

Planning Commission

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 6, 2026**

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m.

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

- **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Savlan Hauser, Jeff Vincent, Blaine Merker, Christina Oatfield, Angela Wang, Alfred Twu, Charles Kahn, Darrell Owens.

Commissioners Absent: Emily Marthinsen

Staff Present: Secretary Justin Horner, Associate Planner Uttara Ramakrishnan, Planning and Development Director Jordan Klein, Clerks Joshua Muller, Branka Tartarevic, and Marytonae Sanchez.

- **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: 0**

- **ORDER OF AGENDA:** No change

- **CHAIRPERSON REPORT:** None

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

- **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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Commissioner Vincent announced this meeting will likely be his final Planning Commission meeting.

- **STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Upcoming PC Meeting Items:

- **June 3**
 1. San Pablo Specific Plan Public Hearing
- **July 1**
 1. Ashby BART: West Lot Objective Development Standards, Part 1
- **No August meeting**
- **September 2**
 1. Ashby BART: West Lot Objective Development Standards, Part 2

Previous City Council Items:

- April 28: SLTE 2026, 5th Street Rezoning

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second (Kahn/Merker) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from the April 15, 2026.

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

10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Public Hearing: Corridors Zoning Update

Principal Planner Justin Horner, Consultant Chris Sensemig, and Associate Planner Uttara Ramakrishnan provided an update on the Corridors Zoning Update efforts based on the Commission's direction at their March 2026 meeting, as well as an overview of the policy drafting history, public outreach efforts, previous City Council and Planning Commission feedback, the proposed development standards, associated zoning changes and General Plan amendments, and provided recommendations to the Commission. Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made comments including but not limited to: the differences between the two opportunity area options, proposed design standards, capacity tradeoffs between options, warm shell requirement, maximum density in mixed-use opportunity areas, potential unit mix, range in potential units, potential disruption from construction, parking considerations and concerns, potential impacts on commercial activities and spaces, affordability concerns, accessibility considerations and concerns, considerations relative to the 6th and 7th Housing Cycles (RHNA requirements), application of density bonus, potential for projects stalling, entitlement and permit review timelines and potential for ministerial pathways, potential to limit assembly of parcels, application of state laws, amount of affordable units relative to density.

Motion (Kahn/no second) to recommend the City Council adopt the staff recommendation with the following modification: Utilize the Alternative 1B map to identify the parcels within Mixed-Use Opportunity Areas, do not permit aggregation, and allow approval of projects within Mixed-Use Opportunity Areas with an Administrative Use Permit.

Motion/Second (Twu/Owens) to recommend the City Council adopt the staff recommendation with the following modifications:

1. Utilize the Alternative 1B map to identify the parcels within Mixed-Use Opportunity Areas, and do not permit additional lots to qualify as Mixed-Use Opportunity Areas through aggregation;
2. Revise the development standards to add an additional floor to the maximum height standards within Mixed-Use Opportunity Areas, resulting in 5 stories on College Avenue, 6 stories on Solano Avenue and 7 stories on North Shattuck Avenue;
3. Allow approval of projects within Mixed-Use Opportunity Areas with an Administrative Use Permit;
4. Remove the proposed lot coverage and massing development standards identified in the draft ordinance;
5. Remove the requirement for separate entries for trash storage; and
6. Commit to evaluate and re-examine the zoning changes during the 7th Cycle of the Housing Element.

Substitute Motion/Second (Oatfield/Kahn) to recommend the City Council adopt the staff recommendation with an encouragement to develop support services for small businesses.

Ayes: Oatfield, Kahn. Noes: Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Wang, Owens, Merker. Abstain: None. Absent: Marthinsen (2-6-0-1). Motion failed.

Vote on Original Motion (Twu/Owens)

Ayes: Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Wang, Owens and Merker. Noes: Oatfield, Kahn. Abstain: None. Absent: Marthinsen (6-2-0-1). Motion passed.

Public Comments: 74

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

None

12. CORRESPONDENCE

13. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING:

- Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission: Wednesday June 3, 2026 at 6:30pm.

14. ADJOURN

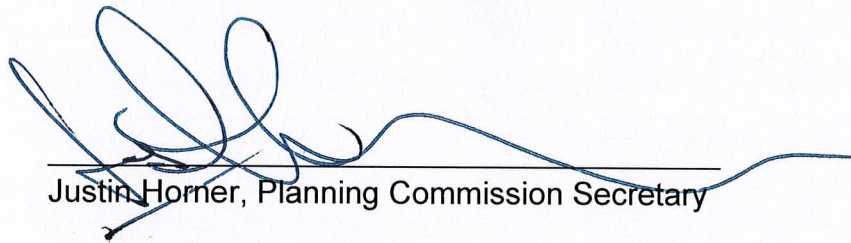
Motion/Second (Oatfield/Merker) to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 pm.

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

Members of the public in attendance: 100 in person, 95 on Zoom

Public Speakers: 74 (58 in person + 16 online)

Length of the meeting: 3 hours 42 min



Justin Horner, Planning Commission Secretary