



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING

DRAFT AGENDA

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2020
5:00 PM TO 7:00 PM**

**TACOMA MUNICIPAL BUILDING
747 MARKET STREET, ROOM 248**

- I. ROLL CALL**
- II. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2020 MEETING NOTES**
- III. REVIEW OF AGENDA**
- IV. TCC WETLAND & POTENTIAL HEIDELBERG SPORTS VILLAGE PROJECT**
- V. STAFF UPDATES**
- VI. SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES**
- VII. REVIEW EARTH DAY SUSTAINABILITY SMALL GRANTS**
- VIII. WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT**
- IX. SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**
- X. COMMISSION FEEDBACK & PRACTICES FOR 2020**
- XI. APPROVE RULES OF PROCEDURE AMENDMENT**
- XII. OTHER PUBLIC COMMENT**
- XIII. OBJECTIVES FOR NEXT MEETING**
- XIV. ADJOURNMENT**



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February 12, 2020

MetroParks Board
4702 S. 19th St.
Tacoma, WA 98405

Dear President Pointer and members of the Board,

The mission of Tahoma Audubon is to connect people with nature through education, recreation and conservation. We are concerned about a recommendation by a MetroParks' consultant to develop recreational fields on the property owned by Tacoma Community College east of campus. The recommendation is posted on MetroParks' website. We are a 500-member organization that stands with the 4,000 people who signed a petition against the recommendation to build on this site.

The site under consideration is a natural area with more than 50 percent native vegetation and several wetlands. It is one of the few areas left in Tacoma that provides habitat for birds and access to nature for residents. More than 65 species of birds have been observed in the area.

Thelma Gilmur, one of the founding mothers of Tahoma Audubon, took children there to teach them about the native plants and animals on a regular basis. Tahoma Audubon still uses the site for educational purposes. For example, this year's Youth Bird Drawing Contest features ducks and their wetland habitats. A map of local wetlands that students can visit and learn from includes the TCC site. Tahoma Audubon is committed to finding more ways to activate the TCC wetlands through our program offerings in the future

Numerous studies have documented that nature provides both physical and mental health benefits for people. As we work to accommodate an increasing population, access to nature in urban areas becomes more challenging and more critical to maintaining healthy communities. Conserving these remaining places for birds and people is critical to quality of life in the city.

The Washington State Growth Management Act and the City of Tacoma's land use regulations require protection of critical areas and their buffers. The site contains several wetlands and is designated a biodiversity corridor by the City of Tacoma.

When the consultant evaluated this wetland adjacent to the proposed soccer fields, the report looked only at the wetlands. It did not evaluate the need for protection as part of a biodiversity corridor designated by the City. Given the limited analysis of this and the three other sites

considered in the report, building the project would seem to fail the first legal test under the City's critical areas regulations.

Section 13.11.240.A.1 requires a permit applicant to show that the project cannot be reasonably accomplished using one or more sites in the general region that would avoid or result in less adverse impacts to the critical areas. It does not appear that there is enough room to build this project and protect the critical areas including their buffers, including any required on-site mitigation.

The consultant's report states that the construction of eight soccer fields with parking at this location is "approvable through a long, but relatively predictable, permitting process, including critical areas review". The consultant did not consult with any of the permitting agencies prior to issuing the report. It seems irresponsible to post a report on the MetroParks web site that indicates the project is "approvable".

Tahoma Audubon Society recognizes the need to provide recreational facilities for youth soccer. Getting kids outside and active is important for physical and mental health. Tahoma Audubon appreciates MetroParks' stated intent to now convene a steering committee to develop criteria for selecting a site for a youth soccer complex.

We hope MetroParks will take into consideration our concerns with the previous process for developing site recommendations, and to include community comment earlier and more regularly in your site selection process. We look forward to working with you to find more appropriate locations to best serve the needs of youth soccer programs.

Regards,

Kirk Kirkland

Kirk Kirkland
Conservation Chair



Jan. 30, 2020

Steering Committee Forming for Athletic Fields Complex Siting Project

Metro Parks accepting applications for committee membership

Metro Parks is forming a steering committee of stakeholders to participate in the research and analysis project for a proposed athletic fields complex to serve the community's growing needs.

In 2016, Metro Parks and the Tacoma School District conducted a comprehensive athletic field study that identified a community-wide shortfall of fields to meet current and future needs for youth and community sports and recreation. Our northwest climate creates challenges for the ever-increasing demand for outdoor fields that can accommodate a variety of sports year round. Data suggests the need for eight fields to accommodate community needs and interests which if aggregated within a complex could provide a fiscally sustainable program for operation.

Last year, a feasibility study sparked by a proposed soccer stadium also reviewed four potential sites for an 8-field sports complex and recommended a site on the eastern margins of the Tacoma Community College campus. The steering committee is forming to take a deeper dive into that analysis and will include further review of the four sites as well as consideration of any other possible locations.

The steering committee will help guide efforts to determine possible locations for a regional sports complex that could potentially consist of lighted synthetic turf sport fields (striped for multiple sports), parking areas, restrooms and other ancillary supporting infrastructure. In addition, the general public will be afforded multiple opportunities to provide input through a series of public meetings and workshops as the siting project progresses.

