

## Tacoma Permit Advisory Group

### Hybrid meeting

Meeting #41 – January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 2:00pm

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

Excused: Layne Alfonso

Absent:

#### **2:04 Welcome**

#### **2:05 Approval of November Minutes**

Meeting #40 on November 16th, 2022

Justin Goroch, moved. Clinton Brink seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.

#### **2:06 Public Comment**

Jim Dugan (Chair) of the [Tacoma Permit Advisory Group](#) (TPAG) explains that public comment will be provided at the beginning of every meeting and is a set time for attendees to share a 30-second comment with the TPAG panelist. Verbal public comment is required to pertain to agenda items to assist in decision-making. No comments were provided by the public at this time.

#### **2:07 Quick updates: City staff new items of interest**

- Administrative updates:
  - Recruitment updates will be presented by the Chair later in the agenda. TPAG received three applications and leadership members proceeded to move forward to interviews with all candidates. Interviews took place in early January, and the next step is for the Chair to work with Co-chairs and submit their recommendations to [Planning and Developments Service](#) (PDS) support staff. Following that PDS will submit recommendations to the City manager for final authority on member appointment.
  - The request for \$500,000 in REET funds to be used by PW/PDS to partner with developments within low equity index areas; or low, very low, or moderate accessibility index areas to build new accessible infrastructure such as curb ramps or sidewalks was awarded.
  - Christopher Johnson (PDS Site Review manager) updates that due to staff shortages, the department is running behind on reviews. If there is an immediate permit review or question you may reach out to him.

#### **2:10 Subcommittee reports**

- Design review – Ben Ferguson
  - Design review is wrapping up. Currently, they are working on recommendations from a third-party consultant. The team has generated a report and is going through the

planning commission process. At this time the report is being fine-tuned and once it is processed it will be submitted to the City Council.

- Home in Tacoma – Ben Ferguson & Claude Remy
  - Ben Ferguson is looking forward to the presentation today from Elliott Barnett. He is happy to see the outreach efforts made by the city for [Home In Tacoma](#).
  - Claude Remy feels that so far there has been no movement and shares concern that phase 2 could be a repeat of last year. Personally, he has projects that would benefit from a trial of the Home In Tacoma model if there were any open opportunities for that. Otherwise, no update on Home In Tacoma.
- Impact Fees – Mandy McGill
  - No updates currently.

**2:15**

- Outreach & recruitment – Jim Dugan

The three candidates Jason Gano, Ken Miller, and Robert Laing were interviewed for the chance to be recommended to the City Council to join as a TPAG member. Jim Dugan received agreement from co-chairs, Michael R. Fast, Ben Ferguson, and Justin Goroch to move forward with a discussion on majority consensus for recommendations.

Jason Gano:

- Justin Goroch moves to recommend Jason Gano.
- Ben Ferguson would like to have a discussion prior to the next round of candidates to discuss the rules for having multiple members from an organization. Moves to recommend Jason Gano
- Michael R. Fast moves to recommend Jason Gano.
- Jim Dugan agrees with Ben Ferguson's comment and moves to recommend Jason Gano.

Ken Miller:

- Justin Goroch moves to recommend Ken Miller.
- Ben Ferguson moves to recommend Ken Miller
- Michael R. Fast moves to recommend Ken Miller.
- Jim Dugan moves to recommend Ken Miller.

Robert Laing:

- Justin Goroch would like to know what category Robert Laing would fill. Ben Ferguson and Jim Dugan confirm the application was for an at-large member. Moves to recommend Robert Laing.
- Ben Ferguson moves to recommend Robert Laing
- Michael R. Fast discusses concerns that Robert Laing does not have experience with permitting process in Tacoma and moves to not recommend Robert Laing. Ben Ferguson clarifies that this is not a requirement on the application and that other TPAG members may have the same level of experience. Justin Goroch has no additional comments. Michael R. Fast has no additional comments.
- Jim Dugan moves to recommend Robert Laing. With the majority of chair members, Jim Dugan elects to move forward with Robert Laing's recommendation.

Jim Dugan will submit the recommendation for all three candidates to the city support staff.

## 2:23

- Offsite engineering curbs & sidewalks (as needed) – Justin Goroch
  - Justin Goroch asked TPAG Liaison (Char Carlyle) to coordinate a February meeting with the subcommittee. City staff to coordinate the schedule for the subcommittee that includes Layne Alfonso, Jim Dugan, Justin Goroch, and Clinton Brink for TPAG members. Chris Johnson as a city staff member and Steve Victor will be asked to join as legal representatives for the City of Tacoma.

## 2:25 Home in Tacoma PowerPoint 1

PowerPoint presentation with Elliott Barnett. Home In Tacoma completed Phase 1 in 2022 and the council has approved the foundation for establishing middle housing growth with updated zoning. Phase two will focus on how to implement middle housing.

### Phase 2: Part 1

1. Residential zoning (map shown in PP slide 5). Home In Tacoma will have guided zoning districts and the residential to single-family districts will be in the new zoning areas. There may be multiple zoning because not every neighborhood is the same so each area will be custom to its needs. Zoning question to focus on:
  - a. How many zoning districts (what factors should inform this)?
  - b. How should zoning reflect neighborhood distinctions?
  - c. What should lot standards be (such as width, area)?
  - d. What should permit and notification processes be?
2. Need to create standards for middle housing. These will be detailed decisions and the city is looking to developers for help and input. Standard questions to focus on:
  - a. How should we balance housing production versus other goals?
  - b. How can standards promote desired features?
  - c. What functional and feasibility considerations must inform standards?
  - d. How can infrastructure keep pace?
3. Affordability and anti-displacement Studies show whatever we choose with our zoning will affect who can afford developments. Make sure costs are being built in prior and paid attention to.
  - a. Understanding the market – promote affordability without slowing construction
  - b. Setting priorities – location, households served, duration of affordable units
  - c. What incentives and bonuses make sense?

