



MINUTES

(Approved on 12-16-2020)

TIME: Wednesday, November 18, 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 5:04 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda for the meeting was approved. The minutes for the November 4, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments were not accepted at the meeting.

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, reported to the Commission that one written comment had been received, regarding Discussion Item D1 – Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations as follows:

- From Victoria Leistman, via email:

“-Why is the planning commission starting this process before the results from the baseline fossil fuel study have been released?

-What are the next steps in the process after the 12/2 scoping meeting? Will there be a draft and another hearing opportunity?

-What is the timeline for the recommendation from the planning commission to council?”

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, provided context and reason for the Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations project, which was initiated by the City Council's Ordinance No. 28696 adopted on October 20, 2020. To provide background information in relation to the Tideflats Interim Regulations process, Mr. Atkinson stated that the initial regulations were adopted in November 2017 (Ordinance No. 28470) following the City Council's directive and the Planning Commission's recommendation. Since then, the Tideflats Interim Regulations have been extended five (5) times.

Moving onto the non-interim regulations, Mr. Atkinson prefaced the discussion by setting expectations for the project. He also explained a number of issues identified in the interim regulations as follows:

- i. Public Awareness of Permits: Public notice did not adequately reach a broad number of people or neighborhoods. It was suggested that the non-interim regulations would require for both occupants and taxpayers to be directly notified, rather than only taxpayers.
- ii. Conversion of Industrial Lands: Industrial lands were becoming scarce for various reasons, which necessitated protection for the industrial lands in the Tideflats area. Potential amendments included applying to expansion of existing uses, modifying area of applicability to protect Core Area while allowing some additional use in the Industrial/Commercial Buffer Area, and considering conditional use permit and criteria.
- iii. Residential Encroachment: Lands along Marine View Drive/North East Tacoma hillside were prohibited from new platting and subdivision for residential development. The non-interim regulations would consider strategies to limit residential encroachment in the area.
- iv. Siting of Potentially High-Risk/High Impact Industrial Uses: The interim regulations restricted new oil and liquefied fossil industries, coal storage and/or terminals, chemical manufacturing, smelting, and mining and quarry; but they were not applicable to existing uses. This project would review and consider potential applicability to existing uses, as well as exemptions and other approaches to address the issue.

To support the development of the code that the Planning Commission would recommend to the City Council, staff and consultants would conduct fossil fuel study, SEPA review, policy review, benchmarking report, and Climate Emergency Resolution. The findings would then be presented to the Commission for review.

Further, despite the undesirable timing, outreach and engagement effort would be extensive with three (3) tentative public hearings, several informational meetings and notices, and direct engagement with various partners in the community. The timeline for this project was also presented, featuring both the schedule for the Commission's review and that of the City Council. Mr. Atkinson noted that it would be ideal for the Commission to forward their recommendation to the City Council with sufficient time for the City Council to take actions prior to the expiration of the current interim regulations on June 2, 2021.

Commissioner Edmonds questioned the reason for proceeding with the non-interim regulations before completing the Tideflats Subarea Plan project. Mr. Atkinson explained that it could be several years if the City waited for the completion of the Tideflats Subarea Plan project, and there was strong interest from the community to have permanent regulations at the last interim extension. Commissioner Edmonds was also concerned about the timeline and asked for additional information regarding public comments, evaluation on the interim regulations, and outreach methods. Vice-Chair McInnis shared the concern about the rushed timeline of this project, and wanted to make sure all stakeholders were involved in the discussion. Commissioner Karnes was interested in more information about potential criteria for mitigations of Conditional Use permits. Additionally, Commissioner Strobel commented on the timeline of consultant's work and reports, as well as the subject areas other than the Tideflats and outreach efforts in those areas. Background information about the changes since the initial interim regulations process in 2017, the differences between interim vs. permanent regulations, and the demographics likely affected by the regulations were also requested. Commissioner Givens suggested having listening sessions to receive feedback from the community and make appropriate adjustments during the process.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion to release the draft scope of work of the Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations for public review and set the public scoping hearing on December 2, 2020, at approximately 5:30 p.m. Commissioner Strobel seconded the motion. The Commission discussed specifying businesses to outreach and utilizing survey format in the scoping process. The motion was amended to incorporate the aforementioned points. It passed unanimously.

