PRESENTATIONS and HANDOUTS

Regular Meeting on November 16, 2016

1. North End Neighborhood Council Meeting with the Planning Commission
   (PowerPoint Slides, for Discussion Item D-1)

2. Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan & EIS
   (PowerPoint Slides, for Discussion Item D-2)

3. Public Comment concerning the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan
   (Letter of comment, for Discussion Item D-2)

4. Planning Commission’s Letter of Comments on Pierce Transit’s 2016 Route Analysis,
   November 14, 2016
   (Handout; Informational)
NORTH END NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (NENC)

MEETING WITH CITY OF TACOMA PLANNING COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 16TH, 2016
Overview

1. Design Review
2. Residential Zoning & Commercial Use
3. Cushman SubStation
North End Comments:

• John De Loma
Tacoma should have a design review board similar to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to review Mixed-Use, Multi-family and new commercial buildings. Too many buildings are looking the same and not following the one paragraph design requirements. This City is losing its character with all the new buildings being built with no budget for character.

The City should also create and enforce design requirements. Neither proctor building followed the design requirements. There should be more than one step on a building abutting an R-2 zone. There should also be requirements in the required 10′ - 20′ setback when there is a single-family residence zone. Anytime a building is built in a community there should be more design guidelines to avoid the overpower feel a six story will have in a residential neighborhood.

If the City wants more support for increasing density, then improve public safety, traffic and transportation. With no real design and timeline set for a transit system, why are we increasing density? Allowing the building to reduce parking only to have zero on transportation is problematic. Increasing 290 units/300-350 vehicles + 5-7 new tenants and no new commercial parking is not smart when there is no planning for transportation and/or improved public safety.

This what a Planning commission should be preparing. react-text: 48 http://archive.epa.gov/greenbuilding/web/pdf/density.pdf

• Felicity Devlin
The City should start working on the Master Plans for each MUC. Many times during the MUC Zoning Change Process (2007-09), the Planning Commission recommended taking a center by center approach in order to analyze and address the needs of individual centers. Decisions are currently being made without reference to a master plan for individual MUCs (how many marijuana stores have now been allowed on 6th Ave.?)

• Margaret Demick
I agree with the comments John and Felicity made. Also I think we might ask them to slow down if more big buildings are proposed until Proctor has had to adjust the new changes before deciding ,more is good.
Comments Continued

• Marie C.
The proposed new building at 6th and Alder is too big. Alder is a main arterial to the medical offices and I have concerns about the extra traffic consolidated at that intersection. What about the people living in the houses across the alley? How is this fitting into the neighborhood? Smaller building would be far better and still increase housing.

• Jeff Ryan
Priority should be given to the existing residents first to ensure they are properly protected and provided for before giving priority to those who are not here yet.

• John Avery
Former NENC Chair – In the 90’s serious effort was made toward siting a Community Center in the Nor5h End. Of the numerous reasons why it did not happen was lack of location and building. The current situation (de-commission Cushman Substation) now seems like a real opportunity to put in a Community Center and park. I would be interested in working on this issue.

• Becky Stroud
I am very concerned about how Cushman is zoned and the impact to my property. I live directly across the street from the substation.

• John Richards
Proctor development – project details do not respond to the context and is devoid of detail, misapplied modernism in a craftsman/midcentury environs. Too huge, flat with no relief. Back side is worse and it is what the neighbors all see, cheap, not rich or caring, we have to look at blank walls. Sun shadow and massing a concern, this does not transition to residential. Scale, Detail, Sun + Shadow

• Naomi Smith
Homeowner at 638 Prospect seeking support. An allowed new multi-family development next door to them has significantly impacted their property and quality of life. Zoning changed after they purchased their home in 2007, they were not aware. The property on their other side is getting ready to have the parcel segregated and the same situation can/will happen. This is a good example of why development & permitting needs more individual scrutiny as residential infill is being encouraged. These projects need to be in context with what is in the surrounding area. The project at 636 Prospect is a complete failure for the planning department.
Comprehensive Plan:

Policy DD-4.1 **Preserve and enhance the quality, character** and function of Tacoma’s *residential neighborhoods*.

