



MINUTES (Approved on 7-15-15)

TIME: Wednesday, July 1, 2015, 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), Donald Erickson, Meredith Neal, Anna Petersen, Erle Thompson, Scott Winship

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Beale called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting on June 17, 2015 were reviewed. Commissioner Erickson suggested clarification to the communication items, where the reference to the vacant position of "Architecture" should be "Architecture, Historic Preservation, and/or Urban Design." The minutes were approved as clarified.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Transportation Master Plan

Joshua Diekmann, Public Works, provided a review of the June 2015 draft of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP), including two of the five appendices, for consideration as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update. Mr. Diekmann reported that the body of the document included the following: a focus on Goals and Policies to ensure that goals and policies of previous documents were captured; the Land Use / Travel Demand Model which was intended to be consistent with the Land Use Element; the development of the layered network concept and modal networks; a revision to how concurrency is approached, moving from measuring concurrency with automobile delay towards a multimodal level of service; and adopted appendices including the Model Documentation and Update and the Pedestrian Crossing Appendix.

The public comments were discussed. Comments regarding conflicted corridors, where there was debate on which mode should receive priority, resulted in recommendations including a list of the corridors in the TMP and recognition that a corridor study would be needed. Comments had expressed a desire to capture the thought put into previous plans such as the Mobility Master Plan. Additionally they had heard comments expressing interest in addressing equity in the Plan, which is addressed in the Performance Measures. Additional public comments were received for and against the 20-minute neighborhood concept in the plan; concerning delivery vehicles and parking and how they allocate the street space; and a request that trails be shown on the maps. They had also received comments from the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee emphasizing the idea of equity; desire for geographic equity in the project selection process; diversity of modes; ensuring that they provided for skateboarding and electric vehicles; and a request from the Dome District that more connections be shown into and out of the Dome District.

Jennifer Kammerzell, Public Works, discussed the items in process and the next steps. Items in process included the Mobility Master Plan (MoMaP) Update, the Project List, and the Impact Fee Appendix. The

MoMaP update would be added as part of the appendix. Ms. Kammerzell noted that it includes a strong bike mode component and that eventually there would be a modal appendix for other modes including freight, transit, and autos. Comments from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group (BPTAG) would be provided to the Commission at the next meeting. Ms. Kammerzell commented that the project list incorporated over 460 projects including unfunded projects, long term project, and modal networks. A scoring system had been created for the projects on the list that ranked the projects across three tiers. The top tier would be the focus of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Impact Fee Appendix would include the research data and next step information. Additional next steps would include reviewing the outcomes of other plans like the Emergency Response/Intelligent Transportation System (ER/ITS) and the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan; Implementation Strategies for all modes; a database/inventory of sidewalk; pedestrian crossings; and parking and roadside amenities. The calendar was reviewed and a possible joint meeting with the Transportation Commission proposed for August.

Commissioners had the following comments and questions:

- Commissioner Erickson expressed concern that there was no focus on intercity topics like extending the link to the airport or how the connections work with adjacent cities.
- Commissioner Erickson commented on long range confidence in funding sources, noting that the light rail and transit budget had been cut in the past. He added that if they were to rely on the systems they would need to have confidence that they would be there in the future.
- Commissioner Thompson commented that auto and freight should be included in the priority modes for Division and 6th Avenue since it was primarily auto. Mr. Diekmann responded that it was not the intent that the other modes would not be accommodated.
- Commissioner Thompson commented that studying impact fees did not make sense as most of Tacoma was already built out and the money could be spent studying something that was more beneficial. Commissioner Erickson responded that while the City was mostly built out there would still be room for impact fees as there was a significant amount of new development anticipated.
- Vice-Chair Wamback commented on the designation of Pacific Ave as Transit and Freight instead of Transit and Auto and not wanting to send a message that they were seeking to displace transportation impacts from Pacific Ave or I-5 to Portland Ave and McKinley.
- Vice-Chair Wamback commented that it did not make sense to map the 20-Minute Neighborhoods from a geographic center point rather than from the actual center point of the neighborhood in centers like the Tacoma Mall area.
- Vice-Chair Wamback recommended revisions to the language of the document including clarifying the text describing the 20-Minute Neighborhoods concept; making a firmer recommendation for Development Incentives; having less of a mode bias for streetcars; and considering whether the quote on page nine was appropriate to Tacoma's vision.
- Chair Beale asked about how concurrency and having a metric of growth in population relative to plan buildout would work with concerns about equity. Mr. Diekmann responded that they were not at the implementation discussion stage yet and were still focused on the larger policy direction.

