



Planning Commission

FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING JULY 1, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

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

1. ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Emily Marthinsen, Benjamin Bechtolsheim, Alfred Twu, Charles Kahn, Debra Sanderson (alternate), Darrell Owens.

Commissioners Absent: Savlan Hauser, Christina Oatfield, Angela Wang,

Staff Present: Secretary Alisa Shen, Principal Planner Justin Horner, Clerks Joshua Muller and Marytonae Sanchez.

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 uncanceled 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: 2

4. **ORDER OF AGENDA:** Swap Items 10A (Public Hearing: Tentative Tract Map #8760 for 1155-1163 Hearst Avenue) and 10B (Discussion: Ashby BART West Lot Objective Design Standards)

5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT:

- a. Welcoming new Commissioner Benjamin Bechtolsheim
- b. Proposed procedures regarding clarifying questions; please write them down and provide to the Chair.

6. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS: None

7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Upcoming PC Meeting Items:

- **No August meeting**
- **Next meeting: September 2 or September 16 – date to be confirmed. Agenda item(s) anticipated at this time:**

1. Ashby BART: West Lot Objective Development Standards

b. Update from Principal Planner Justin Horner regarding SB 79 TOD zone determinations from ABAG and MTC

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second (Kahn/Two) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from the June 3, 2026.

Ayes: Marthinsen, Sanderson, Two, Kahn, Owens. Noes: None. Abstain: Bechtolsheim. Absent: Hauser, Oatfield, Wang (5-0-1-3). Motion passed.

10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

B. Discussion: Ashby BART West Lot Objective Design Standards

Principal Planner Alisa Shen presented an overview of the Preliminary Objective Design Standards (ODS), including the ODS development timeline, site context, policy framework, technical constraints, a summary of the Preliminary ODS, and next steps. Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made comments including but not limited to: programmatic and commercial space requirements, differentiation between ODS for different BART stations, interagency cooperation and process, height vs. stories and associated limits, design of public realm spaces, building massing and configuration, timeline and deadline to adopt ODS, affordable housing requirements, emergency vehicle egress and access, children play area vs. community gathering spaces, binding nature and modification potential of ODS, location and layout of commercial spaces relative to public plazas, potential for station entrance plaza programming, residential entrance locations and orientations, residential entry (stoop) design considerations, ODS flexibility relative to design process, commercial space location and size flexibility, bicycle infrastructure placement, balcony requirements, inspirations for potential architectural designs (plan books), potential modifications to sunken plaza, park access and programming, potential for programming in Adeline ROW, potential expansion of green spaces, commitments to civic spaces.

Public Comments: 8

A. Public Hearing: Tentative Tract Map #8760 for 1155-1163 Hearst Avenue

Principal Planner Justin Horner presented the proposed subdivision, Tentative Tract Map #8760, the associated project approved by the Zoning Adjustments Board, and the Planning Commission's role in the approval of tentative tract maps, and provided a recommendation to

the Commission. Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made comments including but not limited to: approval of the tentative tract map.

Motion (Kahn/Owens) to approve Tentative Tract Map #8760 and recommend that the City Council review and certify the map pursuant to BMC Section 21.16.047, subject to the attached Findings and Conditions, and consistent with Berkeley's Tentative Maps Ordinance (BMC Chapter 21.16), applicable condominium conversion requirements, the Subdivision Map Act, and the Berkeley General Plan.

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

Public Comments: 1

C. Action: Planning Commission Work Plan FY 2026-2027

Principal Planner Alisa Shen presented an update on the previous work plan, current staffing, an overview of the proposed work plan, and what priority PITCH and other items should have in the proposed work to the Commission and provided a recommendation to the Commission.

Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made comments including but not limited to: details regarding the "neighborhood-scale commercial" referral, potential avenues for implementation of "support for artists" referral, funding for items, how to prioritize PITCH and other proposed items.

Motion (Kahn/Sanderson) to review and approve the proposed Planning Commission Work Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027.

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

Public Comments: 1

D. Action: Gentrification Referral

Principal Planner Justin Horner presented a summary of the Council's April 2019 referral, a chronology of events and actions taken since the referral, and provided a recommendation to the Commission. Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made comments including but not limited to: potential issues with anti-eviction study conducted by the Rent Board, potential for a more comprehensive study.

Motion (Marthinsen/Kahn) to direct staff to prepare an Off-Agenda Memo for the City Council in response to the 2019 City Council referral Refer to the Planning Commission and Housing Advisory Commission to Research and Recommend Policies to Prevent Displacement and Gentrification of Berkeley Residents of Color and African Americans, with the additional note regarding the need for a more comprehensive study on the Black population history and demographic changes of Berkeley from 1940 to present day.

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

Public Comments: 3

11. INFORMATION ITEMS: None

12. CORRESPONDENCE

13. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING:

- Wednesday September 2, 2026 or Wednesday September 16, 2026 at 6:30pm. Date to be confirmed.

14. ADJOURN

Motion/Second (Kahn/Owens) to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 pm.

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

Members of the public in attendance: 13 in person, 13 on Zoom

Public Speakers: 8 (8 in person, 0 online)

Length of the meeting: 3 hours 0 min



Alisa Shen, Planning Commission Secretary