



Planning Commission

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
February 1, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Location: Virtual meeting via Zoom

1. ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Blaine Merker, Jeff Vincent, Chip Moore, Christina Oatfield, Elisa Mikiten, Emily Marthinsen, Alfred Twu, Savlan Hauser, and Barnali Ghosh.

Commissioner Absent: None.

Staff Present: Secretary Grace Wu, Clerk Zoe Covello, Steven Buckley, Ashley James, Alene Pearson, Claudia Garcia, Eleanor Hollander, and Liz Redman Cleveland.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT. Guest speaker Toby McLeod.

3. ORDER OF AGENDA: No changes.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: 2.

5. PLANNING STAFF REPORT:

- Highlights Information Items (linked below):
 - Results from the Southside Student Housing Survey
 - January 17th Council Meeting on the Citywide Affordable Housing Requirements – back to Council for a first reading on Tuesday, February 14th
 - January 18th Council Meeting where Council approved and adopted the City's 6th Cycle Housing Element.
 - Council found it in substantial compliance with state law, prior to the January 31st statutory deadline.
 - The City received comments from HCD on January 30th. City staff and consultants are taking a close look at the comments and have scheduled a follow-up meeting with HCD to seek clarification on additional improvements that might be necessary to receive state certification, beyond Council's findings of substantial compliance with state law.
 - Staff are currently prioritizing this work.
- The Department of Public Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront will be holding the Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan Work Session at a Special Council meeting on March 7 at 6pm.

- There were several late communications; Commissioners were sent a packet this afternoon.

Information Items:

- *December 18, 2022* – Southside Student Housing Survey Results.
https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FinalSummary_Southside%20Area%20UC%20Student%20Housing%20Survey%20-%202019%20December%202022.pdf
- *January 17, 2023* – City Council Meeting – Citywide Affordable Housing Requirements.
<https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-01-17%20Item%2021%20Citywide%20Affordable%20Housing%20Requirements.pdf>
- *January 18, 2023* – City Council Meeting – 2023-2031 Housing Element Update.
<https://berkeleyca.gov/city-council-special-meeting-eagenda-january-18-2023>

Communications:

- General.

Late Communications: *See agenda for links.*

- Supplemental Packet One
- Supplemental Packet Two

6. CHAIR REPORT:

- Chair Mikiten shared that the Planning Commission received a letter from Mayor Arreguín regarding Item 12: Demolition Ordinance, and that the item would be heard and public comment would be taken, but that the Planning Commission was not going to take action at this meeting.

7. COMMITTEE REPORT: Reports by Commission committees or liaisons. In addition to the items below, additional matters may be reported at the meeting.

- Bird Safe Subcommittee - staff has sent a draft outline to the Bird Safe Subcommittee and plan to bring it back to the Planning Commission as a public hearing in March.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second/Carried (Twu/Moore) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from December 7, 2022.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Moore, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None. (9-0-0-0)

9. OTHER PLANNING RELATED EVENTS:

- None.

AGENDA ITEMS

10. Action: 2023 Nominations and Elections for Chair and Vice Chair

The Commission opted to hold nominations only, and postpone elections until the March meeting.

Motions/seconds for Chair:

1. (Oatfield/Moore) to nominate Chair Mikiten,
2. (Ghosh/Vincent) to nominate Vice Chair Hauser, and
3. (Hauser/Merker) to nominate Commissioner Vincent.

Motions/seconds for Vice Chair:

1. (Mikiten/Vincent) to nominate Vice Chair Hauser, and
2. (Moore/Mikiten) to nominate Commissioner Oatfield.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Moore, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None. (9-0-0-0)

Public Comments: 0

11. Discussion: Preparations for In-Person Meetings

The Commission discussed exploring a start time of 6:00 pm or 6:30 pm once Planning Commission is back in-person starting on March 1, 2023. Secretary Wu agreed to follow up with the South Berkeley Senior Center to find out availability.

Public Comments: 1

12. Public Hearing: Demolition Ordinance

Chair Mikiten read a letter from Mayor Arreguín asking for the Planning Commission to delay their recommendation on the Demolition Ordinance until the 4x4 Committee has another opportunity to review the draft ordinance and make additional recommendations. Public comment was taken, the public hearing was closed, and the commissioners held a brief discussion. No action was taken.

Motion/Second/Carried (Mikiten/Vincent) to close the public hearing at 8:15 pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Moore, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None. (9-0-0-0)

Public Comments: 7

13. Discussion: Pacific Steel Casting Zoning and General Plan Amendments and EIR Scoping Session

Senior Planner Ashley James presented and asked for feedback on (1) proposed text for a new zoning district M-RD, Manufacturing, Research and Development for an 11-acre site in West Berkeley, and (2) the scope and content of the EIR, and Economic Development Manager Eleanor Hollander presented background information on West Berkeley's economy. Zoning map amendment applicant Mark Rhodes also presented about his proposed project on the Pacific Steel Casting site and outlined his preferred process for the rezoning of the site.

Following these presentations, staff received direction from public comments and commissioners, and plans to return to the Planning Commission in March to report back with an update to the draft zoning standards and the EIR timeline.

Public Comments: 3

Motion/Second/Carried (Oatfield/Moore) to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 p.m.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Moore, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None. (9-0-0-0)

Members in the public in attendance: 38

Public Speakers: 13

Length of the meeting: 2 hr 53 minutes



Grace Wu

Planning Commission Secretary