



MINUTES (Approved on 5-15-19)

TIME: Wednesday, May 1, 2019, 6:00 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, Ryan Givens, Andrew Strobel
ABSENT: Brett Santhuff, Jeff McInnis, Dorian Waller

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Wamback called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was approved. The minutes for March 20, April 3, and April 17 were approved as submitted.

C. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. 2019 Amendment Public Hearing No. 1

Chair Wamback called to order the public hearing at 6:09 p.m., reviewed the public hearing procedures, and asked Commissioners to introduce themselves.

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, provided an overview of the subject of the public hearing, i.e., Future Land Use Map Implementation. Mr. Atkinson reviewed the amendment process, summary of applications, public notice, SEPA, and how to provide comments.

Chair Wamback called for testimony. The following citizen testified:

- Mary Chambers Little – Ms. Chambers Little is one of 11 heirs to the property at 6638/6640 S. Alaska St., which has been their single family home for over 68 years. However, it no longer benefits anyone as a single family residence. She requested a rezone to either R4 or R4L. She noted that many of the city planners may know that her family has been seeking this change since her mother passed in 2016, and requested that this change be made this year. She feels this change would benefit the entire neighborhood and future development.
- Rosalie McKinney – Ms. McKinney noted that she was not sure if she needed to be at the meeting, but she had looked at the map and could not make heads or tails of it. She was interested in finding out if there was anything in her neighborhood, near North 25th and Lawrence, that she needed to be concerned about.
- Nick Malo – Mr. Malo grew up in Tacoma and bought his first home last May, in the Eastside's Strawberry Hill neighborhood. He noted that the home's value is tied to its views. Currently the areas around him are zoned to allow for a maximum height of 35 feet, but the proposed rezones would allow for multi-family homes up to 60 feet, blocking his views. He believes that the proposed changes to East L St. and East 29th St will fundamentally change the neighborhood and negatively impact current and future property owners. He added that he does not feel these changes align with code, and urges the City not to change the zoning districts in that area.
- Tatyana – Lives in Stadium District, and would like there to be studies on the effect that high rise housing has on the environment and on sustainability in a historic area. She thinks it is unacceptable to propose high density housing in a historic neighborhood and that it will destroy the neighborhood

and its quality. Stated that single home owners are being aggressively displaced in this neighborhood to allow the city to build high-rise multi-family buildings.

