



MINUTES

(Approved on 07-17-2019)

- TIME:** Wednesday, June 19, 2019, 5:00 p.m.
- PLACE:** Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 1st Floor
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
- PRESENT:** Anna Petersen (Vice-Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, Ryan Givens, David Horne, Jeff McInnis, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel
- ABSENT:** Stephen Wamback (Chair)

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Vice-Chair Petersen called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the May 29, 2019 special meeting were approved as submitted.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Urban Design Studio

Mesa Sherriff, Planning Services Division, presented a progress update on the Urban Design Studio. He reviewed the milestones of the design review program and went over the goals that were previously established for the program. He also provided summaries of the recent meetings of the Planning Commission, the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) Committee, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and Project Advisory Group (PAG). Mr. Sherriff displayed a map with potential focus areas for the project.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Edmonds began by noting her concern that Northeast Tacoma does not appear to have any potential projects on the map displayed that would be considered within the Design Review program. Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, clarified that this project would be focused on mixed-use centers at first, and Northeast Tacoma is made up of mostly single-family homes and lacks a designated mixed-use center. Commissioner Edmonds also requested Northeast Tacoma representation within the stakeholder committee advising on the program development.

Commissioners discussed the other areas presented. Commissioner McInnis commented that he would like to see a focus around the Link light rail corridor. Also noted by Commissioners as focus areas were places with future development possibilities, pedestrian corridors, mixed-use centers, downtown, and transition areas. Commissioner Santhuff stated that he thinks the locations identified by staff are perfect, and that the next step would be to define the thresholds for the size and type of project. Mr. Sherriff noted that they would be discussing that in August.

The Commission arrived at a general consensus that priority geographies would include the Downtown Regional Growth Center, Neighborhood Centers, and Pedestrian Corridors as designated in the Comprehensive Plan and TMC 13.06, and that these areas would encompass streets currently planned for high frequency/intensity transit.

2. Public Scoping Hearing: 2020 Amendment – Assessment of Applications

Vice-Chair Petersen called to order the public scoping hearing at 5:39 p.m. and reviewed the procedures. Mr. Atkinson gave an overview of the annual amendment process and explained that the public hearing would be broken into four segments in order to individually address the following Amendment Applications: (1) Heidelberg-Davis Land Use Designation, (2) West Slope Neighborhood View Sensitive Overlay District, (3) Transportation Master Plan Amendments, and (4) Minor Plan and Code Amendments.

(1) HEIDELBERG-DAVIS LAND USE DESIGNATION

Larry Harala, Planning Services Division, introduced the application. He displayed a map of the area and explained the current land use designation of “Parks and Open Spaces”, as well as the proposed designation of “Major Institutional Campus.” Shon Sylvia, Executive Director of Metro Parks Tacoma, spoke on their behalf. He discussed the plans for a soccer stadium and noted that they are in the final stages of a feasibility study for the area. He stated that the results will be shared at a joint study session between Metro Parks Tacoma and the City of Tacoma on July 9th. Debbie Terwilleger, Planning Director for Metro Parks Tacoma, added that they want to preserve the opportunity to move forward with the soccer stadium project, and that they plan to do extensive public outreach after the feasibility study is completed.

Vice-Chair Petersen called for testimony. The following citizens testified:

- Charles Mann – Mr. Mann is the Chair of the Central Neighborhood Council. He discussed the Cubesmart Storage Warehouse that was proposed to be built across from the Allenmore Medical Complex which was ruled against in litigation. He noted that if the citizens were more aware of the decade old zoning amendment to the area, perhaps discussions would have ensured to introduce alternate strategies and avoid litigation entirely. Because of this, the Central Neighborhood Council is resolved to participate in any zoning amendments within its boundaries. They would like to see thoughtful, humane, considerate Tacoma development.
- Doug Schafer – Mr. Schafer is a board member of the Central Neighborhood Council and is the President of the Community Council of Tacoma. He commented that his concern is that the proposal is clearly communicated to citizens. He discussed specific portions of the PDF that was sent out regarding the amendment, and noted that it does not mention the soccer stadium in any materials that he could find. Mr. Schafer urged the Commission to look back at the proposals rejected previously and think about why they were rejected then and what has changed now.
- Venus Dergan – Ms. Dergan is a South Tacoma resident. She commented that she thinks these need to be advertised better so the public knows what is going on with their open space. She stated that she is very concerned with the city’s open space, and that Metro Parks should focus on conserving open space and should look for other options if they want to develop. Ms. Dergan also discussed the fact that developers can reduce their residential yard space based on their location to a school, but it must be an accessible park or school. She commented that if a developer lessens their yard space and then a park is re-zoned, we lose that open space. She stated that not providing people their open space affects their quality of life.

