

Tacoma Permit Advisory Group

Hybrid meeting

Meeting #52 January 17th, 2024 2:00pm

Advisory Group Members in attendance: Layne Alfonso, Clinton Brink, Jason Gano, Michael R. Fast, Justin Goroch, Loundyne Hare, Robert Laing, John Wolters, Claude Remy

Excused: Jim Dugan, Ben Ferguson, Gomer Roseman

Absent: Ken Miller

2:05 PM Welcome

Welcome the newest TPAG member Loundyne Hare. Loundyne is an at-large stakeholder with the appointment effective January 1, 2024–December 31, 2026.

2:07 PM Approval of Minutes

Meeting #50: Clinton Brink, moved. Claude Remy seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.

Meeting #51: Layne Alfonso moved. Clinton Brink seconded. No discussion or objection. Motion approved.

2:08 PM Public Comment

- No comments were provided by the public at this time.
 - Jason Gano requests public comment options be checked for virtual attendees. It was confirmed public can raise their hand and the liaison, Char Carlyle, will allow attendees to use the chat function as well for future meetings.

2:10 PM Quick updates: City staff new items of interest

Administrative updates:

- TPAG Recruitment – Three applications will be discussed at the next leadership meeting on February 7th, 2024.
- Impact Fees- Jennifer Kammerzell from Public Works Transportation Planning & Permitting joined to give an update on impact fees.
 - Jennifer Kammerzell reports her department has teamed up with the budget office for this project. In 2021 they provided a framework study for parks, schools, traffic, and fire. It was determined what level of service was needed. This was concluded with community outreach for feedback on the public's priorities. On February 6th, 2024, Public Works Transportation Planning & Permitting will meet with the city council to present the impact fee background and request a proposal for a consulting team. Jennifer Kammerzell plans to return with updates to this group after that council meeting.

- Justin Goroch asks about the timing for the complete impact fee packet. Jennifer Kammerzell expects at the earliest end of this year but most likely 2025.
- Jason Gano inquires where is the push for this. Jennifer Kammerzell replies that the City Council and city growth with development have pushed this.
- Justin Goroch asks what the aim of the money is that will be collected. Jennifer Kammerzell explains the money collected is not to fix. It is growth-paying for growth and will be used for capital projects only. Such as sidewalks, accessibility to transit, and bike lanes.
- Jason Gano would like to know if not passing impact fees is an option. He asks if the cost may be too much for what it's worth.
- John Wolters requests the Public Works Transportation Planning & Permitting team look for a consult team, to try and find a local representation, so they are aware of what is going on in our city. Jennifer Kammerzell thanks John Wolters for the great suggestion to be considered.
- Justin Goroch inquires if TPAG needs to set up a subcommittee meeting for impact fees and how important is this subject to TPAG members.
- Clinton Brink feels the El Dorado supreme court case shows an example of how this can create more limitations.
- Jason Gano adds that underprivileged areas are not being served. It would be helpful if you had to spend the money where you collect the money.
- Layne Alfonso states that our previous subcommittee member is no longer keeping track of the impact fee progress and a replacement is needed. How can our subcommittee representation interact to get updates on impact fees?
- Jennifer Kammerzell will be a point of contact for the member assigned to this subcommittee and will return with updates after the meeting with the city council.

2:23 PM Subcommittee reports (Not Discussed- Due to time limitations)

- Outreach & recruitment – Jim Dugan
- Design review – Ben Ferguson
- Home in Tacoma – Ben Ferguson & Clinton Brink
- Impact Fees –
- Sidewalk Policies & Recommendations – Justin Goroch and the committee
- Unit Lot Subdivision (ULS)- Ben Ferguson

2:23 PM Home In Tacoma PowerPoint 1

Senior Planner Elliott Barnett with PDS Comprehensive Planning presents an update with Home In Tacoma.

