



Planning Commission

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
June 4, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

1. ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Christina Oatfield, Alfred Twu, Darrell Owens, Emily Marthinsen, Blaine Merker, Savlan Hauser, Jeff Vincent and Charles Kahn

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Secretary Alisa Shen, Clerk Faye Messner, Justin Horner, Branka Tatarevic

2. 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.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: 1

4. ORDER OF AGENDA:

5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT:

- None

6. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS

- None

7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- None

8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance related to Middle Housing to be considered by City Council on June 26
- Info Item: General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Report, available online
- July 16th Meeting Agenda
 - Discussion of Implementation of SB 684

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second (Vincent/Merker) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from May 7th, 2025.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Owens, Oatfield, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None (8-0-0-0). Motion passed.

10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Public Hearing: Amendments to the Zoning Map to Redesignate Parcels Zoned R-1A (Limited Two-Family Residential) to R-2 (Restricted Two-Family Residential).

Principal Planner Justin Horner presented on proposed amendments to the Zoning Map to redesignate parcels zoned R1-A (Limited Two-Family Residential) to R-2 (Restricted Two-Family Residential). Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including, but not limited to: appreciation for the public's attendance and comments, the importance of making changes to the Zoning Map and Ordinance now for future development, how infrastructure should be considered with Middle Housing zoning changes and public consensus on the need for housing in Berkeley.

Motions/Second (Oatfield/Vincent) to close the public hearing at 7:22

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Owens, Oatfield, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None (8-0-0-0). Motion passed.

Motions/Second (Owens/Kahn) to merge the R1-A and R-2 Zoning Districts per staff's recommendation.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Owens, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: Oatfield. Absent: None (7-0-1-0). Motion passed.

Public Comments: 33

B. Public Hearing: Amendments to Title 23 (Zoning) to ensure compliance with State ADU laws.

Associate Planner Branka Tatarevic presented on proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance (Title 23) to bring Berkeley's ADU regulations into compliance with State law. Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including, but not limited to: the importance of bringing our ADU regulations into compliance with State law, expanding the maximum size of ADUs to serve a broader set of households, distinguishing between attached and detached ADUs in the Ordinance language, and rental terms for JADUs.

Motions/Second (Merker/Kahn) to close the public hearing at 8:13.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Owens, Oatfield, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None (8-0-0-0). Motion passed.

Motions/Second (Kahn/Owens) to accept all modifications to the Zoning Ordinance proposed by staff with the addition of those proposed by the ADU Task Force.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Owens, Oatfield, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None (8-0-0-0). Motion passed.

Public Comments: 4

C. Public Hearing: Amendments to Title 23 (Zoning) to require undergrounding of transformers on private property.

Associate Planner Branka Tatarevic presented on proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance (Title 23) to require undergrounding of transformers on private property. Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including, but not limited to: the types of projects that require transformers, the impacts that transformers have on urban design and public space, cost impacts of undergrounding transformers, and applying undergrounding requirements to projects citywide.

Motions/Second (Merker/Vincent) to close the public hearing at 8:47

Ayes: Merker, Owens, Kahn, Marthinsen, Hauser. Vincent, Oatfield and Twu. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None. (8-0-0-0). Motion passed.

Motions/Second (Twu/Kahn) to amend the staff proposal as follows: to apply the transformer undergrounding requirement to all residential and commercial zoning districts, and to all residential, commercial, and mixed use projects citywide.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Owens, Oatfield, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None.
Abstain: None. Absent: None (8-0-0-0). Motion passed.

Public Comments: 4

12. INFORMATION REPORTS

- 2024 General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Reports.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

- General

14. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING: Wednesday, July 16th, 2025 at 6:00pm

15. ADJOURN

Motions/Second (Kahn/Owens) to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Owens, Oatfield, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None.
Abstain: None. Absent: None (8-0-0-0). Motion passed.

Members in the public in attendance: 77

Public Speakers: 42

Length of the meeting: 3 hours and 13 minutes



Alisa Shen
Planning Commission Secretary