John Wolters would like to confirm that commercial zones are not included in Home In Tacoma. Elliott Barnett confirms.

Claude Remy inquires if Browns Point is included in the new zoning because it is available in the current pilot program. Elliott Barnett confirms Browns Point is not included in the new zoning map provided and that the pilot is an effort to explore the rules and process with permits, but it will be largely replaced with Home In Tacoma. Claude Remy states there are not very many cottage-style density zoning offered.

#### Phase 2: Part 2

The goal is to start with public engagement. This includes outreach efforts by email, mail, press release, and the large postcard many will receive this week. This is to let people know it is the time to get involved in the discussion on middle housing design, neighborhood infrastructure, and amenities; all with the intention of keeping housing affordable.

To reach the development community, Home in Tacoma is looking to TPAG, MBA, and affordable housing for the community's engagement and recommendations. This will help at the planning commission level of understanding the current conditions and residential patterns.

There are currently six different patterns in the city (age of development, street patterns..etc.) however should those affect the new zoning and residential standards? The new zoning guidelines can take from the current patterns.

Ben Ferguson explains that the data on slide 11 can be misleading as most housing is 5,000 sq ft in size not above. It would be beneficial to have it described in more layman's terms so it can provide an opportunity to get more feedback.

Jim Dugan explains it is hard to find a reason to not support housing but there is so much more to also consider such as water, sewer, street parking, and power and a big one is density.

Corey Newton explains he is the city staff lead for infrastructure impacts that Home In Tacoma will have. Looking into realistic growth estimates with this new zoning and communicating with utility and power facilities so then we will understand what needs will be required to consider moving forward.

Elliott Barnett explains that other jurisdictions have good information. They have learned there is more than one way to do this, but the question is, what are our community's priorities? Most other Jurisdictions had 4-6 zones. Doing our best to learn from others.

#### Phase 2: Part 3

Elliott Barnett clarifies TPAG's role in all of this is to help find developers who would volunteer some time for an interview. It is important in this phase to have community engagement and provide input on details that come to light. ECONorthwest is conducting a development feasibility study and currently looking for four developers to fill four categories of interviews.

### **3:00 Questions and discussion**

#### Recommendations for Interviews

- Ben Ferguson feels Claude Remy and John Wolters would be beneficial to interview.
- Claude Remy would prefer to recommend other developers for the low-scale and mid-scale categories. Claude will email [permitadvisorygroup@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:permitadvisorygroup@cityoftacoma.org) with recommendations after clearing it with the individuals.
- John Wolters is happy to be considered.
- Ben Ferguson thinks Habit for Humanity is a great place to start for affordable housing interviews and suggested an Evan man would also be a good person of contact.
- Claude Remy says Tacoma Housing Authority would be good as it is larger than Habit for humanity. The executive director is April Black.

- Ben Ferguson feels he would bring design expertise but is not a developer. Happy to donate time if needed. Jim Dugan states Ben Ferguson brings a unique viewpoint to group discussions.
- Clinton Brink recommends Low Income Housing Institute, a nonprofit founded by Sharon Lee, Reggie Brown of Louis Rudolph Homes, and Ken Miller for good contacts.

Claude Remy would like Home In Tacoma to keep financing in mind as things can change quickly when there are any stalls in the permitting process. Interest rates change and funding opportunities get adjusted. Financing is directly related to the feasibility of a project keeping done.

Elliott Barnett will come to TPAG monthly and report what the work is looking like at the planning commission level to keep the panelist updated and engaged.

Ben Ferguson wants to know if details are to be discussed in the process prior to them being finalized. So, there is availability for feedback on what aligns with developments.

Elliott Barnett explains yes there are more and more details to come. The plan is in March to have the map- zoning levels done and available to get feedback in April.

Ben Ferguson appreciates the opportunity to be early in the discussion and hopes it will allow enough time to make the recommendations at the right times.

Ben Ferguson is concerned that some focus will not be beneficial and that mid-level with mixed-use vs mid-level and residential is not currently in Tacoma. The C2 zone is the most difficult zone and it would benefit from being focused on. C2 should be discussed regarding the mix-use middle zone. He feels with the focus on Home In Tacoma C2 zoning will not be looked at for a long time

John Wolters appreciates that the city is taking the view of bulk, scale, and compatibility. He also agrees the C2 zone should be studied and reevaluated sooner rather than later.

Elliott Barnett's response to C2 zone and planning concerns – Reassured that commercial zoning is on the slate to be looked at next year. It will be sooner than later. Home In Tacoma is set the geography for residential zones and some mix used mid areas.

### **3:20 Final Comments:**

Jim Dugan requests that the PowerPoint be sent out to the entire panelist group and for everyone to look at slides with key questions. It would be beneficial to provide feedback between now and the next meeting. Please mark up the PowerPoint when the verbiage is too complex so we can provide feedback to Elliot Barnett on how to reach the community best at a low level. Also developing community feedback on the level of detail.

Elliot Barnett encourages this feedback and to look at the Home In Tacoma website to ensure they are communicating at the level needed as well to reach the community.

Panelists feel that the Home in Tacoma pamphlet is very understandable. With the change in the neighborhood comes fear so making the opportunity for the public to stay involved is a great approach. As for developers' minds, they would want more details, but they understand it can be hard to accommodate all audiences.

Route all questions, feedback, and recommendations to [permitadvisorygroup@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:permitadvisorygroup@cityoftacoma.org).

**Future topics:** Not Discussed

### **3:27 Adjourn**