

Tacoma Permit Advisory Group
Virtual meeting
Meeting #35 – May 18, 2022, 2:00pm

Members in attendance: Clinton Brink, Jim Dugan, Michael R. Fast, Ben Ferguson, Justin Goroch, Mandy McGill, Claude Remy, John Wolters

Excused: Layne Alfonso, Joshua Jorgensen, Jessica Gamble

Absent:

2:04 PM Welcome

Jim Dugan talked about the Taskforce officially becoming an Advisory group.

Lynda Foster had sent out questionnaire for demographic information, which would help with filling the gaps in recruitment efforts.

2:07 PM Approval of past meeting minutes

Mike Fast moved. Remy Claude seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.

2:08 PM Quick updates: City staff new items of interest

Terry Forslund provided update on Reconstitution plan – Phase 3 starting June 6th would have more staff in office.

- **Resolution 40967: Tacoma Permit Advisory Group**

2:09 PM Subcommittee reports

- **Design review – Justin Goroch:** The meeting scheduled for a couple weeks ago was moved to May 19th. No other update
- **Home in Tacoma – Ben Ferguson & Claude Remy:** The City invited Ben Ferguson to be one of three public members on the interview panel for consultant. Further update would be avail next meeting.
- **Impact Fees – Mandy McGill:** They were in process of choosing a consultant. Mandy asked Joe France to find out if there were public members embedded in the interview panel.
- **Outreach & recruitment – Jim Dugan:** Jim thanked the group for recommendations on brokers of retail and real estate. Next meeting would have a better idea of where the gap is (based on demographic questionnaire).
- **Offsite engineering curbs & sidewalks (as needed) – Justin Goroch:** No update.

2:15 PM Parking Requirements Presentation

Shirley Schultz introduced herself and went over the presentation.

2:25 PM Questions and discussion

Ben Ferguson observed that Fire and Building Code are approved at the state level and there are requirements that the City cannot, or will not modify. This is in contrast to Land Use codes which are established at the City level, and it seems this is where code interpretations and enforcement could be the most flexible. He was interested in getting a staff view on why land use codes are enforced strictly and where flexibility could be used more liberally.

With regards to parking, Mike Fast asked about the requirements for quantity of parking and if it was in the City Code. Also, when adequate on street parking is available, how to reduce required onsite parking to one parking space. In response, Shirley Schultz explained it was a two-part answer – an approved parking variance and angled street parking fronting the site are required to get credit for on-street parking.

Shirley Schultz responded that there is variance criteria. If a unique hardship is demonstrated, variance may be in place to lower the bar for review. Mike Fast inquired about the variance process and how many were denied.

Mandy McGill asked for departments responsible for touching parking and how often they communicated. In response, Shirley Schultz explained that Title 13 dictates the number of parking stalls. Usually, Land Use, Site, Traffic, Fire, and Solid Waste all review together during pre-app.

Remy Claude stated that Home in Tacoma would require scrutiny on parking. He did not like having less parking for residents. There are times when parking in front of the buildings is essentially controlled by the use of the adjacent parcel. If changes to parking require a variance, more options for administrative process need to be looked at. Parking is a balancing act – some developments want more, some want less.

John Wolters is interested in a follow up on commercial zoning update project and any changes with Multi-Family Tax Exemptions (MFTE). Solid waste clearances were also brought in. One solid waste can takes up two parking spots; the requirement is beyond what is needed. He would like to see parking requirements removed in Mixed-Use districts. Furthermore, near transit should apply citywide, not just in select areas.

Ben Ferguson wanted to highlight what John Wolters said regarding trashcan issues. It is hard to understand the requirements and meet all the requirements, especially with new buildings and existing lots. Ben also hopes to find common ground on the issues and asked staff for feedback regarding staff bandwidth. It was also noted by Kurtis Kingsolver that it is easier to discuss parking in commercial projects and harder in residential. Community engagement is the right thing to do, but these can be extremely difficult conversations to have with people.

Remy Claude mentioned future opportunity in 10-15 years for ridesharing services such as Uber or Lyft.

Mandy McGill expressed appreciation for staff and their hard work.

Jim Dugan asked commenters to write down their thoughts and convert them to something actionable. Follow up can be emailed to permitadvisorygroup@cityoftacoma.org.

Jim Dugan brought forth an update regarding Bryan Elementary School. This project challenges everything in the City Code because it is so far off the mark from code requirements.

3:16 PM: Final comments

Jim Dugan thanked Shirley Schultz and would love to have her back when they have a recommendation. He asked the group members to articulate their comments into actionable items for future discussions.

3:19 PM: Adjourned