

Tacoma Permit Advisory Group

Hybrid meeting

Meeting #51 November 15th, 2023 2:00pm

Advisory Group Members in attendance: Layne Alfonso, Clinton Brink, Jim Dugan, Michael R. Fast, John Wolters, Claude Remy

Excused: Ben Ferguson, Justin Goroch, Robert Laing

Absent: Jason Gano, Mandy McGill, Ken Miller

2:05 PM Welcome

2:05 PM Approval of Minutes

No minutes to approve. Will approve meeting #50 at a later date.

2:07 PM Public Comment

- Mandy McGill put in resignation 11/2023 and will no longer be a member of TPAG.
- Justin Goroch has changed positions and membership will be reclassified within TPAG.
- No comments were provided by the public at this time.

2:08 PM Quick updates: City staff new items of interest

- Administrative updates: PDS is working on increasing staff and finalizing 2024 budgeting.
- TPAG Recruitment – Corey has submitted the packet to the City Manager for final member appointment.

2:10 PM Subcommittee reports

- Outreach & recruitment – Jim Dugan
 - Two new members to start in early 2024. Losing current member Mandy McGill. Will have another recruitment start in January.
 - One application has been submitted and is pending review from leadership.
- Design review – Ben Ferguson
 - Not in attendance. No update.
- Home in Tacoma – Ben Ferguson & Claude Remy
 - On today's agenda.
- Impact Fees –Mandy McGill
 - Mandy McGill is not in attendance. Leadership will take action to find a replacement to take over subcommittee impact fees.
- Sidewalk Policies & Recommendations – Justin Goroch and the committee
 - Justin is not in attendance. City staff Chris Johnson to write up a draft policy.
- Unit Lot Subdivision (ULS)- Ben Ferguson
 - John Wolters reports that the subcommittee met Monday 11/13/2023 with city staff Elliott Barnett and looked at sketches. Challenges notated were with

parking areas, especially when there is no alley on the site. Tree requirements did not seem to be a large concern regarding site space.

2:16 PM Home In Tacoma PowerPoint 1

Senior Planner Elliott Barnett with PDS Comprehensive Planning presents an update with Home In Tacoma.

Revised project schedule timeline:

- July-December 2023, Develop full package & EIS Consultation
- January-March 2024, Planning Commission Public Hearing, Release Draft EIS, and Planning Commission recommendation
- April-June 2024, City Council review, Release Final EIS, Council Public Hearing, and Council action

The City of Tacoma's planning department is currently in a review process of the State Department of Commerce's middle housing requirements.

Unit Lot Subdivision (ULS) Subcommittee- Met earlier this week and went over scenarios to help understand how everything will fit on a site plan and then staff can create the policies from there. Elliott Barnett says thank you to TPAG for the ability to learn from these hypothetical developments while working with city review experts and topic experts so that standards can be adequately adjusted. Corey Newton is working with City utilities and planning staff to review amenity and service standards including locations, separation, and number of services per unit. We are identifying ways to reduce space demands. Elliott Barnett explains, at first, it was discussed to use actual sites to try and plan- however, once the subcommittee started it was obvious there were too many variables and needed to work with typical hypothetical scenarios instead so they could get them dialed in and then work with adding in variables.

Six scenarios (Illustrated on slide 3) were discussed. Possible housing that is allowed by zoning, is likely to get built, and pushes the upper limit to what would be allowed. Scenarios are a combination of sites with and without alleys ranging from existing houses to multiplex units. The illustration is not complete yet. The subcommittee will continue to work on this and add more details. The illustration key at this time is that blue represents space provided for solid waste and green is the space provided for amenity space.

Layne Alfonso clarifies if the intent is to get this done before going to the planning commission in January 2024? Elliott Barnett answered yes, the goal is to have this available for discussion at December's TPAG meeting and if needed can adjust the plan from there.

Site plan research includes things that require space (zoning, frontage, parking, and utilities). The planning department is working with internal subject matter experts on the processes.

Chris Johnson suggests letting the subcommittee see what the city side is working on, with utilities. Chris Johnson feels that the paths are lining up. HOA, side sewers, water services, solid waste- lots of new standard conversations going on. Hopes to have another subcommittee meeting before the December TPAG. Corey Newton adds that standards are from a state level

and things are challenging but it is being worked on. Working with the planning commission and going to the council next Tuesday.

Topics HIT needs guidance on include building design standards, ULS, residential target area, land uses, building code changes, bonus program, middle housing market feasibility, and round 3 engagement.

There are currently five different housing types (Houseplex, Backyard Building, Rowhouse, Courtyard Housing, and Multiplex). Restructuring the code to focus on elements of where the building sits on a lot, the space between buildings, and how big is the building. (Building design standpoint).

