

**Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force**  
Virtual meeting  
Meeting #29 – October 14, 2021, 10:30am

**Task Force Members in attendance:** Layne Alfonso, Clinton Brink, Jim Collins, Jim Dugan, Michael R. Fast, Ben Ferguson, Jason Gauthier, Justin Gorocho, Joshua Jorgensen, Evan Mann, Mandy McGill, Claude Remy, Chuck Sundsmo  
**Excused:** Jessica Gamble, John Wolters  
**Absent:** N/A

**10:32 AM: Welcome**

Jim Dugan indicated that there would be a meeting with the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee chair regarding Impact Fee. Lynda is to coordinate with Jennifer Kammerzell. He also asked the taskforce to consider additional membership, adding one or two members that could add value to the subjects and work of the taskforce.

There would be no meeting in November.

**Approval of August and September meeting minutes**

- Meeting #27 on August 12, 2021 – Michael Fast moved. Layne Alfonso seconded. No discussion. Motion approved.
- Meeting #28 on September 9, 2021 – Layne Alfonso moved. Mandy McGill seconded. No discussion. Motion approved.

**New items of interest**

- Board of Appeals will be advertising for new members in the near future. If you know of an interested Architect, please let them know. The application process is managed by the City Clerk's office, PDS will send out communication when it is advertised.
  - Terry will send out a follow up.
- City services are currently in Phase 1 of Reconstitution, and at this time we know we will remain so until Feb 1. PDS office is open from 9am-1pm on Tuesdays. Inspections will continue as they have through the pandemic, and staff will continue to provide remote service or services in person as deemed appropriate.
- Climate Action Plan is taking public comments. A link will be sent out.

**Fee in Lieu update**

City of Tacoma did not draft a bill ourselves but staff are including supportive language on this policy concept in the draft legislative agenda to be presented to the City Council the following week.

The MBA indicated that this issue is a priority for them and they will be talking with BIAW about potentially introducing legislation. If they proceed to do so, we will plan to support the legislation by signing in at committee hearings, asking Council Members to testify in support, and advocating for the bill with our legislative delegation.

Lynda will provide the language in the draft legislative agenda.

## **Continuation of September Off-site Presentation**

Jim Dugan called on Justin Goroch to provide an update.

Justin Goroch was asked to pull together a small group of engineers with experience in ADA curb ramps and sidewalks to look at the City requirements and determine whether they are reasonable, how they are compared to other jurisdictions. The group was working through their process, they may need to meet with City staff to verify at some point. Justin Goroch also asked about if any other jurisdiction was doing this better. Evan Mann mentioned that the City of Puyallup recently changed their code around sidewalks and offsite improvements. Jim Dugan asked Evan Mann to look at the draft language that Lynda Foster would send out.

Ben Ferguson felt that the goal for Tacoma to get to 100% sidewalks seemed unreasonable. He wanted to know if there was a priority list or if the City had a way to prioritize.

Chris Johnson stated that some areas had been identified but there was not a buffer area like distance.

Ben Ferguson considered many of these to be communication issues. If there were easier ways to communicate them, the taskforce's voice could be used to advocate for them. He suggested prioritizing having something to advocate rather than to criticize.

Lynda Foster explained that this would be a topic for Public Works, not PDS. The City does not prioritize sidewalks the way described. There are many different planning programs/efforts, which all have a role and help prioritize how to build. Lynda Foster would follow up with Public Works.

Kurtis Kingsolver discussed funding limitations.

Evan Mann felt that the City had little interest in building sidewalks and looked to development community to build them. The questions became why there were not funds for Public Works to build sidewalks, and how much of those funds were being spent replacing not-great sidewalks. If funds were going to green energy/green sources, why don't we move that over to getting sidewalks? What could be done to advocate for Public Works to get more funding?

Kurtis Kingsolver and taskforce members further discussed sidewalks funding as well as requirements and limitations.

Evan Mann talked about fee-in-lieu and not wanting it to become another impact fee. Working with the City of Puyallup, it was an option – not a requirement. If a sidewalk is good – not great, fee-in-lieu isn't required.

Jim Dugan spoke about supporting growth in Tacoma – this is not a conversation of no support. He wanted to look at everything in aggregate and make sure things were not duplicated or added on, in consideration of the total cost.

Chris Johnson continued the presentation.

Evan Mann asked to have the federal vs. City requirements listed out. Chris Johnson shared background.

Michael Fast pointed out that when a ramp gets fixed, the ones across the street need to be fixed. The federal safety requirement makes sense but the sharing of cost does not.

Kurtis Kingsolver shared that Corey Newton and he had been working on this. They requested a half-million dollar budget to address the issue. The developer would pay for their corner and the City would build out the rest of the intersection. They would not have an answer until the end of the year.

The taskforce was excited about the proposal and asked what they could do to support. All taskforce members were in agreement to submit a letter of support to the City Council. Lynda Foster would work with Leadership on the letter.

Moving on, Jim Dugan discussed how funding was not in the taskforce's purview but the need for it to be funded was a statement they could make.

Mandy McGill had a question about the process to resolve a permit dispute.

Chris Johnson explained they would base on recommendation from the taskforce, review the tip sheet, talk to plan reviewer and supervisors/Managers/Director as appropriate. The process works fairly well.

Mandy McGill also brought up a situation related to parking on Alder where they wanted to put in a restaurant but were unable to because of parking. This was similar to information she was receiving from a retail advocate, where they were trying to bring more energy to space but were cut off by permitting for seemingly minute (trivial) reasons.

Jim Dugan asked Chris Johnson to provide the link to other members.

Corey Newton added that one of the things they were looking at was how to do things differently. Early is the best. How could the pre-app process be modified to include more of a determination early in the process, so that requirements are appealable at a lower level?

#### **11:50 AM: Final comments**

Jim Dugan recapped the meeting and next steps.

Kurtis Kingsolver expressed appreciation for the group and the great conversation. Public Works would be happy to provide a grant discussion if the taskforce ever desired.

Jim Dugan reiterated that the meeting in November would be canceled in observance of Veterans Day, so the December meeting is necessary to have, and the taskforce could expect the letter of support in a few days.

#### **11:57 PM: Adjourned**