

TUMWATER PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
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CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Elizabeth Robbins and Commissioners Grace Edwards, Terry Kirkpatrick, Brian Schumacher, Meghan Sullivan, Michael Tobias, Anthony Varela, and Kelly Von Holtz.

Staff: Planning Manager Brad Medrud.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: Election of officers was added to the agenda.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Chair Robbins invited nominations for Chair during 2023.

Commissioner Sullivan complimented Chair Robbins for her service as Chair during the last year and nominated her for Chair during 2023. Commissioner Tobias seconded the nomination.

Chair Robbins accepted the nomination.

No other nominations for Chair were offered.

AFFIRMATION: **By unanimous affirmation, Commissioner Robbins was elected to serve as Chair during 2023.**

Chair Robbins invited nominations for Vice Chair during 2023.

Chair Robbins nominated Commissioner Sullivan to serve as Vice Chair during 2023. Commissioner Kirkpatrick seconded the nomination.

Commissioner Sullivan accepted the nomination.

No other nominations for Vice Chair were offered.

AFFIRMATION: **By unanimous affirmation, Commissioner Sullivan was elected to serve as Vice Chair during 2023.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: FINAL JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION TREE BOARD OCTOBER 11, 2022:

MOTION: Commissioner Schumacher moved, seconded by Commissioner Tobias, to approve the minutes of October 11, 2022 as published. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

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**COMMISSIONER'S
REPORTS:**

There were no reports.

**MANAGER'S
REPORT:**

Manager Medrud reported the Commission is scheduled to review native vegetation and tree preservation regulations. The first community conversation/external stakeholder meeting is scheduled on Monday, November 21, 2022 via Zoom with in-person attendance available at the Fire Department Training Room. A second stakeholder meeting is scheduled in early December.

Manager Medrud referred to a copy of meeting minutes for the October 11, 2022 joint meeting of the Tree Board and the Planning Commission prepared by The Watershed Company.

Staff recommends cancellation of the Commission meetings on November 22, 2022 and December 27, 2022. The Commission supported the recommendation.

The City received nine responses to the Request for Proposal for assistance on the City's Equity Tool Box project. The next phase of the project is scheduling interviews of the selected finalists.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jerome Tuaño, JOLT (The Journal of Olympia, Lacey & Tumwater) said he had no comments as he is only attending the meeting.

Mr. Golder said he is interested in serving on the Planning Commission and submitted an application to the Mayor for consideration.

**2023 DRAFT LONG
RANGE PLANNING
WORK PROGRAM:**

Manager Medrud presented the draft of the 2023 Work Program. The work program includes all work items for next year. The Commission is scheduled to meet with the City Council on December 13, 2022. The joint discussion will include a review of the work program and issues that should be addressed in 2023. The code requires approval of the Long Range Planning Program each year by the City Council. Following the review and approval process, the 2023 Work Program will be posted on the Long Range Planning website. The 2023 Work Program assumes the department would have two full-time planners.

Chair Robbins asked about the possibility of any element of the work program that could be contracted or added to an existing consultant contract if the department lacks sufficient capacity. Manager Medrud said the department is receiving assistance by several consultants for all urban forestry regulations as well as consultant assistance for the Comprehensive Plan Update. Staff would advise the Commission and the Council of any projected staffing capacity issues prior to final

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approval of the Work Program. The proposed work program is structured on the department's ability to complete the work.

Manager Medrud reviewed the four main sections of the Work Program and work items within each section:

- Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket:
 - 2023-2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (continued from 2022)
 - Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments (City-initiated amendments only with no private applications)
- Development Regulation Amendment Docket
- Tumwater Housing Action Plan Amendments – Several tenant protection ordinances and a rental registration program (continued from 2022)
- Urban Forestry Management Plan Amendments – Landscaping, Street Tree Standards, and Tree and Vegetation Preservation (continued from 2022 and forecasted for completion in a staggered process during 2023)
- Other Amendments: 2023 Housekeeping (New), Development Regulation Periodic Update (associated with the Comprehensive Plan Update), and Thurston County Code Title 22 – Tumwater Urban Growth Area Zoning (continued from 2022, update process will be similar to the process of the update of the Joint Plan)
- Other Planning Projects:
 - Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan (continued from 2022 working in coordination with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
 - Deschutes Flood Reduction Study/Thurston and Olympia Lakes Flood Map Study
 - Equity Toolbox (continued from 2022)
 - GIS/GIS Support
 - Grant Funding
 - Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (continued from 2022; plan is updated every six years)
 - Housing – Affordability and Homelessness
 - Housing Action Plan – Infrastructure (Housing Affordability Fee Work Plan Ordinance #9/Housing Action Plan Action 1.m.)
 - Long Range Planning Website Updates
 - Managing Multifamily Tax Program (continued from 2022 – the City has two programs of an 8-year exemption and a 12-year exemption with an affordable housing element for designated areas of the City)

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- General Management and Coordination (internally and externally)

Manager Medrud advised of the recent receipt of the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) for the Tumwater School District. Staff is scheduled to meet with school district staff early next year to discuss coordination efforts between the City and the school district. Staff will forward a copy of the CFP to the Commission.