Revised project schedule timeline:

- July-December 2023, Develop full package & EIS Consultation
- January-April 2024, Planning Commission Public Hearing, Release Draft EIS, and Planning Commission recommendation

- May- July 2024, City Council review, Release Final EIS, Council Public Hearing, and Council action

Tonight, a Home In Tacoma (HIT) packet will be presented to the planning commission in hopes of getting the draft passed so it can go out to the public by March 8th, 2024.

Elliott Barnett reports that track changes are being produced now by him and the HIT team. The complete form will be handed out soon and he will provide an email to the TPAG group for early review.

Elliott Barnett declares there has been a lot of work done by the Site planning and ULS subcommittees and he is thankful for the volunteer efforts. He explains that the planning commission wants a written letter from committees. The comment letter needs to be submitted by March 8th 2024.

Justin Goroch speaks to TPAG about how it is important to come up with five to seven specific points that are problematic and submit this letter. He also shares that this package is a massive effort, and it is good to remember that the package will not be perfect. It is important to identify the most problematic or most impactful areas and then be able to help fix them when things do not go well.

Elliott Barnett goes into detail about the agenda for the planning commission tonight.

- Overview of the Packet (not the track changing code) but summaries of what the public is going to need to understand what is being proposed.
- Summaries
 - Zoning: map and three urban residential (UR) zones and how it will be turning into an online version
 - Housing Types
 - Parking (requirements reduced)
 - Landscaping and amenity Space
 - ULS
 - Affordability and building retention

The Multifamily Tax Exemption Program (MFTE) program is now offered in more areas and provides a map on slide 9 of PowerPoint.

Elliott Barnett states that there will be many changes to the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) with a large impact on 13.06 zoning codes.

Site plan study

- Identifies
 - Hit package changes
 - Utilities and access standard updates
 - Topics for ongoing study

- Landscaping

Handout 1

TPAG ULS subcommittee presented a handout of the site planning exercise with comments. There were 6 tested scenarios at the upper end of the density range. Included HIT change and updated utility standards. Elliott Barnett explains the site plans generally work. It is constricted when bonuses are added in.

Justin Goroch inquires why have the bonus option if it is hard to make work.

Clinton Brink brings to attention that in the six-unit townhome design (John Wolters noted), the usable space would only be 6.5 ft. which is not a usable unit. That example is also assuming there are no blemishes in the lot(slopes) which could also take away from the feasibility. Elliott Barnett answers in a situation with UR 1 and a six-unit building in the bonus range – there is proposed additional flexibility to help make it not as tight.

Jason Gano comments there are so many things competing for space- what is the landscaping requirement? Elliott Barnett explains there is a tree planting of 25-35% however if using bonuses then flexibility to lower the tree requirements.

Layne Alfonso remarks that there will be an increase in density for a typical lot.

Elliott Barnett advises the committee to put comments in a letter to the planning commission. He explains there are many goals and directions from the planning commission that must be met within this packet. An example is more affordable housing and more trees.

Elliott Barnett shares that there will be bonuses and project flexibility. More units, bigger buildings, less parking, increased building heights. With tree canopy requirements, there will still be more flexibility on front setbacks, and amenity space reduction. There is a change to utilities and access standards regarding power, stormwater, and sewer. More facilities will be allowed to be shared rather than separate ones and some access standards will be reduced. With the discussion on unit lot subdivision, it may need HOA to take care of shared facilities.

City staff is aware that there will be tons of ongoing work. The new package will not be perfect. HIT is meeting with the Master Builders Association (MBA) on February 13th, a follow-up meeting with TPAG on February 21st and is open to facilitating presentations at any other meetings

2:51 PM Discussion

Clinton Brink agrees that flexibility for bonuses is a good thought process. Not sure if it will help enough but glad to hear that direction.

TPAG? declares if the city keeps providing parking it will never get to the point where parking is not needed, and people utilize public transportation.

Jason Gano explains that parking is contentious, and the city is giving away valuable city areas for free. There can be more affordable housing when not paying for parking.

