

Tacoma Permit Advisory Group

Virtual meeting

Meeting #39 - September 21th, 2022, 2:00pm

Task Force Members in attendance: Layne Alfonso, Clinton Brink, Ben Ferguson, Justin Goroch, Mandy McGill, Claude Remy, John Wolters

Excused: Jim Dugan

Absent: Michael R. Fast

2:07 Welcome

2:08 Quick updates

- Outreach & Recruitment
 - Tacoma City Council adopted [Resolution 40967](#) and adapted a recruitment process for all members to join the panelist group. All applications will be reviewed by the Advisory Group chair, co-chairs, and staff, with the potential for candidate interviews, culminating in a recommendation to the City Manager for appointment. The City Manager would have final authority to appoint members. A news release will go out this Friday for applicants to apply and will be posted anytime there are open seats available in [Tacoma Permit Advisory Group](#) (TPAG). This application can be found on the TPAG site and City of Tacoma's [Media and Communications](#) office site once released.
- City Staff Updates:
 - Terry Forslund has accepted another position with the City of Tacoma and will no longer be a leadership member for TPAG.
 - City Of Tacoma is experiencing a lot of change over in staff. It was discussed at the leadership meeting to cancel October and December TPAG meetings due to staff shortages. November's meeting will most likely be offered as a hybrid (in-person & zoom) meeting.

2:12 Approval of July & August Minutes

- Meeting #37 on July 20th, 2022
 - Layne Alfonso moved to approve. Ben Ferguson seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.
- Meeting #38 on August 17th, 2022
 - John Wolters has an edit, Page 2, 4th paragraph "The photos demonstrated containers being serviced in the ROW and only 6-8 feet inches apart."
 - Layne Alfonso moved to approve with edits discussed by John Wolters. Claude Remy seconded. Ben Ferguson abstained as he was absent for meeting #38. No further discussion or objection. Motion approved.

2:15 Parking Recommendation Discussion

TPAG members would like to go over John Wolters parking recommendations that were deliberated in meeting #38 with a focus on parking not solid waste. Solid Waste will return for a future conversation and presentation with TPAG so some of the points can be postponed until then.

It is recommended by city staff to dictate an official letter to submit to the city manager with general parking concerns and recommendations. TPAG members want to work through the core grievances that parking code creates obstacles for development projects.

TPAG member mentions parking code is based from the 50's with little change since and feels the city should take an entirely fresh look at all parking related codes. There is room for improvements. Members feel this is important because it is having negative impacts and creates barriers to development within the city.

Code Requirement: Sites located within Mixed Use Centers and within 500' of a transit stop can reduce parking requirements by 25%

Development Challenge: Sites located along transit lines outside of Mixed-Use Centers are also in need of parking quantity reductions

Proposed Change: Expand the Transit Reduction to a) all sites along transit corridors and b) expand the 500' distance to 1,500 feet and c) increase the exemption 50% of the parking requirement in all cases

- Public comment, Jason Gano with Master builders: when developers are working on projects, and they are required to provide ADA accessibility and add a sidewalk that sometime interferes with neighboring properties who is responsible for this? The neighbor? Developer? Who is paying for this? TPAG member explains that the sidewalk is in the ROW and as the developer of the project you would provide the accessible path in the ROW, this would be adjacent to the neighbor's property on the ROW. You would need an accessible path (sidewalk and ramps) from the project to the bus station within 1,500 feet. City of Tacoma Staff adds that it would be up to the developer on a project what is more cost effective to provide parking or build the necessary sidewalk required to avoid additional parking requirements.
- If you have an infrastructure that promotes non-motorized access, then there should be an option for a reduction for that access.

Code Requirement: There is partial parking credit for restored parking spaces on the street with the installation of bulb-outs with angled or perpendicular parking

Development Challenge: There is no credit when parallel parking spaces are restored to the right of way

Proposed Change: Allow partial credit of restored on-street parking any time that parking spaces are demonstrated to be restored to the right of way because of a development.

- TPAG member brings up that this code requirement is based on the type of zone, what parking is allowed, and what type of parking restored. It is discussed the recommendation would be to include parallel parking with the already angled or perpendicular with a bulb out credit. Members feel partial credit should be due anytime a developer is giving more parking back to the public.

Code Requirement: In Mixed Use Centers (20) 450 sf apartments, or half the total number in the development, are exempt from parking requirements

Development Challenge: Parking exemptions are needed outside of Mixed-Use Centers for multifamily buildings

Proposed Change: Expand this exemption to all areas of the City.

- It is proposed to expand this code to the whole city regardless of a mixed-use center or not.
- One TPAG member feels that mixed-use center is the best place for this and maybe expanding is not the best recommendation.
- In meeting #38 it was discussed that the size of the apartment should not be what guides the parking requirements because it is a barrier to affordable housing.
- It was discussed combining the recommendations. Have city wide for 450 feet or less and within 1500 feet of an accessible bus stop to be exempt from parking.
- The idea to eliminating parking requirements for larger projects would provide the building of larger units for families. Developers choose to put in 450 square foot units to avoid the parking requirements and it should be eliminating all parking requirements for any size unit near an accessible transit center. The 450 square feet is driving the wrong behavior.
- TPAG would like to focus more on the development of the mixed-use centers so that they can expand and then the exemption for parking requirements will expand as they are built out.
- Justin Goroch will draft an official letter with these discussions in mind and bring it back to the group for deliberation.

