felicity offered to be on the subcommittee if it is formed. A Commission member suggested just providing the facilitator with the group's feedback regarding the purpose of the retreat, rather than having a special meeting. Kristin said they may have a draft agenda to share at the June STC meeting. Jim encouraged members to submit their goals for the retreat to shape the session, if they haven't done so already.
 - A Commission member asked if Council is open to changes of the STC's accepted roles and responsibilities. Kristin said that Council has pretty clear needs, though the STC may create a resolution or amend bylaws. Jim said that bylaw changes are reserved for the end of the year, though the group can start thinking about this.

- STC feels that Council input at the retreat would be useful, and that it would be good to meet the people they are advising. Kristin stated that Council Member Mello previously expressed interest in the retreat, and that Council and IPS members can be invited to the retreat, though STC members also have the opportunity to meet these individuals at their meetings.
 - The Center for Urban Waters building is a potential location for the retreat.
- **Staff Update**
 - Kristin gave a staff update that she and Emily Campbell will be going to the IPS Committee meeting next Wednesday to talk about bees and pollinators, as requested by Council Member Walker who wanted to know about bee health, education and resources that are available.
 - Agnes will receive the Earth Day Proclamation at the Council meeting next Tuesday at 8pm.
 - Urban Forestry is moving into the Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability. There will be a new position for Urban Forestry. There will be code changes for how trees are managed in the City. Open space is now mostly managed by Environmental Services.
 - The Environmental Action Plan Request for Proposal is out, and there should be progress on this in May.
 - Ken Campbell announced that this was his last meeting.
 - **Public Comment**
 - Laura Wisdom spoke as a representative of Downtown On the Go (DOTG) – a transportation management and advocacy organization in downtown Tacoma. DOTG’s Board wrote a letter in response to the Transportation Master Plan. The letter included concerns about making multimodal transportation planning a priority. The letter also provided feedback that encouraged bolstering the implementation section to ensure the Plan will be carried out. She encouraged the STC to look at the implementation and prioritization of multimodal transportation section if they share these concerns.
 - **Objectives for Next Meeting**
 - STC would like an update from TPU about energy benchmarking and reporting.
 - There may be an update from the Integrated Resource Planning group.
 - May include discussion about STC members acting as messengers about the disposable bag ordinance – STC requested help from the City in making contact with the neighborhood councils as they often struggle with getting on the meeting agendas.
 - STC would like an update about the Green Events Program, including any trends and feedback.
 - STC is looking forward to an update on the Sustainable Materials Management Plan and the waste characterization study results.
 - Subcommittee report outs should be included.
 - **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, May 12, 2015, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 9th Floor Visibility Center.