



**MINUTES** (Approved on 8-17-16)

**TIME:** Wednesday, July 20, 2016, 4:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North  
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Chris Beale (Chair), Stephen Wamback (Vice-Chair), Meredith Neal, Anna Petersen,  
Brett Santhuff, Dorian Waller, Scott Winship  
**ABSENT:** Jeff McInnis

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL**

Chair Beale called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. A quorum was declared.

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES OF JULY 6, 2016**

The agenda was approved. The minutes of the regular meeting on July 6, 2016 were reviewed and approved as submitted.

**C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No members of the public came forward to provide comments.

**D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. Planning Commission's Annual Report for 2015-2016 and Planning Work Program for 2016 - 2018.**

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, provided a review of the Annual Report for the Planning Commission, which reported the accomplishments of the Commission over the previous twelve months. He noted that according to the Tacoma Municipal Code, Chapter 13.02, they were required to provide the Annual Report to the City Council. Mr. Wung reviewed accomplishments of the past twelve months including Live-work/Work-live Code Amendments; Billboard Regulations which had included the formation of a task force for a series of intensive meetings; Marijuana Regulations; the Capital Facilities Program which had been in response to a request from the Commission for an improved process with the opportunity for feedback; and the 2015 and 2016 Annual Amendments. They had also been recognized by the State with the Lifetime of GMA Achievement Award and would be receiving a Healthy Communities Award from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. Commissioner Petersen provided a minor correction on page 4 of the Annual Report. Commissioner Santhuff recommended some language clarification changes on page 5.

The Draft Planning Work Program for 2016-2018 was discussed. Mr. Wung noted that the projects broke into three categories: items for the 2017-2018 Annual Amendment, ongoing and emerging planning issues, and regional and cross-jurisdictional issues. He reported that the 2017-2018 Annual Amendment would be the first time using the new biannual process and that they would begin to accept applications from private and public entities in March 2017. Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division Manager, commented that with the switch to a two year cycle they would be shifting to focus on implementation components such as the Land Use Designations and area-wide rezones. They would also need to look at the Commercial zoning categories and what makes sense as they proceed with proactive rezoning. Other items to be addressed included open space, landscaping, steep slopes, and the area around Cheney stadium.

Ongoing planning issues were discussed. Mr. Boudet reviewed that items for the draft work program included the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan, the draft of which would be presented to the Commission in the coming months; the Residential Infill Pilot program where the next step was to work on the design guidelines and the administrative processes associated with it; the 20 minute neighborhood baseline analysis, which was one of the specific goals in the Comprehensive Plan for the 20 minute neighborhood concept; Environmental/Urban Forestry issues including the steep slopes issue and an effort to better define open space designations on private property; the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program review, which would track the program and discuss whether the City was receiving the maximum benefit from it; the sign code update which would make sure that the sign code was content neutral; and the Historic Preservation demolition review item.

Regional and cross-jurisdictional issues were discussed. Mr. Boudet commented that the Port/Tideflats Area Land Use Review would recognize community interest in future development in the area, the need for a possible special committee to examine issues, and consideration for a subarea plan. The Joint Land Use Study implementation would look at airport compatibility with McChord Field to address concerns about land uses in the airport's crash zone.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

- Chair Beale asked if the City Council would be able to approve the work program before the next meeting. Mr. Boudet responded that they would be going to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee for concurrence on the draft work program.
- Vice-Chair Wamback recommended, as an item for the work program, a one year check in on marijuana regulations to see if they were working as intended.
- Vice-Chair Wamback suggested that as part of an effort to reach out to neighborhoods earlier they should consider proactively initiating some joint meetings with neighborhood councils, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, or the Transportation Commission. Commissioner Waller added that they should also discuss which methods of public engagement were working and why.
- Commissioner Neal asked if the Commission would have any input on prioritization of items on the work program. Mr. Boudet responded that staff could pass along a message to the City Council. Chair Beale suggested communicating that the Urban Design Program had been a strong recommendation of the Commission.
- Vice-Chair Wamback commented that as they get into more depth on the work plan they should consider whether it would be beneficial to break into smaller work groups to do more intensive work that would be reported to the full Commission.

