



City of Tacoma Sustainable Tacoma Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: February 15, 2024

Commission Members Present: Matthew Benedict, Tony Ivey, Laura Svancarek, Adam Reichenberger, Casey Twiggs, Lowell Wyse, Sheena Hewett, Devynee Ye, Margaret Schwertner, Lexi Brewer

Commission Members Excused: Mike Chang, Evlondo Cooper, John Doherty

Others Present:

Mike Carey, Office of Environmental Policy & Sustainability

Alyssa Torrez, Planning and Development Services

Call to Order & Roll Call

This meeting was called to order by Commission Co-Chairperson Margaret Schwertner at 5:15 pm, including an acknowledgement of the traditional indigenous lands this Commission conducts its business on. The Chair welcomed Commissioners, staff, and members of the public. Then, Margaret administered a roll call, where Commissioners acknowledged their attendance.

Unanimous Approval of February 15, 2024 Meeting Agenda

Unanimous Approval of January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Public Comment

No public comments were delivered verbally during this agenda item.

Staff Updates

No updates were given.

Officer Elections - Vote

Casey Twiggs and Evlondo Cooper were nominated and voted on as co-chairs unanimously.

Rules of Procedure - Vote

The rules of procedure were voted on and adopted.

Home in Tacoma Phase II - Presentation

Alyssa Torrez and Mike Carey presented on Home in Tacoma. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of Tacoma's residential land area will be re-zoned to allow for more housing types. The new zones—UR-1, UR-2, and UR-3—will allow

more units per lot to be built closer to major corridors and mixed-used centers. HiT is meant to be a sustainable growth package, with elements like a building retention bonus, reduced parking requirements, tree planting and protection, and an environmental impact statement (EIS) process.

- Parking requirements are reduced from 2 spaces to 1, with lower requirements for higher-density zones. State law now outlaws parking requirements along main transit corridors like Pacific Avenue. Bike parking will be required for every unit.
- The draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) is a separate document with a separate public comment process. The DEIS addresses 9 topics, such as land use, transportation, and air quality.
- Site planning exercises show how all required infrastructure can fit on certain types of residential lots.
- Tree credit system requires different canopy coverage for residential lots.
- There are many ways to give public comment, including several in-person comment workshops coming up in the next few weeks. Trees and parking are the issues that have generated the most comments so far.
- Single-family units will still be allowable under the new code, but higher numbers of units will also be permitted.
- There is language about the variances in the code but it does not define what a hardship is. Recommending feasibility criteria would be good feedback from the STC.
- Variances would be reviewed by land use staff (PDS staff). Landscape architect will be a new staff position involved in this work.
- Intent of tree retention table is that sites “cannot become more non-conforming,” so small trees couldn’t just be removed even though a permit is not required.
- The Urban Forest Manual is a separate document that adds more guidance on planting and maintaining trees.
- Survey of trees is required. Arborist will need to assess mature trees if they are being counted for tree credits.

Home in Tacoma Phase II - Letter

Matthew moved that Adam and Lowell (and other STC members) are entrusted by the commission to complete a letter to be presented to IPS that will include a statement in support of HiT along with the 4 talking points to be reviewed by the co-chairs and OEPS staff. Lowell seconded. The motion carried.

The four talking points were:

1. We are in favor of Home in Tacoma
2. We want maximum allowable density because climate action
3. Landscape code is necessary
4. Oversight and enforcement is crucial

Public Comment

No public comments were delivered verbally during this agenda item.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Commission unanimous approved an adjourned at 6:56pm.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be held hybrid on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 5:00pm, on zoom and at Tacoma Municipal Building, room 248.

Evlondo Cooper III

Casey Twiggs

Evlondo Cooper and Casey Twiggs, Co-Chairs

Lowell Wyse

Lowell Wyse / Note Taker

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