

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

**PRESENT:** Chair Dennis Morr, Jr., and Commissioners Jessica Hausman, Nam Duc Nguyen, Nancy Stevenson, and Meghan Sullivan Goldenberger.

Excused: Commissioners Joel Hansen, Terry Kirkpatrick, and Patrick Zitny.

Staff: Community Development Director Michael Matlock, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, Senior Planner David Ginther, and Recording Secretary Valerie Gow.

Others: Mayor Pete Kmet.

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES –  
FEBRUARY 27, 2018:**

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Hausman moved, seconded by Commissioner Goldenberger, to approve the February 27, 2018 minutes as published. Motion carried.**

**CHANGES TO THE  
AGENDA:** There were no changes to the agenda.

**NEXT PLANNING  
COMMISSION  
MEETING DATE:** The next meeting is scheduled on March 27, 2018.

**COMMISSIONER  
REPORTS:** Commissioner Stevenson reported on her discussion with staff about a potential capital project for the Custer Way bridge over Interstate 5. The Washington State Department of Transportation is conducting a traffic study between Tumwater and Joint Base Lewis McChord, which could trigger an opportunity to consider embellishing the overpass to improve pedestrian access. WSDOT's long-range study is examining traffic flows and volume between the improvements at Joint Base Lewis McChord and Tumwater.

**MANAGER'S  
REPORT:** There were no reports.

**RESCHEDULE  
HEARING:**

**HISTORIC  
COMMERCIAL –  
MAINTENANCE,  
ORDINANCE NO.** Manager Medrud advised of the need to reschedule the public hearing on Ordinance No. O2017-015, Historic Commercial – Maintenance to meet public noticing requirements.

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**O2017-015:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Stevenson moved, seconded by Commissioner Goldenberger, to reschedule the public hearing on Ordinance No. O2017-015, Historic Commercial – Maintenance to March 27, 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

**WORKSESSION:**

**SIGN CODE  
REVIEW,  
ORDINANCE NO.  
O2017-007:**

Planner Ginther reported staff explored increasing public outreach on proposed changes to the sign code. The two remaining issues reviewed at the last meeting included feather flags and A-boards. Feather flags are not directly addressed in the existing code, but are considered in the category of prohibited signs. A review with the cities of Olympia and Lacey indicate both cities do not allow feather flags although they are prevalent in all jurisdictions. Enforcement of the code by all three jurisdictions is through a complaint process. The City of Olympia is exploring an option of allowing feather flags in the vicinity of the auto mall.

Many A-board signs are displayed throughout the City with most located along Capitol Boulevard and Littlerock Road across from the Costco store at Tumwater Center, a small mall featuring 19 businesses. The mall has two lots fronting Littlerock Road with another series of lots in the mall. The sign code allows two A-boards per lot. Signs must also be located on the property. Today, many A-board signs and feather flags are featured along the mall frontage along Littlerock Road. The width of mall frontage of the two lots is approximately 400 feet. Placing signs 25 feet apart would not accommodate all 19 businesses that might want to display an A-board sign.

Commissioner Stevenson noted a combined mall sign advertises all businesses located in the mall. Planner Ginther said the mall has two signs, a monument, and a freestanding sign. Commissioner Stevenson pointed out that the clutter of feather flags and A-board signs obscure the mall signs. Planner Ginther said the situation of sign clutter was much worse several years ago when he counted over 23 signs including a large floppy feather type sign, balloons, feather flags, A-board signs, and a giant ice cream cone plastic sign.

Following discussions with staff to improve public outreach, the City's Communications Manager, City Administrator, and the Community Development Director recommended a business roundtable followed by a residential roundtable for outreach as opposed to only a public hearing. Public hearings typically do not offer the opportunity for public discourse on topics. Staff plans to contact the Tumwater Chamber of Commerce, several key business owners to include the Tumwater Center and Southgate Mall, as well as others. A second roundtable with residents would be scheduled for

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input from local residents. Outcomes of the roundtables would be reviewed with the Commission. An additional worksession was also included on April 10.

Manager Medrud invited Commissioners to provide any contact suggestions for the roundtables.

**DISCUSSION:**

**MAYOR'S STATE  
OF THE CITY  
ADDRESS:**

Mayor Kmet reported the same presentation was presented the prior evening during Tumwater University. Most of the participants were residents who have lived less than one year in the City. Many of the participants are striving to become part of the City.

Mayor Kmet thanked Commissioners for their continuing service on the Planning Commission. The role of a Commissioner serves as a representative of the citizens of Tumwater. Commissioners represent a wide range of people and interests geographically and bring different backgrounds and experience. The Commission serves as an important advisory board to provide the Council with advice on specific issues. Although the Council makes the final decision, the Council appreciates and relies on the minutes and discussions by the Commission.

Mayor Kmet presented the State of the City report.