Manager Medrud described the difference in the process of annexation and revisions to the City's urban growth boundary. Any changes in the urban growth boundary of either expansion or reduction would be part of the larger Comprehensive Plan Update and entails a review process to include evaluation of the Buildable Lands Report to identify available land supply. Annexations of areas are limited to only those lands located within the City's urban growth area. Expansion of the City's urban growth area requires approval by the Tumwater City Council and the Board of County Commissioners with final approval by the state.

Commissioner Schumacher asked for additional information about the Buildable Lands Report. Manager Medrud explained that the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) completes an annual Buildable Lands Report to comply with the state requirement adopted by the state following the adoption of the Growth Management Act. The Buildable Lands Report documents completed development for residential and commercial to include densities and calculates land used and land remaining for growth. The state's six largest counties are required to complete a Buildable Lands Report. The methodology used by TRPC in compiling the report is not the same methodology used by other counties as each county has its own process. The City is involved in the process through Council representation on the Thurston Regional Planning Council.

Chair Robbins asked about the extent of revenue loss to the City caused by the Multifamily Tax Exemption Programs. Manager Medrud said he would follow up with information.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick pointed out that the program encourages development enabling the addition of other apartments that pay property tax resulting in an increase in the number of properties assessed property tax that can help to offset any loss of property tax under the exemption program.

Manager Medrud added that the programs help to promote economic development in the City. The 12-year program provides affordable housing units for a period of 12 years. The Council is considering other

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types of incentives to encourage the construction of permanently affordable housing. Both programs require an annual reporting process.

Manager Medrud advised of scheduling a presentation by Intercity Transit during the first quarter of 2023. Staff recently met with Intercity Transit staff to discuss the extensive level of development occurring off Littlerock Road. The discussions surrounded ways to assist the agency in extending transit service further south on Littlerock Road and possibly along Old Highway 99. Intercity Transit is recruiting approximately 60 to 80 bus operators as it contemplates expansion of transit service in the community.

Manager Medrud noted that the largest element of time devoted to coordination with other jurisdictions is the time allocated to the Regional Housing Council (RHC). The RHC addresses homelessness to include a full realm of services.

Manager Medrud invited feedback on the proposed 2023 Work Program.

Commissioner Tobias referred to the work on the Hazard Mitigation Plan, specifically as it relates to the increased danger of wildfires. The extended amount of smoke experienced by the region during the summer speaks to the state's lack of a standard for air quality as wildfire protection is focused on the protection of homes and critical infrastructure, as well as people. However, since 2017, the state has experienced an increase in the incidents of prolonged periods of smoke and particulate matter in the air that poses a health risk to people. He suggested the City should address the issue as a component of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, such as opening cooling centers when air quality increases health risks.

Manager Medrud said the issue speaks to several elements. The first is avoiding situations that cause wildfires as addressed in the Hazard Mitigation Plan, as well as the emergency weather situation caused by wildfires. Air quality issues are typically addressed as a component of housing issues through the Thurston County Health Department and some changes have occurred in how the region addresses declining air quality over the last several years. During cold weather, local jurisdictions often open warming centers and opening cooling centers could be an option during wildfires when air quality declines.

Chair Robbins requested additional information on the below line projects pertaining to several essential public facilities items. Manager Medrud said essential public facilities are included within the Comprehensive Plan Update process. However, the City's code for

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conditional use exists as a separate chapter and covers essential public facilities. Staff is discussing options of extracting essential public uses and creating a separate chapter because state requirements are often different for essential public uses.

Discussion ensued on ways to increase the City's response to poor air quality conditions during the summer.

Manager Medrud acknowledged a request to forward information on the community/stakeholder meeting scheduled later in November.

**NEXT MEETING
DATE:**

The next meeting is a joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting on December 13, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Kirkpatrick moved, seconded by Commissioner Schumacher, to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

Prepared by Puget Sound Meeting Services, psmsoly@earthlink.net