

**FINAL MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**MARCH 22, 2000**

1 **Location:** North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue  
2 The meeting began at 7:05pm.

3 **Planning Commissioners Present:** Boverhuis (7:15), Bronstein, Capitelli, Howerton (left  
4 10:00), McCamant, Morris, Poschman, Wengraf, Wrenn

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6 **Staff Present:** Haney-Owens, Cosin, Thomas, Douglas  
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8 **PUBLIC COMMENT**  
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10 Todd Harvey of Jubilee Restoration stated that his organization has applied for a housing density  
11 bonus and is willing to work with the Housing Advisory Commission regarding the design and  
12 scale of the organization's proposed housing project at 2718 Eighth Street.  
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14 **ORDER OF AGENDA**  
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16 The order of the agenda was not changed.  
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18 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**  
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20 None.  
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22 **COUNCIL ACTIONS**  
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24 None.  
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26 **FUTURE AGENDAS**  
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28 Staff Haney-Owens discussed the proposed changes to the Planning Commission schedule.  
29 Commissioner McCamant asked why the 5/10/00 meeting is a joint meeting with the Waterfront  
30 Commission.

31 Staff Thomas replied that the General Plan Subcommittee decided that a joint meeting would be  
32 appropriate since waterfront issues often overlap with land use issues.

33 (M/S/C) to approve the proposed future agenda, with the exception of scheduling items related to  
34 item #9 on the agenda (Poschman/Capitelli). The motion carried. Ayes: Boverhuis, Bronstein,  
35 Capitelli, Howerton, McCamant, Morris, Poschman, Wengraf and Wrenn. Noes: None.

36 Abstain: None. Absent: None.  
37

38 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 8, 2000 MEETING**  
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40 (M/S/C) to approve the 3/8/00 minutes with corrections (Poschman/Bronstein). The motion  
41 carried. Ayes: Boverhuis, Bronstein, Capitelli, Howerton, McCamant, Morris, Poschman,  
42 Wengraf and Wrenn. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.  
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**DRAFT SOUTHSIDE PLAN**

Commissioner Wrenn summarized the results of the transportation working group meetings held on February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 11<sup>th</sup>. He asked staff to prepare alternatives for the coming working group series regarding the issue of turning Bancroft and Durant into two-way streets.

Commissioner McCamant discussed the Safety Element’s three goals of improving (1) policing, including cooperation between the City and UC, (2) seismic and fire safety, including better code enforcement and mitigation of unsound apartment buildings, and (3) urban design for safety, including later hours of operation for local restaurants and businesses.

Commissioner Wrenn introduced John McBride, Michael Yarne, Kate Gordon, and John English, who presented a housing and zoning plan for the Southside based upon input from three working group meetings held on February 16<sup>th</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup>, and March 14<sup>th</sup>. He noted that additional housing working group meetings are proposed for April 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.

John McBride provided an overview of the zoning proposal.

Michael Yarne stated that the zoning map represents an attempt at reaching a consensus between neighborhood groups and student groups regarding the shortage of affordable housing for students. He stated that a primary objective of the group has been to make better use of underused sites, such as surface parking lots, while being sensitive to the historic and local context. He stated that many neighbors are concerned about office usage proliferating in the Southside. He also stated that the City could employ a car-free option in a limited zone as a cost-saving incentive to developers.

Commissioner Wengraf asked why the car-free option should not apply throughout the entire area.

Yarne replied that an area-wide car-free option might meet resistance from neighbors.

Commissioner Poschman stated that even if only 48% of new Southside residents own cars, then 1000 new residents would generate 480 new cars. He asked where the new cars might park.

Yarne replied that the City could legally restrict car ownership, according to the City Attorney.

Commissioner Poschman requested that staff provide a written copy of the City Attorney’s conclusions.

Kate Gordon of Students for a Livable Southside (SLS) stated that the working group’s zoning map reflects a dialog between students and neighbors. She stated that there is not yet consensus on what percentage of affordability the City should require that would meet housing needs and not discourage development. She stated that the City should provide affordable housing for students and others in the community.

Commissioner Wengraf asked how the working group’s plan addresses UC’s need for off-campus office space.

John English stated that the group’s objectives include conserving historic buildings and encouraging good new housing for students, for UC faculty and staff, and for others in the community. He stated that the urban mixed-use zone would accommodate office space.

John McBride stated that the Southside is not in competition with suburban communities like Walnut Creek since businesses and shoppers are drawn to its urban fabric.

John English stated that the zoning plan will encourage affordable housing by making use of the incentives created by the State Density Bonus. He stated that the zoning plan seeks a balance between affordability and feasibility.