Mr. Boudet reviewed the modifications including a one year marijuana regulations review and a discussion of possible joint meetings with the Community Council and other Commissions. Vice-Chair Wamback motioned to approve the report and forward it on to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee as amended through their discussion. Commissioner Waller seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **2. Sound Transit Update**

Chelsea Levy, Sound Transit, provided an overview of the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) ballot measure and some broader context on Sound Transit. Ms. Levy reviewed that Sound Transit was the regional transit authority in the Central Puget Sound Region with their district spanning from Everett to DuPont. She noted that they work with 52 different cities, providing opportunities to benefit from the 3 types of service for 3 million people. Ms. Levy reported that they provided two types of light rail in Tacoma: the current Tacoma Link and the future Central Link. They also operated Sounder Commuter Rail with the Sounder South operating between Lakewood and south Seattle. Ms. Levy reviewed that they had been working on the ST3 proposal for 3 years with many rounds of public comment and with the long range plan having been adopted in 2014. In the 2015 State legislative session they were granted 3 types of taxing authority to fund the ST3 package. Since the end of 2015 they had been developing the system plan which included all projects in the ST3 plan.

Eric Chipps, Sound Transit, discussed the projects from the ST3 plan, highlighting the projects proposed for Pierce County and Tacoma. Mr. Chipps discussed a map that showed the extent of the proposed

projects for bus, light rail, and commuter rail. He highlighted light rail extensions that would double the size of the system from ST2. He noted expansions and access improvements for the Sound South Commuter Rail system including extending the system from Lakewood to DuPont. Mr. Chipps discussed improvements for the Bus Rapid Transit system including projects to help buses move faster across the freeway system. He discussed how the Tacoma Link was planned to extend to Tacoma Community College. He commented that all of the proposed projects were “representative projects” to aid in cost estimates and that if ST3 passes they would restart the scoping process with the input of local jurisdictions. Ms. Levy noted that it was a 25 year plan with a 58 billion dollar package. She added that they had looked at their financial plan and realized some additional bonding capacity which would allow some of the light rail projects to complete earlier.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

- Commissioner Winship asked what would be needed to accelerate the projects further. Ms. Levy responded that the size of the projects alone required a great deal of time, but there could be opportunities to accelerate the process in the future.
- Chair Beale asked how the decision to extend light rail to TCC instead of the Tacoma Mall had been reached. Ms. Levy responded that the board had made the decision to recommend the group of projects based on public feedback. Mr. Chipps added that the extension to TCC had been proposed earlier during the update to the long range plan.
- Commissioner Santhuff asked if the language in the ST3 package was about serving Downtown with the Central Link or if the corridor study was more about the Dome to the Mall. Mr. Chipps responded that it was more about serving Downtown, but that they didn't just consider light rail, but also bus rapid transit.
- Commissioner Santhuff asked what the current vision was for the station at the Tacoma Dome. Ms. Levy responded that details wouldn't be worked on until they had a voter approved project.
- Commissioner Santhuff noted that they had discussed appropriate zonings to support a potential station along 19<sup>th</sup> Street near Cheney Stadium and that they would be interested in any information on what the extension would be so they could plan the zoning accordingly.
- Commissioner Santhuff asked if there was a possibility for a direct access HOV connection to the Tacoma Mall area. Mr. Chips responded that the section of I-5 near the Mall was planned for an HOV lane, but did not yet have the funding.
- Commissioner Santhuff asked if a potential ST4 would have to wait for the ST3 projects to be built out. Ms. Levy noted that the projects typically overlapped and that there would probably be overlap if there was to be an ST4.

## **E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Wung requested a vote to confirm the cancellation of the next meeting. Commissioner Neal motioned to cancel the August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Commissioner Petersen seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Wung reported that the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee was scheduled to conduct interviews of 3 candidates for the vacant Commission position at their July 27 meeting

Mr. Boudet reported that the City Council had held its public hearing on the 2016 Annual Amendment with some testimony expressing concern about S 72<sup>nd</sup> and Alaska and what exactly “postponed” means. Citizens had also expressed concern about more multifamily and traffic on N 33<sup>rd</sup> street. Citizens from the design community had expressed concern about the multifamily design standards not allowing for flexibility long term and the minimum lot size requirement proposed for commercial zones.

Vice-Chair Wamback asked about potential upgrades to the Emerald Queen Casino and if it would be worth having a presentation to the Planning Commission. Mr. Boudet responded that there was some potential coordination and that he could check with Government Relations on the possibility.

## **F. ADJOURNMENT**

At 5:44 p.m., the meeting of the Planning Commission was concluded.