- Jason Hixenbaugh – Mr. Hixenbaugh explained that he and his partner moved to Tacoma from Chicago over a year ago. They specifically choose Tacoma over Seattle because of the neighborhood they live in in the Historic Slope. He noted that right now the sightlines are very nice and it is a calm quiet neighborhood. He is concerned that allowing multi-family will make the traffic problem even greater, especially with speeding and uncontrolled intersections.
- Martin Savol – Mr. Savol's house is designated R2 and is not directly affected by the proposal, but the area across the street from his home is proposed to jump to R4. He and his wife oppose this for several reasons, one being the aesthetics. He also lives on a corner lot with an uncontrolled intersection and there are been no accidents during the 6 years he has lived there, and opposes the potential increase in traffic. Mr. Savol also noted that he lives in a historical area and does not like the idea of a brand new big building right next to historical homes.
- Molly Nichols – Ms. Nichols is a Tacoma Outreach Coordinator with Futurewise and is also a renter who lives in the North End. She is here to support the proposed rezoned that make our zoning consistent with Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan. She stated that as our region grows we need policies for compact and connected neighborhoods to manage the growth and ensure equitable access. The proposed changes allow for diverse housing options to meet diverse housing needs. Ms. Nichols also noted that the proposed changes begin to address the effects of redlining. She stated that we need zoning to be modified to give developers incentive to build low-income housing which creates mixed-income areas in high-opportunity areas which benefits everyone.
- David Cisakowski – Mr. Cisakowski spoke on the proposed rezone on North 12th and Yakima. He wanted to comment on the selection of areas to create diverse neighborhoods, noting that he lives at the top of North Slope and below him are almost all single family homes, but the only proposed rezones for the area are right by him near the top. It was mentioned in the criteria that these rezones should be by mixed-use centers and transit areas, but this area is not within a quarter mile of these. Mr. Cisakowski noted that it did say these criteria might part of a future development, but expressed that you can't know where those would be. He feels like there are a lot of other areas that would be able to better provide diversity and multi-family homes.
- Jim Merritt – Mr. Merritt is an architect and urban planner who has worked and volunteered with the City of Tacoma for 40 years. He believes the amendments are misguided on so many levels and are unrealistic, and the spot rezoning would be a disaster for the City of Tacoma and should be rejected by the Planning Commission. He questioned why the North End, with no community center, would be considered more desirable than other locations. Mr. Merritt explained that the Eastside and South End have significant strip development that is under-utilized. He cited Aurora Avenue in Seattle as an example of the wrong way to do development and stated that we are doing the same thing in our city. Mr. Merritt noted that duplexes and triplexes in single family residential can cause issues because of absentee owners, and in many studies an area that goes under 60% home ownership becomes a troubled area. He stated that we need to throw out these amendments and start with a vision of the city at a design level and not just a process level.
- Lew Simpson – Mr. Simpson commented on the 34th and Proctor rezone. The area is slated as multi-use, but the existing commercial is different from 6th Ave or 38th street, it is in existing buildings than have been there for 50-100 years. He noted that in talking to planners, the tone is to bring things into alignment with the use, but he is cynical about that, and that he does not feel good about seeing R3 townhouses in a row versus the elegant old established neighborhood. Mr. Simpson also addressed the bus stop in the area, which is only for one route and is not very utilized. He stated that the rezoning is a concern because of what it could mean to the area. He noted that the good news is that it is not the high density that was put in at 26th and Proctor, but it could still open the door to something that isn't appropriate.
- Paula Bond – Ms. Bond is a resident of the Stadium District and expressed concern about the proposed rezone for that area. She also wanted to be on record saying that she is concerned with the fact that the Commissioner representing her area is not in here this evening or at several of the other

meetings she has attended. She noted that the Stadium-Seminary Historical District is the oldest historic district in the state of Washington and is one of Tacoma's earliest residential neighborhoods, but there has been a lot of intrusion since it was added to the register. Ms. Bond asked for down-zoning for three families, including her own, and for the Commission to reject the up-zoning proposal overall. She stated that the proposed amendment is in direct conflict with policies that are already in place within the city.

- Hope Murray – Ms. Murray represents the homeowners in the Narrows rezone, which would go from an R2 to R4 in the proposal. She noted that this would displace 96 families in a well-established neighborhood. She believes this change would turn the neighborhood into a confused mix of housing, similar to others in Tacoma that she has driven through. Ms. Murray stated that she has done research through the city's websites and talked to planners, city leadership, and her state legislator, and has found that the rezone is essentially a completed process. Because of this, she feels that the communities have not been heard and that this process lacks transparency.
- Joyce Jackman – Ms. Jackman lives in the Narrows district. She stated that 12 years ago her block was approached with the same proposal to change zoning, but at that time there was an attorney living on the block who helped prevent that. She expressed concerns about parking and possible rising crime rates due to renters of multi-family housing. Ms. Jackman noted that she feels listened to but not heard. Tacoma could be the one to set an example that they care about what their citizens want. She expressed that we are not Seattle, and there are so many other areas that can accommodate high rises and multi-family dwellings.
- Patrick McGoldrick – Mr. McGoldrick spoke about a property at South 12th and Pine. He owns the property and rents it out, currently it is a bicycle repair shop. He expressed that he would like for it to be left alone, and from what he can tell the neighborhood around it feels the same way.
- Carl Anderson – Mr. Anderson lives in City Council district 2, and is generally in favor of the up-zoning proposed. He stated that we need to develop density on transit corridors, and that is the basic tenant of environmentally sound development. He mentioned specifically the Stadium District being transit friendly, with the light rail being expanded and bus stops, and should be up-zoned as such. Mr. Anderson would like to see diverse housing options to meet our diverse needs, including more duplexes, triplexes, and condominium options. He expressed that we need to develop different ways of developing to meet the serious environmental needs of the upcoming century.
- Ellen Norton – Ms. Norton is a lifetime resident of the City of Tacoma, and began looking into this because she bought a house 10 years ago in the 26th and Alder neighborhood. She is particularly concerned about the building that contains the Big Value Market. She noted that when she looks at the zoning map, she can't really make sense of it and does not understand why there are pockets here and there being rezoned. She also mentioned concern for the historic homes in Stadium District, stating that she does not want to see Tacoma tear down something beautiful in order to put up something mediocre. Ms. Norton stated that she actually likes some of the development in Proctor and Stadium districts, but would not like to see a historical home be torn down in order to do that.
- Debby Wenskill – Ms. Wenskill lives in the Stadium area. She stated that although her property would not be directly affected, it would potentially be affected when it comes to traffic and parking. She urged the commission to consider parking and design standards when considering development. She would not like to see our city become like Seattle with heavy traffic. Ms. Wenskill added that she agrees with a previous speaker, and would not like to see our city chopped up because it is great right now.
- Leslie Malo – Ms. Malo noticed that as we look at the issue at hand there are prominent themes, one being are we planning for things? She agrees with the need to have affordable housing for all and with the concerns over historic buildings, but feels we are building without understanding the impacts. She is concerned with not having studies done before development and the impact that could have for example on traffic and the safety of children and pedestrians.
- William Bailey – Mr. Bailey lives in the Central District and spoke about the proposed rezone at South 19th and Proctor. He objects to the rezoning of only the northern part of this area, and stated that it