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, requested that the Commission suspend the rules for consideration of a draft letter of comments from the Commission to the City Council concerning Sound Transit's planned ST3 ballot measure. Discussion would involve reviewing a draft letter from the Transportation Commission that was included in the Communication Items on the agenda and drawing certain information from the TMP that was being discussed, Mr. Wung noted. Commissioners concurred. The draft letter was discussed. Mr. Wung reviewed the content of the draft letter, which conveyed three comments: supporting the extension of the Central Link spine to the Tacoma Mall area; supporting expansion of the Tacoma Link to the Tacoma Community College area; and recommending adding a project to expand the Tacoma Link to the southeast along the Pacific Avenue and Portland Avenue corridors. Discussion ensued. Commissioners decided not to send the letter to the City Council as a similar letter would be sent by the Transportation Commission.

2. Affordable Housing Planning Work Program – Phase 3

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, facilitated a discussion to review draft code language for the proposals contained in the Affordable Housing Planning Work Program and authorize the release of the proposal for public review along with the 2015 Annual Amendment package. Mr. Barnett noted that the proposed changes to the draft were based on feedback from the Commission and the Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group (AHPAG).

The Affordable Housing Incentives and Bonuses package was reviewed. The AHPAG had expressed support for putting the package out for comment, but would be submitting comments themselves including recommendations for the methodology and policy. The comments from the AHPAG on methodology would include a suggestion that it would be more effective to do a percentage of the bonus increment rather than 10% of the total number of units for the density bonus tool. Commissioners expressed concern that this would result in fewer affordable units; would be allowing upzones without getting much affordable housing in return; and that analysis had not been done on the anticipated effectiveness of the incentive.

The fee in lieu methodology was discussed. A subcommittee of the AHPAG had been examining the fee in lieu option and recommended incorporating a buyout option to create funding that could be used to create affordable housing. The recommendation would be to initially set the number at \$10,000 and adjust the number every year. Vice-Chair Wamback commented the fee seemed very low for fifty years of development bonus and that the housing trust fund would not be able to do much with \$10,000 per unit. Commissioners requested information on how the \$10,000 buyout number had been determined.

Proposals for Historic Districts were discussed. Mr. Barnett reported that letters expressing concern had been received from residents. He noted that he had briefed the Landmarks Preservation Commission on the proposals, but they were not able to reach concurrence on a letter to the Commission. Commissioner Thompson recommended language that would prohibit extensive alterations to the exterior features of historic properties being converted to duplexes and triplexes. Commissioner Erickson expressed concern that conversion to duplexes or triplexes would result in significant alteration to interiors as well. Commissioners expressed support for limiting the proposal to non-contributing structures. It was noted that most of the structures in the North Slope were contributing. Discussion ensued. Commissioners agreed to put the proposal out for public comment without limiting it to non-contributing structures.

Height for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) was discussed. Mr. Barnett reported that staff had determined 18 feet was the right number to allow a carriage development on top of a garage. He noted that the method used to measure height was the building code method, which was the midpoint of the roof. Commissioner Neal felt that measuring to the midpoint of the roof was subjective compared to measuring by the total height of the ridge point. It was noted that the midpoint measure was used elsewhere in the code. Commissioner Thompson expressed concern regarding the standards prohibiting construction that would allow ADU's to have a direct view into a neighboring property, noting that there were no similar standards for single family dwellings.

Lot size flexibilities were discussed. Mr. Barnett reviewed the previously discussed proposals and introduced the alley area credit concept as a potential addition. The Alley Area credit would work in situations where a lot abuts an alley, allowing half of the alley to be included in the minimum lot area. A table was reviewed that showed the Standard Lot square footage, small lots square footage, and minimum square footage for the alley bonus across all residential zones. Commissioners noted the different small lot square footages for R-2 and R-2SRD and discussion ensued on whether the small lots size for R-2 should be reduced to be consistent with R-2SRD. There was some support for putting a proposal to lower the R-2 lot size out for public comment. Vice-Chair Wamback commented that the zones are inherently different and should have different lot sizes. Commissioner Erickson noted that it was a pilot program to build confidence in the community and if it was successful they could look at the R-2 lot size later. Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division Manager, commented that there had been staff pushback on lowering in R-2 due to repeated statements in the existing Comprehensive Plan on protecting single-family character. Commissioners supported putting the alley area credit out for public comment.