John Wolters asks if we talk about parking again. Instead of reducing can we eliminate it?

Elliott Barnett's feedback is to put this comment into the letter if eliminating parking city-wide is important.

Layne Alfonso would like to remind members to pick their battles. The city has made big changes regarding parking requirements – do we want to fight for it to be eliminated when we could put energy into something that needs more work and that has not been improved on? This is a baby step to the bigger picture.

Clinton Brink agrees it is important to balance priorities with the letter to the planning commission.

John Wolters brings to attention the handout.

- With the site plan examples of skinny townhomes after walls are put in there is no room for stairs. Realistically it will not work.
- Page three the site plan will only work if there's no parking on the site at all.
- Page four the Townhome does not require an ADA stall however it is on the example. TPAG inquires if this is due to the visibility package. Elliott Barnett explains that visibility with an ADA space is not on this zoning standards package so this may have been an example but not a requirement.
- Page five John Wolters inquires if there are solid waste reductions as this does not fit current standards. Chris Johnson answers that shared space to have less area required. John Wolters replies that solid waste can be set in the alley, not on private property. This will push into the amenity space. Elliott Barnett explains in February or March Corey Newton can present utility changes in more detail.

John Wolters would like clarification on if the common space minimum is reduced from 15' to 10'. He inquires what are the High limits based on. Elliott Barnett to the midpoint of the roof.

- John Wolters shares that on page nine the six-unit house plex site plan is not practical, the subcommittee suggests a remedy to this on page 10 for option A. Developers can fit 16ft units and if the front setback is removed then they can do option B provided on page 11. Corner lots with the front of the unit facing the street and using the entire lot makes sense and they can fit the six units.
- Clinton Brink discusses page twelve. It was discussed at the subcommittee meeting that the site plans are based on sandy loam soil. However, stormwater drain facilities would need to be larger if not sandy loam soil, and unfortunately, sandy loam soil is not common in Tacoma.

Chris Johnson adds that there may need to be some pushback on the modeling team as some sites are failing.

Mike Fast explains that sandy loam soil has a low percolation rate and that UR 1 has no sites with this type of soil, so it is not a valid assumption to use on the examples. It will require infiltration that is not shown in the site plan study.

Justin Goroch asks if HIT is requiring MR5? The majority of Tacoma is formed of glacier till so how would this be handled from site to site? Chris Johnson explains the developer would need to do a full evaluation to pivot the plan.

Justin Goroch suggests the city think about providing an infiltration feasibility map. Cost money but then there is a quick way for developers to see if you are exempt or not from a full evaluation. Then developers are not required to have every site evaluated which is going to take a lot of time and money.

Elliott Barnett adds there's an upcoming stormwater planning effort it is just not done yet. Jason Gano was asked to potentially be the point of contact and work with Corey Newton and Dana Deleon on updates.

Clinton Brink brings up a fee-in-lieu option if the owner doesn't want to put in infiltration, can they pay for the impact that it would have on the city? Justin Goroch adds that currently, a fee-in-lieu does exist it is just very limited. John Wolters states this is a very important issue

Justin Goroch's advice is to use the next meeting for an active working session on the letter for the planning commission.

Clinton Brink suggests that the subcommittee meet before TPAG to start a draft letter.

John Wolters requests that Corey Newton provide utility changes at the next meeting. Clinton Brink requests that the handout be answered by the city and correct site plans.

3:32 PM Final comments (Not Discussed- Due to time limitations)

Future Agenda Topics (Prioritized List)

- *Sidewalk Policies & Recommendations Subcommittee*
- Process alignment: Commercial vs. Residential permit requirements
- TPAG Mission Statement
- E-permits
- Pedestrian/Emergency Access DADU's
- Long Range Planning – update from city staff
- Capital Bond Projects
- Solid Waste Collection & Development Projects
- Urban Design (Stephen Antupit)

3:32 PM Adjourn