(2) WEST SLOPE NEIGHBORHOOD VIEW SENSITIVE OVERLAY DISTRICT

Mr. Harala explained that this application is requesting to amend city code to create a new category of View Sensitive District (VSD) with a height limit of 20 feet as well as an area wide rezone to designate the area VSD 20. The applicant is the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition, and their Co-Chair Dean Wilson spoke on their behalf. He stated that the application is straightforward and simply asks the City to reconsider it’s one size fits all approach to VSDs. He suggested that this modification could be a good model for the development of criteria for possible future designations.

Vice-Chair Petersen called for testimony. The following citizens testified:

- Tom Rickey – Mr. Rickey discussed the racially discriminatory language found in the Narrowmoor Neighborhood Covenants. He stated that the covenant documents he received when purchasing his home had that language redacted and he was horrified when he found out about the covenants. He explained that after HB 2514 was passed, him and many other residents legally changed their

covenants. He explained that he created the Covenant Committee for the neighborhood, and that there are now 93 residents who have also made that change.

- Jane Evancho – Ms. Evancho is Co-Chair of the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition. She stated that she wanted to speak in favor of the VSD. She also discussed the community outreach done around the subject up until now. She stated that they sent out a postcard survey to the 349 residents, they received a fifty percent response, and of those fifty percent, ninety percent were in favor of the proposal. She asked the Commission to accept the application.
- Anthony Steele – Mr. Steele is a Narrowmoor resident. He asked the Commission to consider removing the detail of grandfathering in existing height-requirements to residents. He explained that he wanted to make sure that if his home was destroyed, he would like to be able to rebuild to the home's original height. He stated that he wanted to make sure that those details were fair to people who purchased their homes for the views.
- Ron Hsu – Mr. Hsu has been a resident of Narrowmoor for 22 years. He stated that he is a Chinese-American living on a Scandinavian named street called Leif Erickson, but that the neighborhood is open and welcoming to all people. He explained that the neighborhood is one of the first in the area with underground wiring to preserve the views and he would like to urge the Commission to approve the application so they can continue to preserve them. He noted that it is not fair for the young families moving into the neighborhood to eventually have a McMansion built in front of them.
- Nancy Parsons – Ms. Parsons lives in the Narrowmoor 3 area and has provided a letter of objections to the Commission by email. She stated that the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition is not a Homeowners Association, but is a self-appointed group of very vocal residents who do not speak for everyone. She explained that if this amendment passes, it would only benefit a tiny section of the residents of the West End and Tacoma in general. She stated that the neighborhood has specific covenants that do allow for two-story homes, but the coalition opposes these and has lost two cases that went up to the Supreme Court on the matter. Ms. Parsons also brought up that the area would be perfect for infill, but due to a lawsuit the neighborhood filed against the city and won in 2014, that will not be an option.

(3) TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, presented an overview of the Transportation Master Plan's (TMP) history. He discussed the adoption of the TMP in 2015, previous amendments in 2017, and the needs and objectives of the proposed amendments for 2020. Mr. Wung also provided a list of applicants and preliminary scope of work for the proposed amendments which included updates to priority networks and project lists, updates to performance measures, incorporating city initiatives, strengthening pedestrian priorities, and modifying policies and cleaning up text.

Vice-Chair Petersen called for testimony. The following citizen testified:

- Jori Adkins – Ms. Adkins lives in the Dome District and read some of the application from the Dome District Business Association that had been submitted to the Transportation Commission in 2018 and included in this TMP Amendments application as an attachment. She noted that pedestrians are the embodiment of the transportation hierarchy, and though this is shown in the TMP, it does not have enough focus. She stated that the next Comprehensive Plan review of the Transportation Element should center on truly understanding how pedestrians deal with the streets and other public spaces. She stated that a pedestrian in downtown is much more than a passenger or driver.

(4) MINOR PLAN AND CODE AMENDMENTS

Mr. Wung discussed the scope of work and objectives for the proposed Minor Plan and Code Amendments. He then displayed a list of the 16 amendments that staff has put together so far. He noted that this list is just a starting off point, and may change and have new items added during the process.