Policy DD-4.6 Promote the site layout of residential development where residential buildings face the street and parking and vehicular access is provided to the rear or side of buildings. **Where multifamily developments are allowed in established neighborhoods, the layout of such developments should respect the established pattern of develop except where a change in context is desired per the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.**
Design Review

• Early awareness to community stakeholders and Single Family residential investors.

• Input before design and expense commitments are extensive.
  – Exhaustive design detail reviews not the purpose
  – Current engagement of the public occurs too late in the process for meaningful input.
Residential & Commercial Zoning

- Misallocation of too much commercial space takes away from land that could be residential.
- More residential would be a positive for supporting the commercial space that would be available.
- Maintain compactness of Mixed use centers, with buffers between higher density and single family residential.
- Reducing the number of mixed use centers and reducing strip developments will benefit the business/retail/multi-family zones while providing more opportunities for residential.
- Duplex and Triplex concern because of absentee owners which can lead to a lack of maintenance and supervision problems.
- ADU’s, attached or separated from main residence, are supported as long as owner lives on the site.
Residential & Commercial Zoning

Current Public Engagement Process In-Sufficient

• “Where is the Vision and Plan” for Mixed Use Centers and surrounding neighborhoods?

  – Surrounding neighborhood investors voices are not included early on in the strategic planning conversation.
    • Developer responsible for traffic studies on immediate intersections, impact to neighborhoods not considered
    • Recent Parking study oriented only to Proctor business district. Surrounding neighborhoods not studied.
    • Our youth walk to two schools and a library, there is no funding for street improvements to ensure safe passage.
      – Developers are driving the increased traffic, why is there no financial contribution for” Safe Streets” and improvements?

  • Can zoning, conditional permitting or variances allow for further encroachment into new Single Family zoning?
  • When is too much density for City’s MUC’s?
“Policy UF–13.28
Encourage the conversion of electrical substations for recreational purposes if the sites are no longer needed for their intended purpose.”
Cushman Substation

- **Design & Development: Goal DD-13:** Protect and preserve Tacoma’s historic and cultural character.
  - **Policy DD 7.1:** Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of buildings, especially those of historic or cultural significance, to conserve natural resources, reduce waste, and demonstrate stewardship of the build environment.
  - **Policy DD-13.1:** Encourage the protection and restoration of high-quality historic buildings and places that contribute to the distinctive character and history of Tacoma’s evolving urban environment.
  - **Policy DD-13.5:** Survey and inventory historic resources as part of future sub-area or neighborhood planning projects, with a focus on areas of anticipated growth and change.
  - **Policy P-7.1:** Neighborhood parks should be designed to enhance neighborhood identity, preserve neighborhood open space and improve the quality of life of nearby residents.
  - **Policy P-1.2:** Prioritize investment in acquisition and development of parks and recreation facilities in areas where need is greatest, including:
    - a) Where availability and access to facilities is lowest; and
    - b) Where the greatest population growth is occurring or forecast, such as the **mixed use centers**.

- **Who should NENC committee engage for support to this project in City Planning Dept?**
Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan & EIS

Planning Commission
November 16, 2016

City of Tacoma
Study area for potential expansion of the Regional Growth Center
Outreach efforts

Additional outreach to commercial property and business owners

Outreach to date:
• Stakeholder interviews
• Health department focus groups
• Public meetings
• EIS Scoping meetings
• Design workshop
• Stakeholder Group meetings
• Web site input
• Mailings and signage
Input – support economic growth

• Positive vision
  – Parks, schools
  – Placemaking
  – Improved image
  – Success floats all boats

• City regulatory tools
  – Up front SEPA
  – Infrastructure coordination
  – Incentives
  – Predictability

• City leadership
  – City investment
  – Attracting regional funding
Input – support existing businesses

• General comments
  – Permit process streamlining
  – Offsite improvement costs
  – Business retention

• Plan comments
  – Revisit street network
  – Limit the connectivity requirement
  – Voluntary, not required
  – City commitment
  – Be strategic in limiting height
  – Avoid split zoning/non-conforming
Existing Conditions:
Transportation Issues

- Large blocks
- Lack of connectivity
- Traffic on arterials
- Safety
- Lack of bike facilities
- Gaps in pedestrian facilities
- Auto-oriented land use
- Street conditions
Existing Street Network