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1 Commissioner Morris asked how many more residents the zoning plan would allow in the  
2 Southside.  
3 English stated that the zoning plan projects adding 700 units at approximately 2.1 persons per  
4 unit.  
5 Commissioner Morris asked how the plan would accommodate students with spouses and  
6 children.  
7 John McBride stated that they would be accommodated the same as unmarried students because  
8 students in general seem to dislike dormitory-style housing.  
9 Kate Gordon stated that co-operative housing is popular with students and that the working  
10 group is investigating a variety of design options.  
11 Commissioner Morris asked if car-free zones are truly parking-free zones. She asked if the plan  
12 would restrict visitor parking and require developers to fund auto-tracking systems.  
13 Gordon replied that the City must improve current parking enforcement.  
14 McBride stated that residents are misusing 14-day parking permits.  
15 Commissioner Capitelli asked whether developers would be responsible for restricting car  
16 ownership.  
17 Michael Yarne stated that this and other details of the plan are yet to be worked out.  
18 Commissioner Capitelli stated that the proposed R-MU, R-S, and R-3 zones represent down  
19 zoning, and asked what encouragement would be given to developers to create new housing.  
20 John English replied that the height is reduced but the lot coverage is increased.  
21 Commissioner Capitelli stated that the plan could lower the height limit but allow density  
22 bonuses with a higher percentage of affordable housing.  
23 Commissioner Wengraf asked what design guidelines the plan would provide.  
24 Michael Yarne stated that the plan would use some modification of the existing staff guidelines.  
25 Commissioner McCamant asked why the mixed-use zone cuts through some city blocks.  
26 John English replied that this is because of the placement of various opportunity sites.  
27 Michael Yarne stated that the City should adjust zoning to accommodate possible transit  
28 opportunities.  
29 Commissioner Poschman stated that the C-T district extension could harm the surrounding R-3  
30 district.  
31 Chair Wrenn opened the discussion to public comment.  
32 Ryan Russo of SLS stated his support for the working group process.  
33 Jonathon Kass of SLS stated his concern that unresolved parking issues might hinder  
34 development of affordable housing.  
35 Keith Casner stated that SLS can pressure UC to build housing.  
36 Kathy Berger of the Telegraph Avenue Association stated that the Planning Commission should  
37 extend the workshops and that the Memorandum of Understanding should be incorporated into  
38 the discussion and planning process. She stated that the General Plan should include tax credits  
39 to improve seismic stability.  
40 Becky O'Malley stated the importance of clearly defining the difference between office use and  
41 institutional use, and that the latter use has at various times been detrimental to the preservation  
42 of the area's historic character. She stated that a church group demolished eleven houses to  
43 provide parking in the Southside. She stated her concerns regarding spill-over parking and  
44 unnecessary incentives for for-profit development.  
45 Alex Jackson urged the Commission not to make concessions to UC or to large corporations.

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1 Russell Andavall of Berkeley Street Artists stated that bike racks and kiosks should not be placed  
2 in any of the 156 designated sidewalk vending locations. He stated that Berkeley street artists  
3 must compete with shopping areas that have free parking.  
4 John McBride stated that the City must provide housing for local merchants and workers.  
5 Commissioner Bronstein asked how the City should deal with the parking problem.  
6 McBride responded that the City should maintain parking structures, provide short-term parking,  
7 build housing on surface parking lots, and provide light rail.  
8 Todd Harvey of Jubilee Restoration stated that the dismantling of rent control has led to the  
9 displacement of people of color.  
10 Charlotte Shimura, president of the LeConte Neighborhood Association stated that affordable  
11 housing is intended to prevent displacement. She stated her support for mixed-use and  
12 affordable housing along Shattuck Avenue. She stated that the City should change its 14-day  
13 parking permit policy.  
14 Lesley Emmington stated that Bancroft and Telegraph should be active business corridors, and  
15 that Bancroft should connect with the Downtown.  
16 Council member Kriss Worthington stated his support for increasing student housing that is  
17 consistent with neighborhood values.  
18 Andy Katz stated that the City should seek to provide for the commercial and retail needs of  
19 Southside students, such as late-night cafes, so that these students do not need cars.  
20 Carrie Olson, chair of the Southside Subcommittee stated her frustration with the lack of UC  
21 participation in the Southside plan. She stated that she attended a UC-sponsored presentation of  
22 its New Century Plan in which UC made little mention of providing housing.

