



Planning Commission

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
December 4, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

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

• **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Jeff Vincent, Christina Oatfield, Emily Marthinsen, Elisa Mikiten, Alfred Twu, Savlan Hauser and Blaine Merker (arrived at 6:13 pm).

Commissioners Absent: Barnali Ghosh (excused) and Chip Moore.

Staff Present: Secretary Alisa Shen, Clerk Zoe Covello, Branka Tatarevic, Faye Messner, Justin Horner, and Robert Rivera.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

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

• **ORDER OF AGENDA:**

- Reorder to move the **Public Hearing: Tentative Tract Map #8717** before the **Discussion: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update.**

- **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: 0.**

- **PLANNING STAFF REPORT:**

- January 2025 Meeting Cancelled
- The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is tentatively now scheduled for February 5, 2025
- Staff reported on the San Pablo Avenue Walking Tour held on November 16, 2024
- City Council adopted the first reading of Keep Innovation in Berkeley
- Second reading to approve the Ashby BART TOD contractual Agreement
- Second Reading of Changes to Development Procedures
- The RFP for Ashby BART was issued online

Information Items:

- None.

Communications:

- General.

Late Communications:

- Supplemental 1.
- Supplemental 2.

- **CHAIR REPORT:**

- Chair Vincent thanked the commissioners and public for hearing his comments on democratic processes from last meeting. The Chair acknowledged changes in council seats and possibly commissioner's seats and thanked commissioners for their service this year.

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

- None.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Mikiten) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from November 6, 2024.

Ayes: Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Ghosh, Merker, and Moore. (6-0-0-3)

9. OTHER PLANNING RELATED EVENTS:

- None.

AGENDA ITEMS

10. Public Hearing: Affordable Housing Fee

Principal Planner Alisa Shen and consultants presented on proposed amendments to the affordable housing fee. The Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including, but not limited to: the proposed 5,000 square-foot exemption, how the consultants determined the 5,000 square foot threshold for the proposed exemption, whether there were any natural breaks in the fee structure should market changes allow for greater feasibility of projects, and clarification of enabling policy in the zoning ordinance versus a resolution. There were three public commenters.

Motions/Second/Carried (Vincent/Marthinsen) to close the public hearing at 7:19 pm.

Ayes: Vincent, Mikiten, Merker, Oatfield, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Ghosh and Moore. (7-0-0-2)

Motions/Second (Vincent/Hauser) to recommend staff's proposal to City Council, without the Housing Advisory Committee recommendation to exclude detached homes from the exemption of the first 5,000 square feet of Residential Unit Floor Area for projects that pay the full In-Lieu fee instead of providing any on-site affordable units at 7:49 pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: Oatfield. Absent: Ghosh and Moore. (6-0-1-2)

Public Comments: 3

11. Public Hearing: Tentative Tract Map #8717

Associate Planner Branka Tatarevic presented on Tentative Tract Map #8717. There was one public commenter.

Motions/Second/Carried (Vincent/Twu) to close the public hearing at 8:01 pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Ghosh, Moore and Mikiten. (6-0-0-3)

Motions/Second (Twu/Huaser) to approve Tentative Tract Map #8717 at 8:02 pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Moore, Oatfield, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Ghosh, Moore and Mikiten. (6-0-0-3)

Public Comments: 1

12. Discussion: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update

Senior Planner Robert Rivera presented on the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. The Commissioners took public comment, discussed and made comments including, but not limited to: urban design elements of the plan including building height, sidewalks and public open space. They also discussed balancing the desire for ground floor commercial with market realities, articulation requirements in the objective design standards and preserving the character of small maker spaces that exist along San Pablo Avenue. There were three public commenters.

Public Comments: 3

Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Merker) to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Ghosh and Moore. (7-0-0-2)

Members in the public in attendance: 10

Public Speakers: 7

Length of the meeting: 2 hr 56 min



Alisa Shen

Planning Commission Secretary