Vice-Chair Petersen called for testimony. The following citizens testified:

- Jori Adkins – Ms. Adkins discussed temporary surface parking in the Dome District. She noted that using vacant lots as temporary surface parking is not very temporary, and once parking is there it

is hard to change. This has been true for the downtown for decades. She explained that she looked through the Subarea Plan for the Dome District and all she could find on the subject was a very weak statement and she would like to see stronger language there.

- Venus Dergan – Ms. Dergan is a board member on the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council. She discussed Ordinance 28511 (adopting the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan) and focused her comment on residential yard space. She noted the loophole where developers were able to reduce yard space based on proximity to a public park or school, but they have been able to do this in situations where the school or park is not accessible. She noted revisions were suggested by Councilmember Beale, but it was tabled and there have not been any results yet from that revision. She asked to see this get back onto the agenda and be more of a priority.

Vice-Chair Petersen closed the public scoping hearing at 6:45 p.m.

(The meeting was recessed at 6:46 p.m. and resumed at 6:55 p.m.)

Commissioners discussed the amendments and requested clarification and additional information as needed. On the topic of the Heidelberg-Davis application, Commissioner Horne requested an email with a summary of the findings of the feasibility study when it becomes available. Commissioner Edmonds requested information about the current use of the property, for example how often the baseball fields are being used. Commissioner Santhuff asked to see alternative methods that would not include institutional zoning, as well as a reminder of previous discussions the Commission has had regarding a corridor study along 19th Street and how likely it is that might resurface. In regards to some of the public comments received, Vice-Chair Petersen clarified that if this amendment does move forward, Metro Parks is not held to developing the soccer stadium so it may not be appropriate to include that information in the outreach. Commissioner Strobel noted that he would like to hear from the school district on how Foss High School may use that area and how this change would affect them going forward.

Concerning the Narrowmoor VSD application, there was discussion about the original intent of VSDs in the City and if it concerns private views. Commissioners asked to see more information on this as well as previous legal matters and precedents regarding VSDs. Commissioner Edmonds requested a map of the entire West Slope to see where this area fits in and to see a larger version of the map showing the buildings that are already over 20 feet in the area. Commissioner McInnis noted that the slope of the area is much more shallow than the Old Town area, and requested to see a cross section of those two areas in order to compare and see if a 25-foot height limit is as effective in the West Slope. Mr. Atkinson stated that staff would see what they could provide before the next meeting, but that may be the type of work that would be done during the analysis phase.

Commissioner Santhuff requested that for the TMP Amendments, there would be a proposed timeline for Transportation Commission and Planning Commission during the amendment process. In regards to the Minor Amendments, he asked if staff had considered the two requests from public comments. Mr. Atkinson provided some clarification and stated staff would provide follow-up at the next meeting.

3. 2019 Amendment Package

Mr. Atkinson provided an overview of the 2019 Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code and facilitated the Commission's formulation of its recommendation to City Council. Staff reviewed the six applications, summarizing the Commission's previous conversations and noting any final changes or outstanding decisions that needed to be discussed. The Commission took the following actions:

(1) FUTURE LAND USE MAP IMPLEMENTATION

Commissioners confirmed the changes made to individual areas per the conversation at the last meeting. Commissioners also discussed the code changes proposed to incentivize retention. Commissioner Givens commented that he likes the idea, but that there has not been enough time to review it. He suggested to move it to the Minor Code Amendments application for 2020. Commissioner Edmonds agreed, noting she does not feel comfortable moving forward with it not being part of the public hearings. Vice-Chair Petersen stated that she also likes the idea, but agrees that it needs more time. She asked if there could be an example to look at in another area with a similar code. Vice-Chair Petersen asked if the Commissioners

would like to push this to a future work plan and include it in the Findings of Fact as something of interest. Commissioners agreed.

In reviewing the additional topics to be included in the Findings and Recommendations, Commissioner Strobel asked about the previous discussion around the Narrows neighborhood and if that was something the Commission would like to add. Mr. Atkinson noted that it was included in the documentation specific to the Narrows, but that it could be included in the letter to the City Council as well. Commissioner McInnis commented that he still does not feel comfortable making the zoning change in the Narrows neighborhood. Commissioner Givens concurred, and stated that he would prefer to leave the area alone until it could be part of a larger discussion on the area. Commissioner Santhuff added that if a decision on the Narrows area is held back, he would like to see it wrapped in with the discussion on incentivizing building retention. Commissioner Strobel stated that he would like to see this area used as an example for other Neighborhood Centers.

