



Planning Commission

FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING September 17, 2025

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: Emily Marthinsen, Blaine Merker, Savlan Hauser, Alfred Twu, Darrell Owens, Angela Wang

Commissioners Absent: Jeff Vincent, Christina Oatfield, Charles Kahn

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

- **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.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA: 5**

- **ORDER OF AGENDA:** Chair Marthinsen reordered the agenda to move the Corridors Zoning Update discussion to Item 10A.

- **CHAIRPERSON REPORT:** Chair Marthinsen had no report.

- **AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS:** None

- **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Welcome Commissioner Wang the Mayoral appointee.
- **STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- Next Meeting – October 8th
 - a. Zoning Ordinance amendments for SB 684 and Small Lot Subdivisions
 - b. SLTE Zoning Ordinance Amendments Package
 - c. First Hybrid Meeting
- November:
 - a. Zoning Ordinance amendments for by right development on Housing Element opportunity sites
 - b. Discussion of the West Berkeley Plan
 - c. Discussion of PC calendar and meeting start time
- December:
 - a. No items scheduled
- City Council Updates
 - a. September 9, Council adopted ADU regulations
 - b. Upcoming City Council Items
 - i. October 15 - Implementation of AB 1033 – Separate sale of ADU Condos
 - ii. November 6 – Work session on the San Pablo Specific Plan and Corridors Zoning Update
 - iii. December - (tentative) Transformer Undergrounding

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second (Owens/Merker) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from July 16, 2025.

Ayes: Merker, Owens, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser and Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None
Absent: Vincent, Oatfield, Kahn (6-0-0-3). Motion passed.

10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Reorder A: Discussion: Corridors Zoning Update

Associate Planner Uttara Ramakrishnan and Raimi and Associates consultant Chris Sensenig presented on proposed zoning changes for the College, North Shattuck and Solano Avenue Corridors. Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made comments including, but not limited to: appreciation for the public's participation, support for local businesses and measures to prevent ground floor retail vacancy, the importance of activating the ground floor to promote walkability and pedestrian experience, considerations for rear step backs abutting residential lots and support for increased height to accommodate more housing.

Public Comments: 42

B. Discussion: Planning Department Presentation from Director of Planning and Development, Jordan Klein.

Director Jordan Klein presented on the City of Berkeley's Planning and Development Department structure and its divisions. The commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including, but not limited to: the department's staffing, the impact of State laws on the department and the Commission's responsibilities.

Public Comments: 1

C. Planning Commission 2025-2026 Policy Workplan

Principal Planner Justin Horner presented the 2025-2026 workplan to the Commission. The Commissioners took public comment and thanked staff for the presentation.

Public Comments: 1

11. INFORMATION REPORTS: None

13. CORRESPONDENCE

14. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING: Wednesday, October 8 at 6:00pm

15. ADJOURN

Motions/Second/Carried (Merker/Twu) adjourn the meeting at 9:56 pm. Ayes: Merker, Owens, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser and Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None Absent: Vincent, Oatfield, Kahn (6-0-0-3). Motion passed.

Members in the public in attendance: 66

Public Speakers: 45

Length of the meeting: 3 hours and 57 minutes.



Justin Horner, Planning Commission Secretary