



Planning Commission

1                   **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
2                   **March 4, 2026**

3 The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

4 **Location:** North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709

5 **1. ROLL CALL:**

6 **Commissioners Present:** Emily Marthinsen, Savlan Hauser, Jeff Vincent, Blaine Merker,  
7 Christina Oatfield, Charles Kahn, Angela Wangm, Alfred Twu, Darrell Owens,

8 **Commissioners Absent:** None.

9 **Staff Present:** Secretary Justin Horner, Clerk Faye Messner, Jordan Klein, Uttara  
10 Ramakrishnan

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12 **2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

13 The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of  
14 xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-  
15 chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the  
16 sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great  
17 importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin  
18 our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the  
19 documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound,  
20 and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's  
21 residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen  
22 land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating  
23 the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also  
24 recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay  
25 communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan  
26 Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land  
27 acknowledgement.

28 **3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA: 0**

29 **4. ORDER OF AGENDA:** No change

30 **5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT:**

- 31 • Chair Marthinsen reported that public comment time will be limited to 10-12 speakers and  
32 asked the Commission members to comment on the Vision 0 Taskforce materials.

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34 **6. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS**

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**7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- None

**8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Upcoming PC Meeting Items:**
  - **March**
    1. San Pablo Specific Plan Discussion
    2. State Law and Technical Edits Public Hearing
  - **April**
    1. SB 79 and AB 893 Discussion
    2. Objective Design Standards Discussion
    3. C-AC Zoning District
  - **May**
    1. Corridors Rezoning
  - **June**
    1. San Pablo Specific Plan Public Hearing
  - **July**
    1. Safety/Environmental Justice Elements
- **Upcoming City Council Items:**
  - March 10: Nonconforming Uses for Middle Housing
  - April 14: Transformer Undergrounding

**9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion/Second (Merker/Kahn) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from February 4, 2026.

Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.

**10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Public Hearing: 1646 and 1650 Fifth Street Re-Zoning and Associated General Plan Amendments**

Associate Planner Joshua Muller presented proposed amendments to the Zoning Map, General Plan and West Berkeley Plan. Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made comments including but not limited to: how often parcels are split-zoned and the origin of split zoned lots.

Motion/Second (Oatfield/Vincent) to close the public hearing.

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75 Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes:  
76 None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.  
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78 Motion/Second (Twu/Kahn) recommend staff's proposal to rezone 1646 and 1650 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
79 and associated Zoning Map and General Plan Amendments for adoption by City Council.  
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81 Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes:  
82 None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.

83 **Public Comments: 1**

84 **B. Ad Hoc Committee's Memo on Corridors Upzoning**

85 The Ad Hoc Committee on the Corridor's Upzoning presented a memo to the Commission. The  
86 Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including but not  
87 limited to: an upzoning strategy for opportunity sites, height and street width ratio as an  
88 objective standard applied across all three corridors, opportunities for densification through FAR  
89 and lot size, Density Bonus incentives that prioritize on-site affordable housing, support for small  
90 business protections, and support for the ground floor ODS with suggestions including smaller  
91 commercial spaces and increased sidewalk widths and setbacks for a high quality retail corridor.  
92 The Commission directed staff to prepare Zoning Ordinance amendments to increase heights to  
93 .75 of the street width only for opportunity sites with additional capacity analysis.

94 **Public Comments: 11**

95 **11. INFORMATION ITEMS**

96 **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

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98 **13. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING:**

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  - Special Meeting of the Planning Commission, Wednesday March 18, 2026 at 6:30pm.
  - Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission: Wednesday April 15, 2026 at 6:30pm.100

101 **14. ADJOURN**

102 Motions/Second (Oatfield/Kahn) to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 pm.  
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104 Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes:  
105 None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.  
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107 **Members of the public in attendance: 70 in person, 49 on Zoom**

108 **Public Speakers: 12**

109 **Length of the meeting: 2 hours 31 minutes**