



MINUTES (Approved on 4-3-19)

TIME: Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
PLACE: Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 1st Floor, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Stephen Wamback (Chair), Anna Petersen (Vice-Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, David Horne, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel
ABSENT: Ryan Givens, Jeff McInnis, Dorian Waller

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Wamback called the special meeting (due to change in the regularly scheduled starting time) to order at 4:20 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the meeting of February 6, 2019 were approved as submitted.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Molly Nichols – Ms. Nichols fully supports the proposed incorporation of the Affordable Housing Action Strategy (AHAS) in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. She wanted to focus on the value of the missing middle housing and the Equity Maps. The missing middle will help provide growth for Tacoma. She noted that the Planning Commission now has an opportunity to reverse the damage that has been done, and create more opportunities for families that have been marginalized. She commented there should be modified zoning, and more duplexes, townhomes, and triplexes. She is excited to implement the AHAS.
- Kenny Coble – Mr. Coble fully supported the AHAS and is excited about inclusionary zoning recommendation. He wanted to see this in the transit corridors. He's excited about the missing middle housing and Equity Maps. Some of the hardest part of equity work is the need to address policy, and he is excited that this tool is being utilized.
- Amy Pow – Ms. Pow commented that the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department is happy to see the direction the city is taking, as this can improve emotional and mental health. She noted that maintaining adequate housing can reduce health risks. The TPCHD supports the AHAS.
- Melissa Yager – Ms. Yager is excited about the AHAS and as a social worker in transitional housing, she noted that they are struggling to find affordable housing. By having more of missing middle housing it will benefit folks who can't pay rent at the highest rate right now. The Equity Map is a useful tool to find out what we need to work towards.
- Theresa Power-Drutis - Ms. Power-Drutis was happy and impressed that the AHAS is going forward. She is working with New Connection, who work with people coming out of incarceration. She commented that she worked with the homeless a lot, and that the term affordable housing doesn't mean it's affordable for everybody. It doesn't work with people who have minimum wage jobs. She recommended it would be beneficial to find a different term. Referring to the "Public Comments" segment on the agenda, she recommended that the public give their input at the end instead of the beginning of the process.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Affordable Housing Action Strategy – Planning Actions

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, Daniel Murillo, Community and Economic Development's Housing Division, and Mary Morrison, Office of Equity and Human Rights, facilitated the Planning Commission's continued review of the proposed incorporation of the Affordable Housing Action Strategy (AHAS) in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan (an application for the 2019 Annual Amendment). They provided responses to the Commission's inquiries made at the previous meeting on February 6, 2019, specifically regarding the responsible parties for the AHAS implementation, the Missing Middle Housing – Tacoma context, and the Equity Index and Opportunity mapping.

Mr. Murillo provided an overview of the AHAS, highlighting the goal, intent, strategic objectives, supporting actions, the implementation plan, and the monitoring and reporting mechanism. Mr. Barnett reviewed the proposed integration of the AHAS in the Housing Element as implementation strategy. He highlighted some key new and updated housing element policies. He also discussed the subject of the Missing Middle Housing. Ms. Morrison provided an overview of the Equity and Empowerment policy framework adopted by the City Council in 2014, the methodology for the development of the Equity Index, and the application of Equity Index data to inform housing actions to promote access opportunity.

The Commission noted that staff had made a name change from Equity Map to Opportunity Map. They also expressed concerns about the effectiveness of the Equity Index handout in communicating the policy intent clearly.

Vice-Chair Petersen moved to release the proposed incorporation of the AHAS in the Housing Element, as presented, for public review, Commissioner Strobel seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Historic Preservation Code Amendments

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer, facilitated the Planning Commission's continued review of the Landmarks Preservation Commission's recommendation for updates to the Tacoma Municipal Code, Chapters 1.42, 13.06 and 13.07, pertaining to historic demolition review, nomination process, and conditional use permits. Recommendations are based on the Comprehensive Plan policies, are intended to address gaps in project review, and are components of the overall Historic Preservation Program.

Mr. McKnight provided background information of historic preservation in Tacoma and the activities that it consists: identification, management, incentives and benefits, and education and advocacy.

Mr. McKnight then focused on the subject of the demolition review, for which the Planning Commission had requested for additional information at a previous meeting on January 16, 2019. He highlighted the supporting comprehensive plan policy and the objectives of demolition review, and described the proposed code amendments. He noted that he's been working to identify more districts in Tacoma for historic preservation. Continuing with the presentation, Mr. McKnight reviewed some Mixed-Use Center policies and growth context to exemplify that growth can be accommodated without losing all of the historic characteristics of the Center.

The Commission recommended that when this is scheduled for a public hearing, staff provide an example of what could have been changed as an outcome, and what the applicant had to experience. They commented that the current rules are visible, so it would be nice to know what could, or would, happen with new policy and code changes. Another recommendation made by the Commission was for a next level of demolition review as it relates to alterations in properties, and not just demolition. They noted it would be unfortunate if someone takes out a permit to alter a building that's not registered, and take it out of the running for future registration.

Mr. McKnight requested that the Commission consider releasing the Historic Preservation Code Amendments (an application for the 2019 Annual Amendment), as presented, for public review. Commissioner Strobel made a motion to that effect, Vice-Chair Petersen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Minor Amendments

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, provided a continued review from a previous meeting on February 20, 2019 of the Minor Amendments application for the 2019 Annual Amendment. He reviewed the changes to Issue #3 (street tree removal/pruning clarification) and Issue #18 (incorporation of Pedestrian Streets from the Comprehensive Plan to the Land Use Code), reflecting the suggestions of the Commission made at the previous meeting. He also reviewed three new issues as provided in the agenda packet, i.e., Issue #26 (design standards improvement for small-lot single-family residential development, Issue #27 (clarify floor area ratio definition for small lots), and Issue #28 (zoning map incorporation into the Zoning Code).

Discussion ensued. Mr. Wung and Brian Boudet, Planning Manager, responded to several clarification type of questions from the Commission. Mr. Wung requested the Commission to authorize the release of the Minor Amendments application, as presented, for public review, in preparation for a public hearing on the 2019 Amendment package tentatively scheduled for April 2019. A motion was made to that effect by Vice-Chair Petersen and seconded by Commission Strobel. The motion passed unanimously.

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

The Commission acknowledged receipt of the information on the agenda.

Mr. Boudet reported that, on March 5, 2019, the City Council conducted the first reading of the ordinance adopting Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Regulatory Revisions and introduced three amendments pertaining to short-term rentals limitation, maximum ADU size, and ADU reporting. The final reading is scheduled to occur on March 19, 2019.

Mr. Boudet reminded the Commission that the next meeting on March 20, 2019 will include a joint session with the Transportation Commission to receive a briefing by Sound Transit staff on the Tacoma Dome Link Extension project and that the two commissions might subsequently consider providing a joint letter of comments.

Mr. Boudet reviewed the progress of the Neighborhood Planning Open House series for the 2019 Annual Amendment, and appreciated the commissioners who had attended the first three open houses, which had attracted more than 60 attendees each.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

**These minutes are not a direct transcription of the meeting, but rather a brief capture. For full-length audio recording of the meeting, please visit:*

http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/committees_boards_commissions/planning_commission/agendas_and_minutes/