



## CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

**Date:** July 14, 2015

**Commission Members Present:** Chrissy Cooley, Phil Coughlan, Felicity Devlin, Nick Cutting, Jeff Bessmer, Ellen Moore, Alyssa Illich

**Commission Members Excused:** Agnes Pate, Peter Hickman, Sarah Chessman, Rus Higley

**Others Present:** Kristin Lynett, Emily Campbell, Lowell Wyse, Steven Atkinson, Jane Moore, Ron Stuart

- **Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 3:33pm

- **Approval of June 9, 2015 Meeting Notes**

The Commission did not have a quorum, so this item was tabled. Phil noted that the June notes should be reviewed for spelling of one word: "Wamback."

- **Review of July Agenda**

The July agenda was approved.

- **Comprehensive Plan Presentation and Discussion – Steven Atkinson, Planning Department**

- Steven Atkinson presented on the Comprehensive Plan, giving a high-level overview of what material is included in this new update and where to find it; he encouraged people to attend an upcoming public hearing to make comments. One more draft expected to be produced before a draft is made available for public review. The public hearing date is tentatively set for August 19<sup>th</sup>. STC comments can be addressed to the staff liaison. Public comment is generally accepted 3-4 weeks before and after the public hearing. Comments can also be given on the website – Tacoma2040.com. Comments can be directed to Steven Atkinson and he'll share with the Planning Commission.
- In a broad sense, the chapters of the Plan all relate to sustainability – both the environmental, social and economic sides. Highlights of the presentation included:
  - The Plan expects household size to decrease; poverty rates to remain higher compared to the region; transportation costs for households to remain higher for the region; housing prices to increase; and racial diversity to decline.
- Steve clarified that the data used to anticipate these trends comes from the Regional Council. Current forecasts are based on continuing urban expansion, and the present growth rate allocations are based on aspirational goals combined with past forecasts.
  - Phil expressed curiosity about how the economic development outlook compares with this.

- Felicity was curious about what kind of people (demographically) are expected to move to Tacoma – Steven said the trends seem like we can expect younger adults and single families moving from Seattle.
- There was a question about ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) – Steven said that there is a proposal before the Planning Commission about ADUs, and the Commission may move towards a pilot for ADUs; though there is concern about parking and concern from the North Slope about increases in density.
- Further highlights about the Plan update presentation included:
  - The Plan tries to meet goals from the Tacoma2025 document.
  - The 20-minute neighborhood concept is promoted throughout the updated Plan.
  - Open space corridors are covered in the Plan, open natural space may be more necessary, as people live more densely and may not have front/back yards.
  - Tree canopy goals should be woven throughout the Plan, including in relation to trails, streets and corridors, etc.
  - Building and site design are considered in the Plan, including offsite impacts from development, incorporation of public art, designing with nature, etc.
    - There is expected to be a proposal to have a conversation about having a Design and Development review board. STC could provide comment on what types of projects would be approved, who reviews development designs, etc.
    - One member would like to have the STC heavily involved in the review of design and development projects.
  - Tacoma is expected to have 35% of Pierce County’s new growth. 80% of that growth is anticipated to occur within and in close proximity to mixed-use centers, and 25% of those units should be affordable units.
  - The Plan addresses equity issues of underserved communities in regards to public facilities and services available (such as parks and recreational amenities).
  - Tacoma is planning for 97,000 new jobs in the City, and plans to look at lands available for economic uses; investments in public transportation infrastructure which may provide people with more money for spending; and intends to focus on “People and Place” and business expansion and retention within the City.
  - A new proposal will include policy direction on how to engage with and respect the community.
  - The City anticipates remaining predominantly single-family.
  - The City plans to prioritize investment in mixed-use centers to a higher degree than in the past.
  - Steve explained that previously there were only four zoning categories with multiple sub-categories. Now there are new categories which are more descriptive for land uses. Next year the City will review sites to bring them up-to-date with zoning and into consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
    - Phil suggested that the Planning Commission present detailed examples from Tacoma of how updates to zoning will allow changes to the built landscape.
- Comments should be provided to the rest of the STC and reviewed for clarity and consensus of option, and then a letter is written on the topic by the STC chair. The group talked about having a few Commissioners review and make comments on the Plan and then report back to the group - Jeff, Ellen, Phil and Felicity volunteered for this working group. The entire STC will be notified of when the working group will meet, and they should submit thoughts before that date. Ellen will create a Doodle Poll to schedule this special meeting.