Promoting ownership, affordability, and accessibility- ULS (single site with separate ownership opportunities), Visitability requirement- looking for ways to address housing for ADA. Tacoma adopted appendix 1, so out of 3 or more units there would be this visitability requirement added. This appendix includes a basic level of accessibility, for example, ADA accessibility to a bedroom and bathroom at a minimum.

Layne Alfonso clarifies if it is three separate units would the visitability requirement still apply? Elliott Barnett replies no. This requirement is attached to a building, not the lot. The building review group is currently studying other jurisdictions with this in place.

Jana Magoon struggles with this standard now- she feels it incentivizes duplexes and separate units. With this in place, developers will choose to do separate units and that is not the goal.

John Wolters asks if that comes with accessible parking requirements as well? Elliott Barnett answers no, just an accessible sidewalk. Will have staff expertise come back to discuss this in more detail.

Jim Dugan expresses that parking and sidewalks are always and still a major problem. John Wolters suggests the idea of utilizing street parking space. Street space that gets utilized when someone moves in so that when needed the development can convert the spot to ADA. Trash cans on the street with pick up day only and a notice that parking is not allowed those days?

Elliott Barnett explains another action being worked on is to expand Multifamily Tax Exemptions (MFT) to all Mid-scale Residential areas with 12- and 20-year options. Implementing this as it is a council direction.

Land use changes include:

- Increase options for small, neighborhood-serving businesses
- Operational limits to reduce neighborhood impacts, more flexibility in UR-3
- Support adaptive reuse of "Heritage Buildings" in busier locations

This will allow flexibility in residential areas without large neighborhood impacts. Increase neighborhood businesses (one is already allowed) in UR- 3.

- Special needs housing reduces barriers to shared and supportive housing.

This is state law and will improve the flexibility of short-term rentals. Concerns with this is that it could cause a problem with these zoning changes. Some jurisdictions regulate short-term rentals very strictly, however, Tacoma may not see the same problems.

Jim Dugan inquires what is short-term rental? Jana Magoon answers it is no more than 30 consecutive days.

Elliott Barnett shares details on affordability, anti-displacement and bonus programs being developed.

State legislation has given direction with housing bill 1110 to allow two additional units if they are affordable units.

Bonuses program -ECONW consulting looked at draft standards and they said it will be financially feasible. It is going to increase the range of price points available in the neighborhoods. However, they also determined more actions are still needed for lower income. Development bonuses such as the 2 extra units will help. If you have affordable units, you can have more units, taller units, parking reductions (even though parking standards are going down), and MFT redemption. Affordability units or retention of existing buildings will both provide public benefit.

Clinton Brink comments that he likes the idea of having bonuses for retention of existing buildings- but will these bonuses really incentivize current developers? UR 1 and 2 would only benefit from parking reductions so he suggests coming up with better bonus options. Possibly reduce amenity space? Tree coverage requirements?

Elliott Barnett appreciates knowing what flexibility will make the biggest difference.

3:15 PM Discussion

Layne Alfonso suggested that with new task force members joining in January 2024, it would be great for current members to be in person to welcome them! January 17th 2024 is the first meeting in the new year.

Clinton Brink inquires if ULS are going to be allowed onto existing sites without updates? Not just to newly developed sites? Elliott Barnett answers that the ULS code will allow you to subdivide land and own it separately but there may be building code requirements that will have to be implemented as part of the project. Clinton Brink would like to speak with the building department about that- he feels that current structures were built up to the code standard at that time and they are living there without problems. Just because you are adding another building you should not require the existing building to be changed.

John Wolters asks if offsite improvements with UR3 zones for more commercial areas, do you think there will be alley and street project improvements?

Chris Johnson answers if new yes you will have to make those improvements. So does subdividing a lot require off-site improvement? That needs to be decided on and is the topic of current conversations.

John Wolters adds that the city is not interested in outside groups coming into Tacoma to build on the HIT sites. Can there be a training for current residents? We want Tacoma residents to own and take care of the sites. Is there a program that the city can organize to have support?

Elliott Barnett agrees this is a great idea. Chris Johnson adds education on a large-scale outreach has not been done. Elliott Barnett favors there should be education and training for the community.

Jim Dugan feels there should be an onramp portal to allow people into this so there is greater success for the future.

Clinton Brink would like to have Chris Johnson inquire about what would be required when developing around existing buildings. What are frontage unit requirements when the developer is only doing 1/3 of the site? Chris Johnson explains this is in discussion but at a minimum any damaged sidewalk needs to be repaired. If not how will the city ever have connecting sidewalks? Clinton Brink adds that this would result in fewer subdivisions as requiring this will not encourage developers to build residential homes. He appreciates the concern about the city not having the sidewalks it needs but feels it will result in fewer homeownership opportunities.

3:26 PM Final comments

Continue subcommittees

January TPAG will strongly encourage in-person attendance to welcome new members, plan for the new year, and subjects/prioritization.

3:29 PM Adjourn