2:48 Home in Tacoma

[PowerPoint 1](#)

Elliott Barnett presented PowerPoint on [Home in Tacoma](#) progress for Phase two:

Elliott Barnett presents the question to see if TPAG would be open to helping bring the housing development community into the discussion and provide contributions to Home in Tacoma from a developer's standpoint.

Currently after the December 7, 2021 adoption from City Council of [Amended Ordinance 28793](#) for Home in Tacoma Project - Phase 1 they have been busy working on building teams, finding consultants and getting together funding to have a planning effort.

Phase one included vision and policies: low and mid-scale areas and housing types and policies.

Phase two is focused on the how to implement the ideas. How to develop zoning scenarios and handle growth that comes from this plan. Elliott Barnett is bringing phase two presentation to the planning commission tonight. He explains that the meeting with the planning commission is to get direction on early work products such as zoning scenarios, growth estimates, evaluation criteria and public engagement. With Home in Tacoma making advancements, it is also important to tract state and regional policy development as this will also give direction from the legislature.

The goal is to have a zoning district framework after data is gathered from the early work. This framework will encompass all ranges of options to provide everything that can be decided on in the

future steps of the project. Home in Tacoma has a great team with many external consultants and dedicated internal groups for this project as well.

Seeking help on:

- What should the guiding principles be for a Zoning framework?
- How are we going to start understanding the range of growth that could result from the plan?
- How are we going to evaluate policy choices?
- What are the questions we should ask to the whole community?

Home in Tacoma is starting to look at residential density, height, housing types, lot layouts and patterns so that it can be used to estimate the growth from this plan. This information will then be passed to service providers so they can see what their infrastructure will be asked to service with the expected growth. With all this information then zoning standards can start to be made where infrastructure can support it and/or if determined where infrastructure investment is needed.

City Council adopted a missing middle housing growth strategy citywide. Turning this into two zoning packages they expect to have a low and mid-scale zone. With two subcategories of density in the low zone level and two subcategories of density mid-scale levels. The idea is to provide more flexibility with lot standards and the density that is allowed.

Decisions for the framework that need to be decided on are:

- What factors should inform zoning districts?
- How should zoning reflect neighborhood distinctions?
- What should lot standards be?
- What should permit and notification process be?
- What is needed to ensure consistency?

Elliott Barnett explains that scale will refer to a central concept not the number of dwellings now. It should be an organizing concept while still prioritizing the walkability in complete neighborhoods. Locate more housing in the most walkable location. The goal is to have a system that is predictable but flexible and not complex so that it provides opportunities and growth. The goal with the presentation tonight for the planning commission is to see if this is on the right tract to move forward with the zoning framework planning.

TPAG member is intrigued with the idea of changing use and replace it with scale. It is asked what is the “downfall” for doing this from the City of Tacoma’s view? Elliott Barnett answers: We are moving away from a single family based zoning framework and moving to a scale and pattern based one. There is still a max of dwelling units in low and mid-scale. Reflects pre-zoning neighborhoods and adjusting the zoning rules that have been set for decades.

Elliott showed an example of what a map could look like with the two zoning frameworks. Low scale 1 & 2, Mid-scale 1 & 2 allowing for zoning to increase from low to mid gradually as it goes more central to the nodes. This will allow for more development. Council is allowing more middle housing everywhere with max limits still.

Engagement Strategy Approach:

Early direction from planning commission and council then going into 3 rounds of engagement.

1. Round one: Listening and learning
2. Round two: Co-development and testing ideas
3. Round three: Partnering and refinement

Asking for lots of input from housing community so that the outcome is buildable and actually getting the intended result.

Three Tracks

1. Zoning and standards
2. Infrastructure and neighborhoods
3. Affordability and anti-displacement

TPAG member asks if there is a chance to allow lots to be 2500square feet? Can you take a single parcel and go through segregation instead of reshort platting the lot into 2500 square feet lots? Answer could be YES with Home in Tacoma Elliott Barnett states.

Elliott Barnett explains that the city has been looking for years about how can we allow more infill. The City of Tacoma has added several permit options to help this. Residential and developmental agreement and several flexible pathways to get more than the standard allowance. The goal of Home in Tacoma is to make this more of a standard.

TPAG members discuss how to have engagement from the development community in Tacoma. Have more developers be invited to TPAG meetings so that they can be involved.

City staff members advice is that TPAG is allowed to invite anyone to join the meetings as it is public and during the discussions we can allow for public comments.

Elliott appreciates the willingness to help be involved with this project and thanks TPAG for their time.

3:25 Future topics:

- Solid Waste
- Sidewalk policies

3:28 Final Comments:

- Leadership has discussed skipping October and December meeting due to City of Tacoma staff shortages. There will be discussion about changes in city policies and allowing for hybrid meetings in the future.
- Claude Remy: Thank you John Wolters for your work on the parking recommendations to bring up discussion.

3:28 Adjourn