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24 **PLANNING COMMISSION WORKLOAD AND SCHEDULE (GENERAL PLAN AND**  
25 **SOUTHSIDE PLAN)**

26  
27 Staff Thomas presented the General Plan and Southside Plan Public Participation Schedule.  
28 Planning Director Cosin stated that Mayor Dean requested that the Planning Commission  
29 provide information related to its work program for a March 28<sup>th</sup> Council discussion of workload  
30 issues.  
31 Commissioner Wengraf stated that the Housing and Economic Development workshops were  
32 interesting, well attended, and productive. She suggested the Planning Commission sponsor  
33 another Economic Development workshop.  
34 Commissioner Morris stated her support for integrative discussions of workshop conclusions.  
35 Staff Thomas stated that May 2001 is the earliest that a final draft can be produced due to the  
36 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) schedule.  
37 Commissioner Wengraf stated that the EIR will be informed by conclusions reached in the  
38 General Plan workshops.  
39 Commissioner Morris stated that the EIR process should not limit workshop discussion options.  
40 Staff Thomas stated the importance of delivering the third Draft General Plan so that it may be  
41 used as a vehicle for discussion.  
42 Staff Haney-Owens stated that the July Commission meetings will be dedicated to the General  
43 Plan and these could be used for these integrative discussions.  
44 Commissioner Capitelli stated that the integration of interdependent topics is the responsibility of  
45 the Planning Commission, and that the Commission should not burden the community with  
46 another series of interactive workshops.

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1 Commissioner Poschman stated that the workshop format has been more productive than the  
2 public hearing format. He stated that the process of integration must be clearly defined or else  
3 the result becomes meaningless.

4 Commissioner Morris stated that issues such as housing, parking and office space should be  
5 discussed in relationship to one another.

6 Staff Thomas stated that the July meetings will provide opportunity for integrative discussions  
7 and final direction to staff.

8 Commissioner Morris asked whether the Planning Commission might have a one-day retreat to  
9 discuss workshop conclusions.

10 Commissioner McCamant stated that the Planning Commission should be cautious about  
11 applying the same working group process for developing the General Plan as it has for the  
12 Southside Plan due to the difference in scope and character between the Southside and the City  
13 in general.

14 Commissioner Wengraf stated that the Commission does not have enough time to adequately  
15 hear from the community regarding the General Plan.

16 Staff Cosin stated that the workshops are intended to be a “springboard” for framing the General  
17 Plan issues. She stated that people have many opportunities to submit written comments.

18 Commissioner Wrenn stated that the Citizen Participation element of the General Plan should  
19 include a model that describes how the next plan will gather community input.

20 Commissioner Wengraf stated that ten-year-old community comments are no longer relevant.  
21 She stated that the public comment process should be intensified, not extended.

22 Commissioner Wrenn stated that the Commission must find a compromise between  
23 comprehensive input and expeditious completion. He stated that more workshops are not  
24 needed.

25 Commissioner Bronstein stated that workshops are limited formats that can not cover all topics  
26 completely. She stated that workshops are a useful format for generating ideas and exposing  
27 issues, but not for resolving them. She stated that the workshops to date have been useful and  
28 successful but more are not necessary. She stated that people have responded to written material  
29 and will do so again when more written material is available.

30 Commissioner Morris supported the importance of producing a well-articulated synthesis of  
31 relevant issues in written form for public response.

32 Commissioner McCamant stated that the Southside Plan Subcommittee should have another  
33 meeting to discuss the Safety Element on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

34 (M/S/C) to adopt the amended schedule (Poschman/Capitelli). The motion carried. Ayes:  
35 Boverhuis, Bronstein, Capitelli, McCamant, Morris, Poschman and Wrenn. Noes: Wengraf.  
36 Abstain: None. Absent: Howerton.

37 Commissioner Bronstein asked when the Commission will receive an update on the New  
38 Century Plan.

39 Staff Haney-Owens stated that UC is extending the timeline of the Plan, and that UC intends to  
40 deliver a status report and technical information to the Planning Commission in July and  
41 October.

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(M/S/C) to transmit the staff report to the Housing Advisory Commission (Poschman/Capitelli).  
The motion carried. Ayes: Boverhuis, Bronstein, Capitelli, Howerton, McCamant, Morris,  
Poschman, Wengraf and Wrenn. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None  
Commissioner Wengraf asked whether site control is in the purview of the Planning  
Commission.  
Commissioner Capitelli replied that it is not.  
Commissioner Boverhuis asked whether homeless shelters conform to West Berkeley zoning  
regulations.  
Commissioner Poschman replied that there is an exemption that permits homeless shelters.  
Adjournment at 10:30 p.m.