Today, the City's budget is in good condition with a steady budget over the last several years. The economy has improved and the addition of the Toyota Dealership. Continuing down the same path without adding staff, the City will continue to experience increasing costs, which speaks to the need to grow the economy to support the City while considering efficiencies and other desirable actions to control costs. One-time expenses are considered against ongoing operational expenses. Additional funds are typically invested to upgrade facilities, repairing and replacing roofs, painting buildings, and completing interior improvements.

Two main issues facing the City today are affordable housing and homelessness, and parks and recreation. The City is part of the partnership for sharing federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Every three years, Tumwater receives its share of the pooled grant funds totaling approximately \$750,000. The Council has elected to provide a majority of the funds to help those organizations that provide affordable housing.

Mayor Kmet shared a photograph of a property known as the "Z" Street house near Peter G. Schmidt Elementary School. The house was abandoned

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creating a nuisance for the neighborhood and the City. Using its enforcement authority, the City was able to convey title of the property to Homes First. The City provided CDBG funds to help the organization renovate the property and provide a home for a family. The Homes First model is renovating properties to become permanent affordable housing.

The City has held many ongoing discussions on ways to sustain parks and recreation programs. The City collects park impact fees from new development. Those funds are used to expand existing properties and structures owned by the City to serve new growth. However, the fees are insufficient to address needs. The City lacks sufficient funds to maintain new parks and is contemplating a tax measure to form a park district to fund parks and recreation programs adequately. The City established an advisory task force to consider options. The task force is developing some options for review by the community. The City recently completed a parks survey of over 800 residents.

The Council's 2017-2022 Strategic Priorities serve as the basis for meeting City needs. The priorities include:

- Aggressively pursue targeted development opportunities
- Build a community recognized for quality
- Create and maintain a transportation system for all modes of travel
- Provide quality public safety services
- Refine and sustain a great organization
- Be a leader in environmental sustainability

Targeted development opportunities include the brewery and Capitol Boulevard. Some progress has occurred in both areas. Much of the strategy of the brewery was to attract and build from the brand of brewing history in Tumwater and attracting brewers and distillers to the City along with associated industries. It is likely the existing brewery would not be converted to one large brewer; however, other uses could exist within the buildings. The brewery properties have two ownerships with the warehouse owned by a group located in California. The historic brewery has been privately owned for the last five years. The property owner deeded the brew tower to the City with initial City and volunteer efforts completed to preserve the tower.

On important and major area along Capitol Boulevard is the site of the Washington State Department of Transportation. The Legislature appropriated funds for the department to move the facility to the City of Lacey near the Waste Recovery Center in the Hawks Prairie area. The move opens up 10 acres of land fronting Capitol Boulevard and serving as a potential redevelopment opportunity controlled by the public sector. The City anticipates working with the state to attract a developer to create some of the

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development envisioned for the property. Some historic parts of the property might be saved.

The City, working with a group of volunteers and local companies donating time and materials, installed temporary roofing on the Old Brewhouse, as well as sealing the windows to protect the structure from water and the elements. In the last state capital budget, the City received \$500,000, which requires a match. The City is planning some capital fundraising to initiate renovation and preservation efforts of the structure. Preservation of the building without additional renovation is estimated to cost \$6.5 million.

The City attracted several microbreweries near the airport. One large new development is the Craft District located off Capitol Boulevard near the entrance to Tumwater Valley Drive. The developer reached agreement with Heritage Distilling to construct a manufacturing facility. South Puget Sound Community College is constructing a training center focusing on brewing, distilling, and cider making. The City and the developer agreed to share costs of some of the improvements as some of the improvements benefit the City and are not required of the developer, such as changing the configuration of the entrance to Tumwater Valley Drive. The Council authorized the signing of a development agreement with the owner. The owner is also planning to sign a lease with a microbrewer and a restaurant as well. Because of the level of interest, the owner anticipates obtaining the adjoining parcel for future multi-family housing.

Interim improvements along Capitol Boulevard have been completed to include upgrading of a pedestrian crossing at U Street and Capitol Boulevard and repaving of some portions of Capitol Boulevard. The City successfully obtained a \$6.5 million transportation grant from the Transportation Investment Board to reconfigure the Capitol Boulevard and Trospen Road interchange and provide another freeway entrance. The project includes the construction of two roundabouts to improve the movement of traffic and increase bicycle and pedestrian access. The project's total cost is \$12 million. The City plans to use impacts fees for the match requirement. The only downside is construction activities at the City's busiest intersection. Construction efforts will begin next year with design and other project details finalized this year.

Other development includes the residential subdivision of The Preserve located south of the airport off Old Highway 99 of several hundred new homes. The largest new commercial development is the Toyota Dealership. The City also partnered with Toyota on some improvements.

Other development activities include a residential development along the Deschutes River near Munn Lake, two microbreweries, bakery, and Alaffia in the Warehouse District.