Streets
- Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan Study Area Boundary
- Existing Regional Growth Center Boundary

Street Network
- Highway or Major Arterial
- Collector
- Local
- Alley

Map is for reference only.
Connectivity already in code

• Code requirements today
  – Building up to street
  – Pedestrian connections
  – Parking behind buildings & landscaped

• So why make changes?
  – Anticipating growth
  – Visibility and access adds value
  – Working with large blocks
  – More cohesive and connected system
  – Compact, connected development pattern
Updates

1. Street network changes
2. Tiered street system
3. Connectivity requirement
4. Funding issues
First draft - Street Network

ACTIONS:
- Increase connectivity & network choice
- Ped-oriented land use
- Complete Streets
- Improve regional & local access
- Handle growth through mode shift & internal capture
- Placemaking
Revised Street Network Vision

CHANGES:
• Network “vision”
• Show I-5 ramp
• NW Quadrant grid approach
• Minor refinements
Street Network Tiers

Tier 1: Location critical to network

Tier 2: 600 x 600 “superblocks”

Tier 3: Site access, connectivity & mode shift
Large Block Connectivity Plans

- Tier 1 and 2 streets delineated
- Large blocks
- Barriers to connectivity
Connectivity Plan

- Establishes alignments for Tier 3 streets
  - Allow for flexibility

- Connectivity standards
  - 650 ft frontage max
  - 1800 ft perimeter max
  - 350 ft pedestrian frontage max
  - Align intersections

- Future development follows Plan
  - Building orientation/placement
  - Dedication/construction with major development
Connectivity Thresholds

• Striking the right balance
  – Reasonable maintenance & investment
  – Predictable progress toward network

• Types of thresholds
  – Connectivity Plan – lower threshold
  – Dedication/construction – higher threshold

• Exceptions
  – Small parcels
  – Customized connectivity approach
Funding

• Property owner cost-benefit evaluation
• City commitment
• Develop funding strategy
  – Grants
  – Up front EIS reimbursement
  – Local Improvement Districts
  – City catalytic funds
  – New funding approaches
Requesting feedback…

- Tiered street network
- Connectivity Plan
- Thresholds
- Funding
Next Steps

- Transportation Commission
- Stakeholder Group
- Council Study Session
- Planning Commission Plan rollout
My name is John Brekke and my family is a commercial property owner of a 5 acre business park which we built in the Tacoma Mall area.

We are excited to the City of Tacoma taking time and dedicating resources to improving the area. We have taken part in many of the public meetings over the last several months. We appreciate the planning department’s willingness to listen and take some of our input into account.

This is a 30 year plan but this has immediate financial impact of private property owners.

We want to own, operate, maintain and improve our existing buildings for their remaining useful life. The current connectivity plan being presented tonight contains aspects that are not practical, harm property values, and creates disincentives to owners and businesses.

We had success with the City of Tukwila on a right of way dedication in their urban center. We did this because the city paid for the improvements, we were not negatively impacted, it was voluntary and provided benefit to both the city and us a private property owners.

We appreciate the desire to provide more connectivity. We want to see this connectivity evolve using existing right of ways. We are asking the planning commission to recommend connectivity improvements using existing ROW in the 6 year transportation improvement plan and budget.

We ask the planning commission to help recommend a practical connectivity which:

- Is tied to parcel redevelopment
- Let’s owners benefit from their remaining useful life of their buildings
- Considers topographical restraints
- Is mindful of private property rights
- Has appropriate timing
- Spells out who owns, pays for and builds the connectivity improvements

Owners and businesses need high thresholds for compliance with connectivity. Retenanting buildings needs to be exempt from providing a connectivity plan. Specifically we need to perform typical tenant improvements on existing buildings in the usual $60 - $85 PSF range without triggering connectivity requirements.

The right time for connectivity requirements is when property is being redeveloped. Not when the current property owner is trying to maintain, improve and re-tenant current buildings.

No one’s interest is served if this plan is impractical and serves as a disincentive to further investment.

We invite and welcome a chance to have you tour our business park with us at 3630-3680 South Cedar Street. We can show and explain to you first hand many of our concerns. Please consider taking us up on this offer.

Thank you very much for taking time to develop the right plan for the area.

