



MINUTES

(Approved on June 16, 2021)

TIME: Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 5:00 p.m.

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

ABSENT: Brett Santhuff

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Petersen called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. A quorum was declared.

Chair Petersen read the Land Acknowledgement.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda for the meeting was approved.

The minutes for the April 7, 2021 meeting (including oral testimony on Home In Tacoma Project) were approved as submitted.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments were not accepted for Discussion Item #1, which was the subject of a recent public hearing.

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, reported to the Commission that four written comments had been received by 12:00 p.m. (noon), addressing the 2022 Amendments – Assessment of Applications. All comments were on file at the Department and available on the Planning Commission webpage for review.

D. CONTACT DISCLOSURE

Commissioner Karnes had conversations with Historic Tacoma staff regarding Home In Tacoma.

Commissioner Edmonds had conversations with realtors in her office, Tacoma Pierce County Association of Realtors, about Home In Tacoma.

E. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Home In Tacoma Project

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, outlined objectives of the discussion and next steps in the project.

For each topics discussed at the previous meeting on April 21, 2021, Mr. Barnett provided a review of the proposal and refinements based on the Commission's input.

Regarding the vision and engagement strategy of the plan, Commissioner Karnes expressed his support for the modifications. Commissioner Edmonds wanted more focus on neighborhoods. Vice-Chair McInnis concurred on clarifying that the plan was not to change the characters of neighborhoods. Commissioner Torrez asked about timing of Phase 2. Commissioner Givens and Chair Petersen suggested breaking down Phase 2 into smaller components to prioritize and expedite some processes.

For Low-scale and Mid-scale Residential designations, Vice-Chair McInnis and Chair Petersen inquired about inclusion of mobile homes and the definition of modular vs. pre-fabricated. Chair Petersen also commented on design standards and guidelines for four-plexes and townhouses. Commissioner Strobel wanted clarification on shared housing and that it was not intended to be micro units. Commissioner Karnes supported having pedestrian amenities (sidewalks, frontage, lighting, etc.) and specifying height limit in Low-scale areas. Chair Petersen considered scale as more important than height in Mid-scale areas. Several other Commissioners agreed. Commissioner Karnes added comments about parking and direct access. The Commission provided consent to remove the reference about onsite parking in the proposal.

In relation to the geography of the proposed designations, Mr. Barnett presented hybrid options for applicability areas. Vice-Chair McInnis liked hybrid options as they provided flexibility for future modifications if necessary. Commissioner Edmonds asked about the reasoning for corridors and centers selections to apply the buffers, and believed that Hybrid 1 would be less controversial to the public. In addition, she discussed incorporating neighborhood planning into the Home In Tacoma Project. Commissioner Karnes commented on the density level needed for 15-minute transit service and potential adjustments to the hybrid options based on corridor-related criteria. Commissioner Torrez wanted to allow as much mid-scale as possible to increase housing density. Referring to Hybrid 1, Commissioner Strobel was concerned that it would not meet equity goals throughout the City. He, similar to Commissioner Karnes, wanted to see a “hybrid of hybrids.” Commissioner Givens endorsed Hybrid 1. Chair Petersen felt that Hybrid 1 would not create enough housing, and wanted to explore Commissioner Karnes’s suggestion to enhance Hybrid 1. The Commission provided their preference regarding one block vs. two blocks around centers and corridors.

The Commission continued discussing policy commitments, covering parks and open space, landscaping, parking requirements, demolition, housing trends, affordability and anti-displacement, etc. They wanted stronger statements in the proposal. They also discussed revising phrasing of ownership promotion to avoid coming off as anti-renters.

In terms of code changes, Chair Petersen and Commissioner Strobel had questions about affordability bonuses for religious institutions and housing non-profits.

The meeting was recessed at 6:53 p.m. and resumed at 6:58 p.m.

2. 2022 Amendments – Assessment of Applications

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, indicated that the Commission would review two (2) of the four (4) applications of the 2022 Annual Amendments package at this meeting. The two (2) applications were “NewCold” and “South Sound Christian Schools.” Mr. Wung explained the amendment process and timeline, of which this meeting was the beginning. Criteria set forth in the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) for the review of applications were also presented.

Larry Harala, Planning Services Division, continued by providing an overview of the applications. “NewCold” is an application requesting to change the Land Use Designation of the subject site at 4601 S. Orchard Street, from Light Industrial to Heavy Industrial. Mr. Harala explained the differences between the designations and scoping options. “South Sound Christian Schools” requests the Land Use Designation change of eight (8) parcels at 2053 South 64th Street. A number of parcels were proposed to change from Single Family Residential to Multi-Family Residential (low-density), and the rest from Single Family Residential to General Commercial. Similarly, the designations and scoping options were explained.

Chair Petersen had questions about the designation of the landfill and the zoning history of the “NewCold” subject site as to why it was different from the rest of the property. She would not want to change its designation if the difference was intentional. Commissioner Edmonds requested information on how the designation change of the proposed site would affect the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District. Chair Petersen stated that the written comments received prior to the meeting were all in support of the application. Commissioner Horned inquired about traffic patterns in the area.

For the “South Sound Christian Schools,” Chair Petersen wanted to know how the Home In Tacoma Project would affect the subject area of this application. Commissioner Givens asked for information on the City’s street improvement policy.

F. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETINGS

- 1) Agenda for May 19, 2021 meeting includes:
 - Impact Fees Program Update
 - Home In Tacoma Project - Recommendation
 - 2022 Amendment – Assessment of Applications

G. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

The Commission acknowledged receipt of communication items on the agenda.

- 1) Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, briefed the Commission of the following:
 - The City Council conducted the public hearing for the Tidelands and Industrial Land Use Regulations on April 27, 2021. There were approximately 70-80 public attendants and 400 written comments were received.
 - The potential cancellation of the June 2, 2021 meeting was mentioned, pending the progress of the Home In Tacoma Project discussion at the May 19, 2021 meeting.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 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/