- **Subcommittee Report-Outs**

- Electric Vehicles Subcommittee

- The group is looking for more development stakeholders to attend the EV Symposium. These stakeholders include general contractors that work in Tacoma, other contractors from outside of Tacoma with practical experience installing EV infrastructure, developers who may be interested, and architectural firms.
    - The symposium wants to bring to light what the building community identifies as barriers to construction of EV infrastructure.

- EV infrastructure includes installing slow-charge infrastructure (charging stations) and building in the capacity for installing the infrastructure after property development.
- STC members should share what groups/individuals/businesses they have already conducted outreach to.
- The Symposium is set for September 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Additionally, there is a Ride and Drive event coming up on July 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### Outreach Subcommittee

- Cascade Bike Club messed up printing thousands of t-shirts, which they donated, and Chrissy has a large number of those shirts. She is interested in turning these t-shirts into shopping bags during an event, and making these available to the public for free or low cost. This could serve as a way to generate buzz about restricting disposable bags and to address the concern about low-income individual's accessibility to bags.
  - The Mayor and City Manager previously told the STC to wait to begin outreach on the disposable bag topic.
  - This is on hold until after the November elections.
  - Ellen suggested creating a social media presence about the bag topic.
  - Surfrider and Citizens for a Healthy Bay could be potential partners.
  - Chrissy will create a Doodle Poll to choose a time for a subgroup to meet and develop a plan for outreach around restricting disposable shopping bags.

#### • **Retreat Recap and Next Steps**

- This was tabled until after the staff update.

#### • **Staff Update**

- The first Environmental Action Plan advisory committee meeting is set up for next month.
- Emily and Pat, the City's AmeriCorps members, are finishing up their 10.5 months of service this week, and they are staying on as City contractors for a couple more months. Pat and Kristi will continue to work on and wrap-up the Healthy Homes, Healthy Neighborhoods (HHHN) – Dometop program. They will present about the HHHN program year at the City Council's Study Session on August 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Kristi will attend the IPS meeting Wednesday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30 pm in TMBN Room 16, to talk about the Environmental Action Plan. STC members are invited to attend as a way to learn more about IPS. IPS will also receive a presentation about community solar projects.

#### • **Approval of June 9, 2015 Meeting Notes (cont'd)**

The Commission approved the June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting notes with the potential spelling correction of one word: "Wamback".

#### • **Retreat Recap and Next Steps**

- Kristi encouraged STC members to take the post-retreat survey if they haven't already.
- Jeff felt like there were not many concrete takeaways from the retreat.
- The STC member position description should be updated to include the number of hours expected per month.
- The group wants to have retreats twice per year. Kristi said there isn't money in the budget for a facilitated retreat again.
- Things seemed "nebulous" until the last approx. 30 minutes of the retreat.
- The group wants clarity on the protocol for following up about items as they act to hold people and groups accountable.
  - They could use a calendar program to set reminders about following up on items, and it could also be made public for further accountability. This web platform could also host letters written by the STC and their workplan.
- The functionality of this platform would be, at least, for internal tracking and could include tools for external communication.
- The STC discussed whether this should be like a calendar or organized by task.

- Google, WordPress and Outlook are free calendar programs that could be used.
  - WordPress allows attaching documents.
  - The STC needs to decide as a group what the process and timeline is for following up on items.
  - Felicity would like to see the group take time to assess if they are being effective in their strategies and to do a self-evaluation. Phil suggested that someone gather formats and structures for doing a formal evaluation. This could be included on the agenda at a retreat.
    - The group could invite in past members of the STC to a retreat.
    - The STC could invite members of IPS to be involved in a discussion about this.
  - The group is OK with Kristi sending them multiple emails per week so that they can get documents to review with as much time as possible.
- **Public Comment**
    - Lowell Wyse thanked the Commission for taking on review of the Comprehensive Plan and the Environmental Element.
  - **Objectives for Next Meeting**
    - Elliot Barnett with the City's Planning Department wants to talk about the Tacoma Mall SubArea Plan.
    - STC members should look over other municipalities' Environmental Action Plans based on a list presented by Kristi. The STC will break out into small groups and each group should look over and provide feedback about those plans at the August meeting. Members should think about what elements of the plans they like and don't like, and should respond to prompting questions that will be provided by Kristi via email. People can review these plans individually. Nick, Chrissy, Jeff and Phil will be in one group, and Ellen, Felicity, and Alyssa will be in another. Absent STC members will be in a third group.
  - **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:30pm

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, August 11, 2015, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Visibility Center.