



Planning Commission

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
June 7, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.

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

**1. ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present:** Blaine Merker, Jeff Vincent, Christina Oatfield, Elisa Mikiten, Emily Marthinsen, Alfred Twu, Savlan Hauser, Barnali Ghosh.

**Commissioner Absent:** Chip Moore (Excused Absence).

**Staff Present:** Secretary Grace Wu, Clerk Zoe Covello, Christina Erickson, Ali Endress, Kieron Slaughter, and Justin Horner.

**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. ORDER OF AGENDA:** No changes.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:** 1.

**5. PLANNING STAFF REPORT:**

- June 6<sup>th</sup> – City Council held a public hearing and first reading of the Bird Safe Building item, which was approved by Council

- June 15<sup>th</sup> – Southside Zoning Amendment Standards goes back to DRC after being continued in May
- Upcoming Planning Commission Meeting agendas (*tentative*):
  - o July 5<sup>th</sup> – Adopt the Planning Commission 2023-2024 Work Plan
  - o August – Recess
  - o September 6<sup>th</sup> - Southside Zoning Amendment

**Information Items:**

- *May 10, 2023* – North Berkeley BART Open House - Community Meeting #2, <https://berkeleyca.gov/construction-development/land-use-development/general-plan-and-area-plans/ashby-and-north-berkeley>
- *May 18, 2023* – Southside Zoning Modification Project presented at the Design Review Committee (continued to June 15, 2023)
  - o Agenda: [https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-agendas/May\\_2023\\_Linked.pdf](https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-agendas/May_2023_Linked.pdf)
  - o Minutes: [https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-minutes/2023-05-18\\_DRC\\_Draft%20Summary.pdf](https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-minutes/2023-05-18_DRC_Draft%20Summary.pdf)
- Kala Art Institute’s Print Public Municipal Artist in Residence Program, <http://www.kala.org/residencies/print-public-residency-program/>

**Communications:**

- General.

**Late Communications:** *See agenda for links.*

- Supplemental Packet One.

**6. CHAIR REPORT:**

- Chair Vincent thanked all those involved in the development of the Bird Safe ordinance, including present and past Planning Commissioners, and especially former Commissioner Robb Kapla.

**7. COMMITTEE REPORT:** Reports by Commission committees or liaisons. In addition to the items below, additional matters may be reported at the meeting.

- None.

**8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion/Second/Carried (Mikiten/Vincent) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from May 3, 2023 at 5:42pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Moore. (8-0-0-1)

## 9. OTHER PLANNING RELATED EVENTS:

- Commissioner Mikiten shared a new philosophy of public engagement - Dream Play Build (James Rojas), stating that public workshops are difficult, as people want to express values and workshops want them to talk about regulations. She suggested that this new philosophy may help with upcoming projects, including objective design standards and the BART developments.

## AGENDA ITEMS

### 10. Action: Planning Commission 2023-2024 Work Plan Subcommittee Selection

The Commission discussed and established the Work Plan Subcommittee, and appointed three Planning Commissioners by a vote.

Motion/Second/Carried (Ghosh/Oatfield) to appoint Chair Vincent, Commissioner Mikiten, and Commissioner Marthinsen to the Planning Commission 2023-2024 Workplan Subcommittee at 5:51pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Moore. (8-0-0-1)

**Public Comments: 0**

### 11. Public Hearing: State Law Technical Edits Revised

Associate Planner Justin Horner presented on behalf of Senior Planner Robert Rivera on the revised proposed zoning ordinance amendments to update the Berkeley Municipal Code in accordance with state laws related to special needs housing, employment housing, family day care home and parking as well as additional non-substantive edits. Public comment was taken, and the commissioners discussed the revised draft ordinance amendments, and made a recommendation to City Council.

Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Ghosh) to close the public hearing at 6:04pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Moore. (8-0-0-1)

Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Ghosh) to accept staff's recommendation with the following two technical edits:

1. Add a "ramps" to: TABLE 23.304-2: ALLOWED BUILDING PROJECTIONS,
2. Amend BMC 23.304.030(B)(4)(a) to include a public sidewalk with access to a rear yard as a compliance option,

3. Use the oxford comma throughout the ordinance.

at 6:25pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh. Noes: None.  
Abstain: None. Absent: Moore. (8-0-0-1)

**Public Comments: 0**

## **12. Discussion: Waterfront Specific Plan**

Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department Deputy Director Christina Erickson and Waterfront Manager Alexandra Endress presented on the status of the Waterfront Specific Plan. Public comment was taken, and the commissioners asked questions and provided feedback.

**Public Comments: 4**

## **13. Discussion: Zoning Amendments to Support Businesses**

Office of Economic Development Chief Strategist Kieron Slaughter and Associate Planner Justin Horner presented on proposed zoning ordinance amendments to support Berkeley businesses. Public comment was taken, the Commissioners provided feedback and direction to staff, and the Commissioners convened a Subcommittee to provide detailed review of the proposed amendments for Planning Commission consideration.

Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Oatfield) to appoint Commissioner Mikiten, Commissioner Oatfield, Vice Chair Ghosh, and Commissioner Twu to the Berkeley Business Subcommittee at 9:07pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh. Noes: None.  
Abstain: None. Absent: Moore. (8-0-0-1)

**Public Comments: 3**

Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Mikiten) to adjourn the meeting at 9:11pm.

Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh. Noes: None.  
Abstain: None. Absent: Moore. (8-0-0-1)

**Members in the public in attendance: 8**

**Public Speakers: 8**

**Length of the meeting: 3 hr 39 minutes**



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Alisa Shen  
Planning Commission Secretary