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The City's newest park, "Isabella Bush Park," is a 20-acre property converted to an educational garden for the Tumwater School District in partnership with Garden Raised Bounty (GRuB) for the "Tumwater Fresh" program. The City renovated the old barn on the property with the school district and GRuB developing school curriculum for growing food and learning about the physical sciences of crops. The program has been very successful as many students continue to remain in school because the program has contributed to helping students achieve academically and socially.

The City continues to maintain the Henderson House and the Crosby House located in the City's Historic District. The City is exploring options to provide more public access to the historic homes.

Parks and Recreation sponsor many events during the year. The golf course is the site of the Screen on the Green on Friday evenings during August. The City's annual Christmas Tree Lighting event attracted approximately 1,000 people last December. Different school groups offer performances during the afternoon with the tree lighting at dusk.

The City is also focusing on improving multi-modal transportation options through pedestrian and bike improvements, and trail extensions. This summer, the City used Transportation Benefit District funds to pave streets throughout the City. Another chip seal paving project is planned this summer.

The City's partnership with Toyota included extending Tye Drive from the Toyota property to Israel Road to include frontage improvements along Israel Road. The City invested \$3 million to complete the improvements. Tye Drive improvements include bike lanes, sidewalks, street lights, landscaping, and street trees. Toyota agreed to add a trail behind the dealership to provide residents with recreational opportunities. The half-mile multi-use trail is located on the north and west side of the property, which will eventually connect to the south.

The City received a Safe Walk to Schools grant to upgrade sidewalks on Elm Street and Dennis Street near Peter G. Schmidt Elementary School.

With the City's purchase of the old Trails End Arena several years ago as a future Public Works site, the City recently hired a consultant to help develop a pre-design of the new site. A portion of the property would likely be improved as a new park in the City.

The City's new Police Chief is Jon Weiks, who has been with the City over 20 years and was raised in Tumwater.

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The City's public safety levy in 2009 afforded the opportunity to hire seven firefighters. The addition of the firefighters enables the City to staff the North End Fire Station full time. The City continues to hire police officers, which has been a difficult process.

The City is now addressing public nuisances through code enforcement through the Police Department. Several non-commissioned officers serve as code enforcement officers. The City strives to achieve voluntary compliance, as some instances are not intentional and include elderly residents unable to maintain their property. The City works with residents on those issues. However, in those cases where enforcement is necessary, the assistance of the enforcement officers is beneficial in establishing the case and follow through. The City is contending with a difficult situation off Troser Road involving the Franks property. Garbage and debris have been dumped on the property for some time. Recent information received from the Department of Ecology indicates the department is willing to partner with the City to help offset the costs of cleaning the property. The City is working to secure permission to begin the work of removing surface debris.

The fireworks industry paid people to collect signatures to place an initiative on the ballot, as allowed under the City's code. The ballot measure is on April 24 with ballots mailed April 4. All Tumwater voters will have an opportunity to either ban or allow fireworks in the City. Based on a previous advisory ballot, the Council adopted an ordinance to ban fireworks.

The City continues to focus on environmental sustainability. Most carbon emissions are generated from power sources. Puget Sound Energy's major source of power is from coal. Other efforts to control emissions include the City working in partnership with the cities of Olympia and Lacey and Thurston County to complete a detailed analysis of areas that could be improved to reduce carbon emissions. Thurston Regional Planning Council is working with the jurisdictions to identify mutual goals and potential measures to reduce carbon emissions.

The City continues to be the recipient of the annual Tree City USA award. The City's current tree preservation efforts include developing an Urban Forestry Management Plan spearheaded by the City's Tree Board. The Tumwater Falls Park salmon collection facility is in the final stages of permitting. Construction should begin later in the year or early next year. The Department of Fish and Wildlife is upgrading the facility.

With the advent of the endangered listing of the Mazama Pocket Gopher, as well as a butterfly and bird, the City is undertaking an extensive process in conjunction with the Port of Olympia to create a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) providing the City with a way to enable development within the City's urban growth area while preserving and protecting endangered species and its

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habitat. The City is expecting to receive a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete the HCP.

Commissioner Stevenson thanked the Mayor Kmet for encouraging Commissioners to represent their respective neighborhoods.

Commissioner Nguyen asked about the potential for commercial development near The Preserve and the Warehouse District. Mayor Kmet advised that most of the commercial development is occurring in the Warehouse District. A bakery is also located in the area. Representative of the district are attempting to attract more businesses by providing space at lower cost to smaller businesses. The Commission and the Council are also scheduled to consider zoning in an area located north of The Preserve. A grocery store expressed interest in locating at property adjacent to the Ice Chips business. However, nothing is definite at this point.

Mayor Kmet thanked Commissioners for their service to the community.

**ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Hausman moved, seconded by Commissioner Goldenberger, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.**

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