The meeting was recessed at 6:30 p.m. and resumed at 6:36 p.m.

2. Home In Tacoma Project – Workshop

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, introduced two consultants that had been working on the program, Heidi Aggeler and Julia Jones from Root Policy Research. He began by presenting the objectives of the workshop and providing background information on the Home In Tacoma project, which was a part of the Affordable Housing Action Strategy (AHAS).

Ms. Aggeler continued with data showing the unbalanced rise of housing costs vs. incomes and its effects. Analysis on the shortage of affordable rental units, homeownership challenges for people of color, and different market prices based on location and amenities were also presented. The Commission had questions about displaced low-income households.

Moving on, Mr. Barnett recapitulated the housing goals to guide the policy development. Commissioner Edmonds pointed out that home sales in Pierce and Thurston counties had increased significantly since more people were working remotely due to the pandemic and able to purchase homes outside of Seattle. In addition to reviewing the scope and overview of the Home In Tacoma project, Mr. Barnett informed the Commission of the City Council's direction to speed up and expand housing projects in response to the housing crisis. The schedule and engagement strategy were presented. Furthermore, he went over the takeaway points from the benchmarking process with Portland, Minneapolis, and Seattle. Similar issues were consistently seen in these cities, much like in Tacoma.

Next, Ms. Aggeler reported on the comments from the developer focus group, and indicated the subjects on which the City's existing housing programs would be evaluated in the following months. The evaluation outcome would assist in making policy modifications. Commissioner Givens asked for more details in future meeting materials about the developers' feedback.

Before getting into the Commission's input for policy considerations, Ms. Aggeler explained the proposed guiding principles and provided visual examples of Missing Middle Housing types along with maps illustrating areas of consideration. She also asked the Commission about their concerns regarding this project such as any unwanted Missing Middle Housing types, neighborhood disruption, compatible design features, incentives, etc.

Subsequently, the Commission started their exercise portion on an interactive platform called Mentimeter.

- i. In regards to the five (5) proposed guiding principles, the first two (2) principles received fairly strong support compared to the remaining three (3). The Commission provided comments on each principle. Clarification was suggested for the first principle to make clear that new developments would be to serve both the displaced and new residents. A number of Commissioners stated that not all Missing Middle Housing types should be allowed in all neighborhoods over design compatibility and characteristic concerns, while others expressed otherwise. In addition, there was a strong interest in revising the incentive principle.
- ii. The second question asked the Commission about their potential concerns with infill. Loss of green space and tree canopy, incompatible designs, opposite impact on affordability, demolition of existing viable homes were ranked among the top.
- iii. For appropriate Missing Middle Housing types in established neighborhoods, the Commission predominantly favored duplex, small lot single-family house, and triplex. Tiny/mobile homes were selected the least; various opinions were offered about them.
- iv. Scale, orientation, accessibility, character, affordability, walkability, quality, and transit were some design features that the Commission considered critical.
- v. The Commission, then, provided comments for how to balance housing goals with minimizing disruption to existing neighborhood and residents.

- vi. Lastly, as tradeoffs to build more units, more units/higher density and incentives for including affordable units were highly favored; followed by reduced parking, incentives for market-rate developers, and more/bigger areas for dense housing.

E. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETINGS

- 1) Agenda for December 2, 2020 meeting includes:
 - Transportation Master Plan Update
 - Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations – Public Scoping Hearing
 - Nominations and Elections of Chair and Vice-Chair
- 2) Agenda for December 16, 2020 meeting includes:
 - Urban Design Studio
 - Home In Tacoma Project
 - 2020 Year-in-Review

F. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

The Commission acknowledged receipt of communication items on the agenda.

Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, reported to the Commission of the following:

- The 2020 Annual Amendment was in the City Council's review process. The public hearing and study session were scheduled for November 24, 2020.
- The City Council was going through the final stages of the biennial budget process. If the proposed budget was approved, there would be an opportunity to do a neighborhood planning program.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 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/