

Tacoma Permit Advisory Group

Virtual meeting

Meeting #37 – July 20th, 2022, 2:00pm

Task Force Members in attendance: Layne Alfonso, Clinton Brink, Jim Dugan, Michael R. Fast, Ben Ferguson, Justin Goroch, Mandy McGill, Claude Remy

Excused: Joshua Jorgensen

Absent: John Wolters

2:10 PM: Welcome

2:14 PM: Quick updates: City staff new items of interest

Tacoma Permit Advisory Group (TPAG) is interested in the permit volumes and types as those are indicators for business activity.

2:19 PM: Outreach & Recruitment

Tacoma City Council adopted [Resolution 40967](#) to establish the Tacoma Permit Advisory Group (TPAG) in May 2022 and with this change the group will adapt a recruitment process. TPAG will vote to request recruitment and then [City of Tacoma Media and Communications Office \(MCO\)](#) will be contacted to advertise. Applications received will be voted on by the chair, co-chair and staff with City Manager having final authority to appoint new members.

Current member Joshua Jorgensen sent notice of moving to Tacoma Public School. It was discussed that Joshua Jorgensen could continue to participate if desired.

Currently TPAG has 7 vacancies. The application would be posted on the [Tacoma Permit Advisory Group webpage](#).

As the chair, Jim Dugan will perform outreach in the community for TPAG recruitment.

- Layne Alfonso moves to pass the recommendation to recruit. Mandy McGill seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.

2:26 PM: Approval of past meeting minutes

- Meeting #35 on May 18th 2022 – Ben Ferguson moved. Claude Remy seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.
- Meeting #36 on June 15th 2022 – Claude Remy moved. Justin Goroch seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.

2:30 PM: Outreach & Recruitment Continue

Claude Remy brought up the desire to have elected group members be residents of the City of Tacoma. It was discussed that diversity is written in the resolution and Corey Newton will send out a copy of Resolution 40967 again.

- Claude Remy moves to begin recruit. Clinton Brink seconded. Motion approved.

Corey Newton will work with MCO on a news release to serve as the public notice for the application to be released. This will abide by Resolution 40967.

Clinton Brink suggests reaching out to individuals that provide the most business in Tacoma. As recruitment chair Jim Dugan will reach out. Corey Newton will provide Jim Dugan with a list of the highest volume applicants in the city so that focused recruitment can take place.

2:38 Unanticipated Discovery Plan

Corey presented [Unanticipated Discovery Plan \(UDP\)](#) from 01-2022 Directors rule. All development permits will have to comply with this plan. It will automatically be attached to specific permits as part of a general template and for custom plans a UDP will be provided. UDP illustrates that if an artifact is found, construction must stop and contractor must follow the guided outline of next steps to handle the discovery. If there is a desire for additional information TPAG can ask Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer to present.

Q: Will all development permits require UDP and how is that defined?

A: All construction with earth disturbance will require a UDP. Smaller projects will have the generic template UDP attached for the ease of these projects.

Q: How is large versus small defined?

A: Could be defined by SEPA thresholds, requirements differ based on the geographic area's needs.

Q: When will the template be available?

A: The template is still in process. A draft has been made and it is expected to be completed within the next month. UDP's will be attached to permits issued within accel.

2:48 PM: Parking Overview Questions and Discussion

Parking requirements within Tacoma differ from district to district. This is a matter with the public ROW and overlaps with traffic and site requirements. Parking requirements come from a 1953 zoning code to advance land use efficacy and protect surrounding areas and businesses. The purpose is to protect overflow parking from more intense uses into less intense uses. It is recognized that parking development is expensive and gradually the city has reduced parking requirements over the year.

2:50 PM: Questions and Discussion

There are a lot of commercial development in mixed use areas because of the simpler parking requirements. With new construction abiding by the current standards this raises a concern that existing buildings that were built prior to these standards will have to make costly and difficult changes. There is a request to have a balance of what is needed versus what is just expected due to the standard outline. It is suggested that perhaps parking codes could be up for discussion so that changes to advance parking requirements for specific projects can take place.

It is communicated that traffic codes are related to safety. Land use has great non-conforming standards however, those standards do not exist when there is a safety concern.

Can the standard policies be challenged within reason? What is appropriate for TPAG to do versus just opinions being discussed?

Suggestion that the focus should be on permitting not parking policy. Possibly there just needs to be more information on what is available for parking within the city. Provide resources to show public all the current parking availability within the city.

The city acknowledges that sites are not one size fits all, there are negotiations with applicants to get to best possible result. The city needs to know about areas where parking is an issue since staff isn't always aware. Proposed question is if the amount of money spent from a developer is worth the incremental improvement to safety? Speculation that if the city was spending its own money, then the guidelines would be adjusted.

Jim Dugan states a reminder, one privilege of this group is to provide feedback on policy items. Doesn't have to stay only in permit process.

Suggestion that parking requirements are directly related to the type of developments that are being produced in areas. This may be preventing the right type of development the city needs.

Shirley Schultz stresses that under current code landscaping, parking, and waste management all must be considered for the location and depending on the zone there can be variance in parking requirements.

Consensus is to continue to keep staff involved on what policies are frustrating to developers and see what policies would be a candidate for potential changes and what is off limits due to strict guidelines. TPAG would like to revisit the parking requirements and have city staff involvement.

Parking requirements are good. Without them a project with lack of parking would suffer.

3:27PM: Final comments

Homework for TPAG non-city staff is to make a list of grievances and convert each complaint with the recommendations for change. Email to attention Char at permitadvisorygroup@cityoftacoma.org

Jim Dugan states he will get busy with recruitment to fill vacant spots on TPAG.

3:29PM: Adjourn