



## Public Comments

**Meeting:** Wednesday, June 7, 2023

**Submittal:** Written comments received at [planning@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:planning@cityoftacoma.org)  
by 12:00 noon on the meeting day

**Subjects:** Comments are addressing the following Discussion Item(s) on the agenda:

### **F1 – Urban Design Review Program**

**No. of  
Comments:** One





**From:** [Ryan Meacham](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Planning Commission Meeting on June 7, 2023  
**Date:** Sunday, June 4, 2023 9:09:23 AM

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Hi Mary, I'd like to make a comment on the 'urban design review.' Here is the comment and backstory. It is always difficult to keep up with the details of this program and the home in Tacoma without fully published and accessible as to what these programs are rather than outlines. As a local real estate agent and builder, I only get glimpses in these emails of the changes that occur within the City. If this design review is to add 'specific criteria' to the building process, these 'specific criteria' should be done with an abundance of care. I feel that the City current code has several design criteria that were put into code in the past and, once they are in, they are never removed, whether obsolete or not. I believe that code should identify the type of property the City or people want but it should leave the design of the buildings to the architects and builders. Said builds, when designed by the people building them, will either sell in a competitive market or will not. When they sell, the designs are reinforced and rebuilt. When not, the architect or builder typically moves to another type of structure or design.

A quick example is small lot code roof pitch requirement of a min of 6/12 and with the primary gable running in the direction of the lot or perpendicular to the street. For modern homes, a 6/12 roof is unappealing and this forces a builder or designer to make a flat roof, a shed roof, or other, basically designing around a requirement that was put into place so Craftsman homes had a pitched roof rather than a shallow roof, making the Craftsman homes look more authentic. When applied to other home design, this pitched roof doesn't fit. Another example in 'small lot code' is that the home needs some sort of decorative element, a trellis, thick window trim, or other Craftsman features. Again, modern homes do not have or benefit from this 'decorative' look wherein simplicity is more desirable, so designers are forced to work-around this requirement..

In sum, the City doesn't provide us full details on these 'criteria' and the criteria do not update or transition as time and designs change. If the City wants Tacoma to stay in its 'Victorian' or 'Craftsman' stage for perpetuity, Tacoma's home designs will be uninteresting and stagnant. To make a long story short, planning either needs to allow for a link on their website for suggested code changes and actually review them to improve the code OR we need to stop adding criteria and requirements to the design of homes and buildings. I personally, have a lot of suggested code changes and clean-ups and have City emails from planners supporting or waiving certain requirements on our designs, but no code changes ever occur, even when the planners see our design perspectives. Let's not add to the 'design' requirements and make the builder and architect jobs more difficult.

Ryan Meacham  
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**From:** Crabtree, Mary <MCrabtree@cityoftacoma.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 2, 2023 4:44 PM

**To:** Crabtree, Mary <MCrabtree@cityoftacoma.org>  
**Subject:** Planning Commission Meeting on June 7, 2023

Hello:

The Tacoma Planning Commission will meet on **Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.** This hybrid meeting can be attended in person (Council Chambers, 1st floor of the Tacoma Municipal Building, at 747 Market Street), remotely (<https://www.zoom.us/j/88403846060>), or by phone (253-215-8782 and enter the meeting ID 884 0384 6060 when prompted).

There are two discussion items on the agenda:

1. Urban Design Review Program
2. Pacific Avenue Corridor Subarea Plan & EIS ("Picture Pac Ave")

Attached, please find the meeting agenda. To review the full agenda packet that includes appropriate supplemental information for the discussion items, please visit [Planning Commission Agendas and Minutes](#).

Written comments on the discussion items may be submitted to [planning@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:planning@cityoftacoma.org) by 12:00 noon on the day of the meeting.

*You have received this email as an interested stakeholder in Planning Commission business. If you have received this message in error or wish to be removed from this list, please contact [mcrabtree@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:mcrabtree@cityoftacoma.org).*

Thank you.



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