The goal is to produce an updated recommendation in late spring. The athletic field study and the feasibility study are both available [online](#). Final decisions will be made in the future by the Board of Park Commissioners and potential partners, subject to available funding.

Those interested in keeping informed of this project or serving on the steering committee should submit their contact information through this online form [– Athletic Fields Complex Siting Project interest form](#).

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Media Contact:

Hunter George, Chief Communications Officer, (253) 305-1065, hunterg@tacomaparks.com



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

Date: February 20, 2020

Commission Members Present: Emily Pinckney, Matthew Benedict, Elly Claus-McGahan, Jade Monroe
Evlondo Cooper, Lexi Brewer, Grace Hope, Ashley Sloan, Tony Ivey
Phil Coughlan, Todd Hay, Liberty Evans-Agnew

**Commission Members
Excused:**

**Commission Members
Absent:**

Others Present: Patrick Babbitt, Kristin Lynett, Jim Parvey

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Jade Monroe at 5:00 p.m.

Approval of January 23, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Jade Monroe

Seconded by: Tony Ivey

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion we declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Abstained: None

Approval of February 20, 2020 Meeting Agenda

Motion: Jade Monroe

Seconded by: Tony Ivey

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion we declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Abstained: None

Staff Updates

Sustainability Expo – Saturday, March 14, 2020, 10:00am-3:00pm

The event will be held at the Tacoma Convention Center and will showcase a Sustainable Fashion Show – New Trash Fashion. A sign-up sheet will be going out for STC members to volunteer to cover the booth for one-hour blocks.

Staff will prepare signage and snacks for STC Expo booth. The Commission is asking for Commissioners to sign-up for booth shifts. Staff will prepare a Google drive file to sign-up.

TCC Wetlands / Heidelberg Sports Complex Study

Metro Parks Tacoma (MPT) aims to update its recommendation on use of the site sometime in the spring. MPT is asking for applicants for a steering committee. The timeline is unclear, but the committee is tasked with developing site selection criteria. Currently, the project is scoped for 8-10 fields. There is concern whether they could fit without harming the wetlands and negatively impacting Tacoma's tree canopy. At this time, there is no development permit.

Tideflats Interim Regulations

The City is developing a review and public hearing process. Lexi Brewer is serving on an advisory committee outside her Commission role, and will provide further context about this soon.

Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit

Pierce Transit is asking for public comment on project updates provided through a virtual open house.

Sub-Committee Updates

Lexi Brewer reports she is tracking two City projects: Waste Stream Mapping and Residential Infill Pilot. Todd Hay reports he is participating on Tacoma Public Utility's Integrated Resource Plan committee. Grace Sullivan and Todd report they are interested to continue a discussion about building decarbonization in a Commission subcommittee. Phil Coughlan reports other cities are discussing whether to ban single-family housing.

Sustainability Small Grants – Quarterly Review

Leah Michaelson presented on each Earth Day-focused grant that the STC Commission will vote upon.

“Gentle Giant” Tree Sculpture – Awarded at full value: \$5,000

To build a movable, reusable tree sculpture for Earth Day South Sound. Artist to own product in the end. Commission identified follow-up questions for staff to clarify with artist: costs for food, transportation, number of volunteers, and whether public could make use of sculpture beyond Earth Day South Sound. Upon satisfactory response to these questions, the sculpture is to be awarded as noted above.

“Urban Food Forest Digital Design Exhibit” – Awarded up to \$4,000 (requested \$5,000)

To develop a digital design exhibit to engage the public about urban trees through food forest design workshops. Commission identified follow-up questions for staff: whether Alma Mater and Metro Parks Tacoma are supportive, how the artist will ensure adequate public engagement, if the artist can provide examples of past work, if the artist can provide details about what this workshop-like demonstration/presentation will look like. Staff will review the scope of work and budget with the artist. Upon satisfactory response to these questions/comments, the exhibit is to be awarded as noted above.

“Wingin’ It” Sculpture Display – Awarded at full value: \$2,500

To build a butterfly sculpture display. Artist has provided concept design and pictures of past work. Artist will own the sculpture. Commission identified a follow-up question for staff: how sculpture can be available beyond Earth Day South Sound for public use in order to achieve

public art threshold. Upon satisfactory response to this question, the sculpture is to be awarded as noted above.

Grants Vote: Voting to approve all but Urban Food Forest Digital Design Exhibit at full request with conditions communicated to staff.

Motion: Jade Monroe

Seconded by: Tony Ivey

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried.

Ayes: All

Abstained: None

STC Priorities for 2020

The Commission discussed potential priorities to guide their 2020 work plan. This is initial discussion, which will continue in the Commission's Google drive folder and in future meetings. Initial priorities may be:

- Partnerships for sustainability with Tacoma Public Schools, Port of Tacoma, Puyallup Tribe of Indians
 - Green Schools guidelines

STC Subcommittee Assignments

Postponed until next meeting.

Public Comment

No public comments were given.

Objectives for or before the Next Meeting

- Commission feedback for staff for 2020 Commission activities
- Review Environmental Action Plan 2019 progress report draft
- Conversation with Councilmember McCarthy (Chair of Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee)
- Approve amended Rules of Procedure
- Work plan development
- Subcommittee rosters

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Thursday, March 19, 2020 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Room 248.

Lexi Brewer, Chair

Patrick Babbitt, Staff