Commissioner McInnis made a motion to move the application forward to the City Council, with the revision of removing the Narrows neighborhood to be analyzed in next year's work plan, and to incorporate the modifications made to specific zoning proposals in response to public testimony. Vice-Chair Petersen added to include the discussion on incentivizing retention to the Findings and Recommendations. Commissioner McInnis amended his motion, Commissioner Edmonds seconded and it passed unanimously.

(2) SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM PERIODIC REVIEW

Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Barnett summarized a staff recommendation to modify the proposed exhibits pertaining to the Salmon Beach community, to allow a second story expansion with a Conditional Use Permit. Commissioner McInnis made a motion to forward the Shoreline Master Program Periodic Review as amended to the City Council. Commissioner Givens seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

(3) AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTION STRATEGY INCORPORATION INTO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Commissioner Strobel asked how the AHAS Group would be wrapped up into the recommendation process. Mr. Barnett stated that it is yet to be determined, but that many groups and staff are working together in this process. Commissioner Horne commented that he really like the text that was added regarding historic inequities.

Commissioner Strobel made a motion to forward the application as modified to the City Council. Commissioner Horne seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

(4) HISTORIC PRESERVATION CODE AMENDMENTS

Commissioner McInnis made a motion to forward Historic Preservation Code Amendments to the City Council as proposed. Commissioner Strobel seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

(5) MANITOU POTENTIAL ANNEXATION

Based on the presentation by staff, the Commission discussed the zoning options for the Manitou Potential Annexation area, i.e., Option 1 (C-1, C-2, R-4L and R-2 zoning), Option 2 (C-1, R-4L and R-3 zoning), and Option 3 (C-1, R-4L and R-2 zoning). As noted in the previous meeting, the preference seemed to be between Options 2 and 3. Commissioner McInnis favored Option 2, noting that the R-3 zoning would create a buffer zone between the commercial and the adjacent R-2 zoning in the existing South Tacoma neighborhood. Commissioner Horne disagreed, stating that he would prefer to keep the character of the neighborhood with R-2 zoning in Option 3. Vice-Chair Petersen commented that she is torn between the two options, but if density is a priority, R-3 zoning goes with that. Commissioner Strobel, noting that most of the public comments received asking for R-2 were from residents outside of the affected area, preferred the R-3 zoning. Commissioner Santhuff suggested a new option, to have the properties west of 52nd Avenue zoned R-3 and the properties east zoned R-2. Commissioner Givens also offered a new option of R-2SRD zoning.

Further discussion ensued. Concerning the zoning for the single-family areas, Commissioners recognized that both R-2 and R-3 would be a significant downzone from the current Pierce County's "Mixed-Use

District” designation. Concerning the zoning districts for the commercial areas and the multi-family areas, Commissioners had a consensus about C-1 and R-4L, respectively, being appropriate. Upon concluding the discussion, Commissioner Strobel made a motion to forward the Manitou Potential Annexation to the City Council with zoning Option 2. Commissioner McInnis seconded the motion and it passed 5 to 2 (with Commissioners Edmonds and Horne voting nay).

Mr. Wung verified with the Commission that the Commissioners voting aye were voting for Option 2, with R-3 zoning for single-family areas, and the Commissioners voting nay were in favor of Option 3, with R-2 zoning for single-family areas, and that all Commissioners were in favor of the C-1 and R-4L zoning for commercial and multi-family areas, respectively. Commissioners concurred.

(6) MINOR PLAN CODE AMENDMENTS

Commissioner Strobel made a motion to forward the Minor Plan and Code Amendments to the City Council as proposed. Commissioner McInnis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

After the Commission voted on each application, Mr. Atkinson asked if there were any further modifications and for a vote on the entire 2019 Amendment package. Commissioner McInnis made a motion to forward to the City Council the 2019 Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code as amended by the Planning Commission in response to public comment and testimony. Commissioner Horne seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

E. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETING (JULY 17, 2019)

- (1) 2020 Amendment – Assessment of Applications
- (2) Planning Commission Annual Report 2018-2019 and Planning Work Program 2019-2021

F. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

In addition to the information included in the agenda, Mr. Wung introduced the new office assistant, BT Doan.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

****These minutes are not a direct transcription of the meeting, but rather a brief capture. For full-length audio recording of the meeting, please visit:***

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