



**City of Tacoma
Sustainable Tacoma Commission
DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

Date: December 14, 2023

Commission Members Present: Matthew Benedict (in-person), Lexi Brewer (in-person), Mike Chang, Evlondo Cooper (Co-Chair), John Doherty (in-person), Sheena Hewett, Tony Ivey, Laura Svancarek, Casey Twiggs, Lowell Wyse (in-person)

Commission Members Excused: Devynee Lee, Adam Reichenberger, Margaret Schwertner (Co-Chair)

Others Present:

Office of Environmental Policy & Sustainability: LaKecia Farmer (in-person), Kristin Lynett (in-person), Carson Brock, Mike Carey (in-person), Perry Spring (in-person)

Rochelle Gandour-Rood, Tacoma Public Utilities

Elliott Barnett, Planning and Development Services (in-person)

Call to Order & Roll Call

This meeting was called to order by Commission Co-Chairperson Evlondo Cooper at 5:05 pm, including an acknowledgement of the traditional indigenous lands this Commission conducts its business on. The Chair welcomed Commissioners, staff, and members of the public. Then, Evlondo administered an extended roll call, where Commissioners acknowledged their attendance.

Unanimous Approval of December 14, 2023 Meeting Agenda

Unanimous Approval of November 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Public Comment

Jess Stone is present to listen to meeting about Tree Code. Courtney Davis is excited about City Council tree code, and is a part of Tacoma Urban Tree Friends who advocated for updated codes for protection on trees on private property.

Staff Updates

OEPS Staff gave updates on:

- Lakecia gave updates on Sustainability Small Grants: City is reviewing grants in terms of legal issues. OEPS is able to continue Sustainability Small Grants in 2024 and should have a website update in January, and hopefully should be able to award starting in April.
- Kristin gave an update on Jim Parvey's Retirement party
- Kristin gave an update on Green Business Tours and networking: going to start in January with Richlite and will happen every other month

Additional updates from STC Commissioners:

- Commissioner co-chair Evlondo Cooper gave an update about deconstruction conversation with Deputy Mayor Walker, will have her come and talk to STC and potentially sponsor resolution to address process for supply and demand, codes, etc. Will have STC start draft on resolution possibly in January

Home in Tacoma Phase 2- Landscaping Standards- Presentation

Elliott Barnett and Mike Carey gave their presentation on the potential landscaping standards code changes as a part of the Home in Tacoma Phase II package. In addition to the slides presented, Elliott and Mike gave several updates. The landscaping code updates, as a part of the package, will be going out for public comment soon, and they are looking to other urban communities on how to structure this program. Additionally, there will be a variety of small, medium, and large trees: creating the right soil volume is critical in ensuring trees that are planted are healthy.

Commissioners asked questions about private trees, and how to ensure people can't cut trees they want to for developing. Additionally, presenters answered questions around tailoring tree credits for areas that already have tree coverage versus others. Staff responded that these landscaping standards as written would work on tree coverage for all sites and not pick and choose which areas should have more trees or not depending on neighboring areas. A commissioner asked a question about soil volume and if the amendment will address future problems with the tree, such as with sidewalk improvement surrounding the tree. Staff explained that this amendment is making sure these trees can thrive in these environments and will help with stormwater infrastructure and ADA sidewalk compliance.

Landscaping Standards/Trees Subcommittee- Discussion

The Home in Tacoma Phase II landscaping standards (trees) subcommittee have been meeting about these issues and are developing a draft letter to review in the upcoming months on their thoughts around this package. Various members gave comments so far on their takeaways: They want the same priority and timing of enforcement as other Home in Tacoma policies, Tacoma would be the first city in the state to implement common-sense regulations for housing density and tree retention at the same time.

Other commissioners gave initial comments, including around figuring out who is going to decide if the tree can or cannot be replaced, there may be issues with people cutting corners and arborists should be doing this work to review and evaluate if this tree is healthy or a hazard.

Trees are Stormwater infrastructure and want to make sure that the City isn't removing trees for rain gardens. Trees need to be in the conversation when discussing stormwater mitigation.

Commissioner Twiggs brought up a concern that the biodiversity code is outdated and needs to be a balance of sustainability and development. To her, the code is confusing and is creating barriers for affordable housing. The WA Dept of Commerce is directed by HB 1220 that instructs all jurisdictions that they need to plan for and accommodate affordable units. Commerce then created housing allocation numbers for each jurisdiction showing how many units of all income levels need to be built by 2044, this is called the Housing All Planning Tool (HAPT).

Municipal Building Decarbonization- Presentation

Perry Spring gave his presentation on the Municipal Decarbonization Strategy/Fleet EVSE Action Plan. In addition to the slides presented, Perry gave several updates. TPU was not in the Decarb study that looked at the 9 different buildings. The study includes the cost of carbon and also looks into the savings to more efficient technology. The study does not talk about carbon just energy usage and intensity. Not all campuses are all homebase (i.e. with police vehicles, they have a lot of at home vehicles that don't stay on campus). Not all sites for the city have the same charging infrastructure, the City has to determine what is the best charging for each site. The City added more chargers in the downtown corridor, from grant funding the city received. The city is looking at more grant funding for getting more EVSE and changing fleet vehicles to EV. The City received grants for EV garbage pickup trucks and the grant comes with fast charging stations. Perry and OEPS is preparing for the next budget cycle.

Public Comment

No further public comments were delivered verbally during this agenda item.

Tentative Objectives for the Next Meeting (January 18, 2024)

- End of year survey and look ahead for 2024

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Commission unanimous approved an adjourned at 7:06pm.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be held hybrid on Thursday January 18th, 2024, at 5:00pm, on zoom and at Tacoma Municipal Building, room 248.

O *Evlondo Cooper III*

O *Margaret Schwertner*

Evlondo Cooper and Margaret Schwertner, Co-Chairs

LaKecia Farmer *Carson Brock*

LaKecia Farmer and Carson Brock, Staff / Note Takers