



Planning Commission

FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING July 16, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

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

1. ROLL CALL:

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

Commissioners Absent: Darrell Owens

Staff Present: Secretary Alisa Shen, Clerk 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 ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA: 1

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

5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT:

- Chair Marthinsen had no report

6. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS

- None

7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- None

8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- On July 8th, the City Council adopted the Middle Housing zoning changes
- On July 29th the City Council will hold a public hearing on ADU condos and ADU-related amendments to the Zoning Ordinance
- The Office of Emergency Services' Evacuation Study and Council off-agenda memo are available.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second (Vincent/Kahn) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from June 4, 2025.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Sanderson, Kahn, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None Absent: Owens (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Action: Amendments to Title 23 (Zoning) to ensure compliance with State ADU Laws Regarding Off-Street Parking

Principal Planner Justin Horner presented background on the proposed amendment to eliminate off-street parking requirements for ADUs in the Hillside Overlay in conformance with State law.

Motion/Second to Close the Public Hearing:
(Oatfield/Vincent)

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

Motion/Second to recommend the staff recommendation as included in the staff report:
(Oatfield/Kahn)

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

Public Comments: 0

B. Discussion: Senate Bill 684 (2023) Small Lot Subdivision and Housing Development

Associate Planner Branka Tatarevic presented on SB 684 and requirements and options for local implementation of an SB 684 ordinance, and requested Planning Commission feedback on the following specific policy questions:

1. *Inclusion of Design Standards*

The Commission discussed whether a local SB 684 ordinance should include design standards.

The Commission did not recommend the preparation of design standards. Comments in support of this position included:

- A desire to avoid unnecessary complexity in regulations;
- Concern about potential unintended consequences of prescriptive standards; and
- Support for maintaining flexibility for architects and designers.

2. ADUs and JADUs on Subdivided Lots

The Commission considered whether Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) should be permitted on lots subdivided under SB 684. The Commission expressed a preference for allowing ADUs and JADUs on these lots. Key comments included:

- No clear justification for treating SB 684-created lots differently than other lots;
- Continued interest in supporting housing production;
- Recognition that site constraints and density standards may limit feasibility, but support for preserving the option for property owners to pursue ADUs/JADUs where possible.

3. Requirement for Full Build-Out

The Commission addressed whether full build-out should be required as a condition of approving a subdivision under SB 684. The Commission did not recommend requiring full build-out and supported allowing approval of undeveloped or “paper” lots. Supporting comments included:

- Support for incremental urban development; and
- Interest in encouraging a broader range of housing types and architectural designs over time

The Commission also expressed support for creating a streamlined local subdivision process for subdivision projects that may be proposed at densities lower than those required by SB 684 and/or reducing minimum lot size.

Public Comments: 0

12. INFORMATION REPORTS: None

13. CORRESPONDENCE

14. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING: Wednesday, September 17 at 6:00pm

15. ADJOURN

Motions/Second/Carried (Vincent/Merker) adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm. Ayes: Vincent, Oatfield, Merker, Marthinsen, Twu and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Owens (7-0-0-1)

Members in the public in attendance: 0

Public Speakers: 0

Length of the meeting: 1 hour 40 minutes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alisa Shen', written in a cursive style.

Alisa Shen

Planning Commission Secretary