John Brekke (425) 451-1511 john@brekkeproperties.com
November 14, 2016

Mr. Peter Stackpole
Pierce Transit
3701 96th St. SW
Lakewood, WA 98499-4431

RE: 2016 Route Analysis: Moving Forward

Dear Mr. Stackpole,

Thank you and your colleagues for providing a briefing on Pierce Transit’s long-range plan, Destination 2040 and the status of the 2016 Route Analysis at the Tacoma Planning Commission’s meeting on November 2, 2016.

The Planning Commission is a citizen’s advisory group to the City Council on urban planning issues. We assist the City of Tacoma in the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, One Tacoma, and the associated land use regulations. We also review various local and regional planning projects, such as the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan that is currently underway, the City’s Mixed-Use Centers Review, and the ST3 Plan by Sound Transit. We see a lot of correlation between Pierce Transit’s planning efforts and what we do.

Overall, we support the improvements to route efficiency, span, and frequency as proposed in Alternative 2 of the 2016 Route Analysis and the overall level of service proposed for the City’s designated mixed-use centers. We believe that Alternative 2 will better support new transit ridership than Alternative 1. However, we also believe that with a few modifications Alternative 2 could be improved and do more to support the City of Tacoma’s long-range transit priority network as well as better achieve Pierce Transit’s long-range plan, Destination 2040. These modifications include:

- Tacoma is a waterfront city with limited access to the waterfront. Our first recommendation is to enhance service to the City’s waterfront areas instead of reducing service. Specifically:
  - Alternative 2 proposes to cut one of only two waterfront transit access points (Old Town). We recommend that Pierce Transit re-consider this service reduction and instead explore re-routing the #13 to take Schuster Parkway and Dock Street to the Tacoma Dome to provide enhanced waterfront service as well as improved service to the Downtown Regional Growth Center. The Foss Waterway is a growing waterfront community as well as a tourist and recreation area and would greatly benefit from the service.
  - Point Ruston is a rapidly developing mixed-use community in close proximity to Point Defiance and Ruston Way that incorporates a significant number of new residential units, jobs, and destination uses. We would like to see greater consideration given to providing transit service to Point Ruston to serve both the residents and employees of that community, but also to serve the many visitors. There are concerns over the use of a seasonal ‘trolley’ service to serve this area long-term, particularly given the growth and...
residential units being added in the city’s newest mixed use center, Point Ruston. Future expansion of service should consider a dedicated route option for this area. This area could also be a good candidate for application to the FTA’s ‘Sandbox’ program, which would use Transportation Networking Companies (e.g. Uber, Lyft, etc.) and/or taxi companies to coordinate on-demand rides within certain areas through the use of app-based technology. These strategies would be a pro-active approach to build transit ridership in coordination with the new development activity.

- The city is currently conducting a subarea planning effort for the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center. The Mall serves as both a local and regional retail destination and a hub for transit. We suggest that Pierce Transit evaluate further modifications to the proposed system map to provide increased transit access to the Mall. Specifically:
  - Substantial public comment has been provided by stakeholders in the Tacoma Mall subarea plan regarding the lack of bus service throughout the entire 38th Street corridor. Modifications to Route 41 to better serve the commerce areas on S. 38th Street between S. Alaska Street and S. Tacoma Way, while still connecting to the Tacoma Mall transit hub.

- Consider increasing the frequency of service on certain popular routes, such as Route 1, before encountering “bus bunching.”

Additionally, a direct connection between the North End neighborhood and the Tacoma Mall Growth Center should be considered under future updates to Destination 2040. While service like this will be prohibitively costly at this point, future consideration should be made to directly connect the North End to the Tacoma Mall, particularly given the city’s employment goals for this regional growth center.

Pierce Transit’s aspirational growth scenario under Destination 2040 anticipated a 3% annual service hour growth. Under the 2016 Route Analysis, Pierce Transit is proposing a 12% increase in service hours. This is an opportunity to really get ahead of the curve. And this type of opportunity may not come again. We ask that Pierce Transit take additional time to consider our comments and the further opportunity to advance both the City’s and Pierce Transit’s long term plans.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

CHRIS BEALE, AICP
Chair, Tacoma Planning Commission

c. Tacoma Transportation Commission
Brian Boudet, Planning Services Manager, Planning and Development Services Department