



MINUTES

(Approved on 11-18-2020)

TIME: Wednesday, November 4, 2020, 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT (virtually): Anna Petersen (Chair), Jeff McInnis (Vice-Chair), Carolyn Edmonds, Ryan Givens, David Horne, Christopher Karnes, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel, Alyssa Torrez

ABSENT: N/A

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Petersen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda for the meeting was approved. The minutes for the October 21, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments were not accepted at the meeting. No written comments had been submitted previously as directed in the agenda notice.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. 2020 Annual Amendment Package – Recommendation

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, indicated that, at this meeting, the Commission would finalize the Findings and Recommendations, Letter of Recommendation to forward the 2020 Amendment Package to the City Council for consideration. He provided a tentatively timeline of the City Council's actions, in which the 2020 Amendment Package would be adopted on December 8, 2020. A summary of the Commission's preliminary recommendation for each application was also reviewed.

Regarding the View Sensitive Overlay District – Height Limit Change application, Vice-Chair McInnis requested stronger language in the Letter of Recommendation to emphasize the community support that the proposal had received, as well as his and Commissioner Santhuff's deliberation.

Commissioner Strobel moved to forward the Letter of Recommendation prepared by staff to the City Council, to approve the Heidelberg-Davis Site - Land Use Designation Change, deny the View Sensitive Overlay District – Height Limit Change, and approve the Minor Plan and Code Amendments. Commissioner Karnes seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Santhuff agreed with Vice-Chair McInnis' request and commented on the equity concerns of the letter. He elaborated that the equity argument should cover the fact that this proposed height change would be inconsistent with other parts of the City, infringing on individual property rights and their rights to develop to the greatest extent as allowed in the current code, which would in turn affects density goals and diversity housing types. Commissioner Givens suggested referencing the [One Tacoma Plan's Urban Form](#) – Policy UF-13.4 to provide additional information for the City Council. Commissioner Strobel explained that his main concern was over the consistency to the City's

Comprehensive Plan, rather than just the equity issues. Chair Petersen agreed with Commissioner Strobel and added that most of the support for the proposal was from the residents in the View Sensitive District.

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, clarified that the motion was to forward the packet of the Letter and the Recommendation Report to the City Council. The Commissioner concurred. He summarized the Commission's discussion and indicated that the packet would be modified by staff based on the Commission's comments before going to the City Council.

The motion to forward the 2020 Annual Amendment package to the City Council passed unanimously.

Chair Petersen recessed the meeting at 5:24 p.m. and took her leave. Vice-Chair McInnis resumed the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

2. Urban Design Studio – Workshop

Mesa Sherriff, Planning Services Division, introduced two consultants that have been working on the program, Noré Winter from Winter & Company and Keith Walzak from VIA Architecture. Mr. Sherriff informed the Commission that this meeting would cover the operations of the program, the draft manual, and the draft design standards and guidelines.

Keith Walzak, VIA Architecture, began his presentation with the goal and target of the program, which was to establish a new comprehensive citywide design review program to be adopted in Spring 2021. The project timeline and meeting schedule were presented. Mr. Walzak also went over the six (6) key themes of the program – Be Reasonable, Reflect Tacoma's Values, User Friendly, Program Emphasis Areas, Sustainable Development, and Combine Prescriptive Standards with Flexible Design Guidance.

Furthermore, Noré Winter, Winter & Company, reviewed the Operations Manual, consisting of three (3) sections – Introduction, Design Review Operations, and Appendix. The Introduction outlined the general structure of the design review process (by code compliance, by design review staff, and by design review board). The Design Review Operations detailed the implementation strategy, the phasing in the program, and the system mechanics. The Appendix documented how workload for staff and the proposed design review board were projected. There would also be a public-facing user's guide to help explain the program and how to successfully go through the review process.

Mr. Sherriff invited feedback from the Commission on the materials presented so far. Commissioner Givens noted the requirement to have a designer on the design review board, asking staff and consultants to consider credentials. He also wanted clarity on areas with alleys, and reasoning for exempting places of worship and schools. Commissioner Santhuff, while commenting favorably on the key themes, felt it important to distinguish the targeted neighborhood mixed-use centers (MUCs) from the crossroad ones, particularly in the materials for the public outreach and hearing process. Additionally, he would like to make clear that this iteration of the program would focus on the urban aspects of building designs, rather than criteria such as material, color, durability, etc. Vice-Chair McInnis suggested revision to the composition of the design review board to limit the number of non-Tacoma members and keep the majority to be Tacoma residents. The Neighborhood Councils were also suggested to be included in the design review board.

Mr. Walzak proceeded to presenting the structure of Design Guidelines Manual with three (3) main components – Introduction, Geographies, and Standards and Guidelines. He explained the key content of each section and provided relevant examples, focusing on the Standards and Guidelines.

Commissioner Givens recommended having a checklist available to applicants and endorsed various elements in the guidelines. In regards to the Weather Protection feature, he advised consulting with Public Works. Commissioner Santhuff shared the sentiments in Commissioner Givens' comment. He additionally had a question about the timeline for developing Land Use code changes to address the discrepancies in the proposed guidelines, and asked for more examples of breaking down larger lots and buildings not conforming to the requirements.

The discussion continued with examples of buildings around the City, illustrating features relative to massing and scale, public realm, and built form. Also presented was a GIS map showing the project areas on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

E. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETINGS

- 1) Agenda for November 18, 2020 meeting includes:
 - Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations (Scope of Work)
 - Home In Tacoma Project (Workshop)
- 2) Both meetings in December would likely to remain on the schedule; no cancellation. Agenda items for these two meeting would be reorganized and reported later.

F. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

- 1) Ordinance No. 28696 Tideflats Interim and Non-Interim Regulations
 - Mr. Atkinson informed the Commission that the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 28696 extending the current interim regulations through June 2, 2021 and initiating the non-interim regulations process. The Commission was directed to create and forward a recommendation on the non-interim regulations to the City Council prior to the next expiration of the interim regulations. Staff would come back at the next few meetings with more detailed scope and schedule. A scoping hearing was planned for December 2, 2020.
- 2) Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, reported to the Commission of the following:
 - Staff's telecommuting status had been extended to June 28, 2021, which would consequently extend the Commission meeting virtually.
 - The Commission's Annual Report 2019-2020 and Work Program 2020-2022 were presented to the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability (IPS) Committee on October 28, 2020. The Committee expressed appreciation for the Commission's work and the focus in the Work Program (housing and Tideflats). There was interest in having a joint meeting between the Committee and the Commission, as well as creating a housing justice policy. Climate action planning, implementation of subarea plans, and neighborhood planning programs were also areas of interest to the Committee.
- 3) Status Reports by Commissioners
 - Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Advisory Group – As the group had not had their next meeting since the last report to the Commission, Commissioner Karnes indicated that his last report was still accurate.
 - Housing Equity Taskforce – Similar to the TOD Advisory Group, Commissioner Karnes stated that he would have a more in-depth report after the meeting on November 5, 2020. Commissioner Givens added that the taskforce had been meeting with representatives from Seattle and Minneapolis to discuss their housing strategy experience.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 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:***

http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/committees_boards_commissions/planning_commission/agendas_and_minutes/