

CITY OF SEATAC
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of February 2, 2016
Regular Meeting

Members present: Joe Adamack, Roxie Chapin, Tom Dantzler, Robert Scully
Members absent: Jim Todd
Staff present: Joseph Scorcio, CED Director; Steve Pilcher, Planning Manager; Mike Scarey, Senior Planner; Al Torrico, Senior Planner; Anita Woodmass, Senior Planner; Justin Rowland, Planning Intern

1. Call to Order

Chair Adamack called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2016 meeting as presented.

Passed 4-0.

3. Briefing on GMA Consistency amendments

Senior Planner Mike Scarey noted that this would be a continuation of a series of briefings concerning updates to the City's wetland regulations, being proposed to ensure consistency with State requirements. The City's approach to wetland buffer requirements is not consistent with Best Available Science (BAS) or guidance found in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

Mr. Scarey provided a map of the City that identifies known wetlands and how they are classified per the existing code, which divides wetlands into three (3) classes. (The new guidance provides a system of four (4) wetland categories). Most of the class 1 wetlands found within the city are on Port of Seattle properties and/or were created as mitigation for the 3rd runway at the airport. He noted that the map will need to be made more generic, since existing wetlands have not been rated per the new system.

Mr. Scarey noted that under the new wetlands rating system, "habitat scores" will determine the size of a buffer required. This could result in either an increase or decrease in currently-required buffer widths, depending upon the particular wetland involved. He noted that given SeaTac's built environment, it is unlikely that many wetlands will have a high habitat score. Actual required buffer widths for any wetland will depend upon the results of a wetland study performed by a wetland biologist at the time any adjacent development is proposed.

Mr. Scarey mentioned he will be back at the next Commission meeting with more amendments for review.

4. Briefing on proposed amendments to Business License Code

Senior Planner Al Torrico informed the Commission of the background of this proposal, which is a product of a process improvement effort. CED staff worked with the Finance Department (which is responsible for business licenses) to draft the proposed amendments. Since there were so many changes, a clean copy of the revised chapter has been provided. Mr. Torrico noted that staff is looking for feedback from the Commission, but they are not required to conduct a public hearing and render a formal recommendation to the City Council.

Mr. Torrico highlighted some of the changes, including the proposed appeal process. At this time, it is proposed that appeals would be considered by the Hearing Examiner, in lieu of an administrative appeal process. He also noted that if a business owner fails to get a business license by the prescribed date, they will be cited with an infraction and will need to appear in Municipal Court.

In response to a question, Mr. Torrico noted that staff does not know how many SeaTac businesses do not have a license. He also noted there have been only a few revocations of business licenses over the past decade.

The Commission expressed concern that strict enforcement by levying fines and requiring court appearances could send a negative message to the business community. They also suggested providing a shorter time frame during which a license must be obtained.

5. Angle Lake Station District Implementing Regulations

Senior Planner Anita Woodmass briefed the Commission on this issue, noting that the primary purpose of the discussion would focus on connectivity issues. She reviewed the policies contained in the Station District Plan; what is currently required in the Zoning Code; and potential options of how to address connectivity.

Ms. Woodmass reviewed various options of how to secure increased connectivity. These include providing incentives; allowing departures; granting variances; or entering into development agreements. Staff is recommending the use of either/both incentives and departures, recognizing that any property owner can always request to enter into a development agreement.

The Commission agreed that staff should develop a list of potential incentives and potential departures that could be used to secure new connections within the District.

Ms. Woodmass then reviewed the schedule for completing this work in order to allow Council adoption before the expiration of the Interim Regulations at the end of June 2016.

6. CED Director's Report

Director Joe Scorcio noted that staff will be providing a briefing to the City Council at their February 9th meeting regarding the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning.

Mr. Scorcio provided a report on permit revenues and the number of permits issued in 2015.

Per the request of the Chair, a copy of the recent Council letter to Sound Transit was provided. Mr. Scorcio also passed out a copy of a statement regarding Washington State vesting laws, which was discussed at the last King County Planning Directors' meeting.

Mr. Scorcio showed the Commission a draft map that staff is developing to examine issues of consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map.

Mr. Scorcio also noted that the new Public Works Director will start on February 16. He is Will Appleton, who comes to the City from the City of Federal Way.

7. Planning Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Dantzler provided information regarding the Port of Seattle's plans for the South Airport Support Area. He expressed concern of the potential of large airline hangars being constructed on the west side of 26th Ave. S., across from the light rail station.

8. Adjournment

Moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion passed 4 -0. The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

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