Discussion ensued on how to address the Commission's questions while staying on schedule for the public hearing date. Commissioner Erickson commented that they would want an opportunity to pass along concerns on the other bullets that had not been discussed yet. Commissioner Thompson recommended bifurcating the fee in-lieu proposal or postponing action until the following week for additional information from staff. Commissioners concurred on returning the following week to receive a report from staff on the numbers behind the fee in-lieu option and take action on the package of proposals.

3. Code Cleanup (Annual Amendment #2015-10)

Elliott Fitzgerald, Planning Services Division, facilitated a discussion to review and authorize the release of the proposed minor and "clean-up" amendments for public review along with the 2015 Annual Amendment package. He noted that the focus of the discussion would be items previously discussed including the Low Impact Development (LID) Code Update, Platting and Subdivisions, Land Use permit procedures, Conditional Uses, apartment signs in residential districts, height variances, and design standards for parking garages.

For the LID Code Update the goal was to remove barriers to LID implementation and incorporate new definitions to be consistent with terminology from Ecology. It would also encourage LID where feasible, including permeable pavers for parking areas and plaza requirements. They had also updated references to the City's Stormwater Management Manual.

Platting and Subdivisions were discussed. They were seeking to streamline the review process for short plats by eliminating some of the required signatures. Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity considerations for dead-end/cul-de-sac developments would clarify the desire to have subdivisions that connect to the surrounding system. Chair Beale expressed support for the strengthening of the language and asked what the actual criteria would be for the applicants. Mr. Boudet responded that the intent is to require a reasonable justification for dead end developments such as topography or not owning all of the property.

Land Use permit procedures were discussed. For Development Regulation Agreements (DRA) review criteria, proposed changes included clarification that the City would be the lead agency for the SEPA process. The most significant change since the previous discussion was the removal of a proposal to no longer require that projects meet LEED standards. Commissioners recommended minor revisions to the language of the proposed amendment. Mr. Fitzgerald reviewed that changes to the Conditional Use Major Modifications included expansion of the notification range and allowance for an optional public meeting.

Conditional uses were discussed. Proposed changes including moving Master Plans from use tables to a new section and adding a "sunset clause" for discontinued conditional uses.

Provisions for Apartment Signs in Residential Districts were discussed. The proposed provisions would allow for apartments of four or more units to have a ground sign, five feet tall, six square feet in area with an additional square foot for each additional dwelling unit up to 25 square feet max. Commissioners suggested clarifying that each face could be six square feet. Commissioners recommended revising the requirement that the base incorporate stone, brick, or masonry to be optional if the base relates to the architecture of the associated development.

Height Variances were discussed. Criteria had been added to address concerns that the provision would add to the height of occupiable space above the district height limits.

New provisions for off-street parking and storage areas were discussed. One minor change was eliminating an exemption for bike parking that was below the current standard. A proposed change for ground floor parking uses was to add limitations to encourage more mixed use parking garages like Pacific Plaza. Commissioners recommended language clarifications to specify that no parking would be allowed on the first floor and 60% of the total façade should be for non-parking uses.

Mr. Fitzgerald reported that they were recommending elimination of some items from the proposed package including a provision requiring that school athletic facilities meet the setback requirements of parks and open space uses. They were also recommending eliminating incorporation of vegetated rooftops into the general roofline standards section.

4. Planning Commission Annual Report for 2014-2015

The Commission reviewed and approved the report, as presented, which would be forwarded to the City Council.

5. 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, reviewed the draft plan elements which were distributed during the meeting for Commissioners to review in preparation for the special meeting on July 8th. Chapters that used the proposed layout and formatting were identified for consideration and prompts for feedback were reviewed. Mr. Atkinson reported that two other items would be part of the agenda for discussion at the subsequent meeting: the draft of the future land use map and a continuation of the Mixed-Use Centers review.

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Wung updated the Commission on the following items:

1. The Special Meeting of the Planning Commission would be held on July 8th at 4:00 p.m. in room 335. The agenda would include the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update.
2. The Neighborhoods and Housing Committee would be conducting a tour of the Tacoma Mall area on Monday July 6th from 4:30 to 6:30 pm. Seats were available for up to two Planning Commission members.

F. ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:43 p.m., the meeting of the Planning Commission was concluded.