does not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, as this parcel is separated from arterials and there is a lack of access. He suggested this area is looked at as a modification to the planning designation and leave it zoned as R2.

- Nadiya Sheckler – Ms. Sheckler addressed the Norpoint area that is being up-zoned. Her concern is with the commercial area on 29th and 59th, as the area has a lot of accidents currently. She stated that traffic in that area is already bad with people cutting through to avoid the Fife curve. She also mentioned a residential area on 28th Street NE which butts up against commercial zoning, she feels it would be a good area for up-zoning but it is being ignored.
- Dale Powers – Mr. Powers is also concerned about the up-zoning near Stadium High School. He stated that the area subject to intense traffic and parking is difficult to find. He agrees that density and affordable housing is a great idea, but does not think that area warrants an up-zone at this time.

With no more citizens coming forward to testify, Chair Wamback closed the public hearing at 7:31 p.m. and asked Commissioners to provide feedback as to what additional information would be required of staff to provide at the next meeting.

- Commissioner Givens asked for the comments to be arranged by neighborhood.
- Commissioner Edmonds asked for a close-up map of the Stadium, Narrows, 34th and Proctor, and Northeast neighborhoods, and to know if there are any vacant lots in the proposed re-zoned areas. She asked, if the proposed zoning happens, what the current land use code says in the instance that someone tears down a single family home in order to put up a triplex. Specifically, if there would need to be some assembly of lots. She also noted that some of commercial properties are on tribal land and would like more information on how that impacts zoning. Commissioner Edmonds also asked for clarity on the issue of historical properties, and if the proposed re-zoning would conflict with policies already in place.
- Commissioner Horne wanted to get information about the specific areas that speakers gave as examples of other cities that were negatively impacted by re-zoning.
- Chair Wamback agreed that he would like to have the comments arranged by neighborhood, and would also like to have the maps ready to go on screen so that they are able to zoom in on certain areas.

D. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETING (MAY 15, 2019)

(1) 2019 Amendment Public Hearing No. 2

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

In addition to the information included in the agenda, Brian Boudet, Planning Manager, provided the following:

- Staff will be reaching out to Commissioners for help in recruiting to fill spots on the Advisory Committee for the Design Review Program, as discussed at the April 3rd meeting.
- May 1st was the go live day for the Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU) regulations. Both the Commission and City Council will be updated on this in the coming months.
- There are 3 topics coming up on City Council's docket:
 - The public hearing for the JBLM Airport Overlay Zone is scheduled for June 4th.
 - In early June, City Council will be providing a specific resolution or recommendation on which option should move forward into the next phase for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension.
 - The Tide Flats Interim Regulations Renewal first reading is scheduled for May 14th and the second on May 21st.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 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/