

**APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 28, 2001**

1 Time: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

2 Location: North Berkeley Senior Center.

3

4 Commissioners present: Wrenn, Wengraf, Poschman, Howerton, Hicks, Morris,
5 McCamant (arrived 7:15 p.m.), Bronstein (arrived 7:20 p.m.), Perry (arrived 8:24 p.m.).

6

7 Commissioners Absent: None.

8

9 Staff present: Haney-Owens, Thomas, Cosin, Lambert, Phillips.

10

11 **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

12

13 Irene Hegerty, Director of Community Relations at UC Berkeley, noted that the
14 University is not mentioned in the Disaster Preparedness Element. She also stated her
15 concern regarding negative references to the University throughout the Plan, especially in
16 the Citizen Participation Element.

17

18 John DeClercq stated that the Economic Development Element lacks cross-referencing,
19 particularly regarding the issues of parking and parking management.

20

21 Howie Muir asked if the West Berkeley Area Plan will be incorporated into the new
22 General Plan. He also stated his concerns about densities and heights at nodes along San
23 Pablo Avenue.

24

25 Rachel Rupert, CEO of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, stated that customer access
26 to retail in the Downtown area is limited by the parking situation.

27

28 Norine Smith expressed her concerns regarding pedestrian deaths in Berkeley. She stated
29 that left turns from and onto Shattuck Avenue pose a significant safety risk to
30 pedestrians.

31

32 Commissioner Hicks asked if studies have been conducted that monitor whether
33 pedestrians are observing traffic laws.

34

35 Commissioner Wrenn summarized the results of a study that found drivers at fault in
36 most accidents that involve autos and bicyclists or pedestrians.

37

38 Eva Bansner stated that the Plan lacks appropriate maps of natural environment and
39 developable areas. She stated that Berkeley needs more housing.

40

41 Jennifer Lawrence pointed out that the Transportation Demand Management Study and
42 the Plan do not address the issue of visitor parking, and that this data is difficult to
43 collect.

44

45 Becky O'Malley requested a longer period between Planning Commission discussion and
46 action on Plan amendments and the close of the public comment on the Draft EIR.

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47

48 Commissioner Wrenn noted that amendments are posted on the City's website.

49

50 Staff Thomas clarified the steps of the amendment process.

51

52 Merri Mitchell stated that the EIR was drafted without important information and data
53 regarding Vista College and UC Berkeley Extension students.

54

55 Fran Gallati, a representative from the Berkeley Cultural Trust, suggested that the TDM
56 Study and General Plan consider parking as integral to ensuring accessibility to the
57 Downtown area. He stated that parking is crucial to YMCA membership and the success
58 of other new non-profit attractions. He mentioned the impact of spillover parking on
59 adjacent neighborhoods.

60

61 **ORDER OF AGENDA**

62

63 No change.

64

65 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

66

67 No items to report.

68

69 **CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS**

70

71 Staff Haney-Owens stated the Council has scheduled a 30 minute presentation on the
72 TDM at its April 17th meeting. She also noted that there will be a TDM workshop on
73 April 19, 2001 at the Transportation Commission meeting.

74

75 **FUTURE AGENDAS**

76

77 Commissioner Wrenn noted that the special meeting scheduled on April 4, 2001 to
78 consider a proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment regarding public facilities. He stated
79 that other Zoning Ordinance items would be taken up at a special May 30, 2001 meeting.

80

81 Commissioner Bronstein questioned the necessity for holding a special meeting to
82 discuss only one item.

83

84 Staff Haney-Owens explained that this particular zoning issue is time-sensitive.

85

86 Commissioner Wengraf noted that the special meeting had already been publicly noticed.

87

88 Commissioner McCamant noted that she will not be in town on April 4, 2001.

89

90 Commissioners and Staff resolved to move item 10 on the March 28th agenda, the
91 discussion of the Planning and Development Department Fiscal Year '02/'03 budget, to
92 the April 4, 2001 meeting agenda.

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93

94 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

95

96 M/S/C to approve minutes from the March 14, 2001 meeting (Poschman/Wengraf). Ayes:

97 Bronstein, Wrenn, Wengraf, Morris, Hicks, Poschman, McCamant, Howerton. Noes:

98 None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Perry.

99

100 **PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DRAFT EIR**

101

102 The public hearing on the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR was continued from the
103 February 28, 2001.

104

105 Staff Thomas noted that written comments on the DEIR can be submitted until April 16,
106 2001. He stated that Staff will respond in writing to each oral and written submission,
107 and emphasized that the purpose of the public comment period is to address the adequacy
108 of the EIR.

109

110 John English stated that BAHA will be submitting comments on the DEIR, particularly
111 the infrastructure section.

112

113 Janet Stromberg presented the information in her attached handout.

114

115 M/S/C to close the public comment period on the EIR (Hicks/Poschman). Ayes:

116 Bronstein, Wrenn, Wengraf, Morris, Hicks, Poschman, McCamant, Howerton. Noes:

117 None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Perry.

118

119 **DRAFT GENERAL PLAN AND EIR**

120

121 Commissioner Wrenn opened the discussion regarding amendments to the Environmental
122 Management Element of the Draft General Plan.

123

124 Commissioner Wengraf questioned the appropriateness of some of the actions under
125 Policy EM-26.

126

127 Commissioner Morris supported moving some of these actions to the Economic
128 Development Element.

129

130 Staff Thomas clarified the intent of this policy, and suggested refining the language to
131 capture this intent.

132

133 M/S/C to refine the language and move these actions to the Economic Development
134 Element (Poschman/Bronstein). Ayes: Wrenn, Bronstein, Hicks, Wengraf, McCamant,
135 Morris, Poschman, Howerton. Noes: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Perry.

136

137 Commissioner Wrenn opened discussion regarding amendments to the Open Space
138 Element of the Draft General Plan.

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139

140 Commissioner Wrenn read proposed new language for OS-12.

141

142 Commissioner McCamant requested a formal definition of the term “green”.

143

144 Staff Lambert stated that the definition used by the Office of Economic Development is
145 broad, and that there is no set criteria or checklist used to categorize a business as
146 “green”.

147

148 Commissioner Morris suggested amending the proposed language by replacing “green”
149 with “publicly accessible”.

150

151 Staff Haney-Owens suggested that the language distinguish between new and existing
152 development at the Marina.

153

154 M/S/C to approve new language for OS-12 with changes (McCamant/Wengraf). Ayes:
155 Bronstein, Wrenn, Wengraf, Morris, Hicks, McCamant, Howerton, Perry. Noes: None.
156 Abstentions: Poschman. Absent: None.

157

158 Commissioners and Staff resolved to revisit OS-7, OS-8, and EM-36 at the next regular
159 meeting.

160

161 Commissioner Wrenn opened discussion regarding amendments to the Citizen
162 Participation Element.

163

164 Commissioner Wrenn suggested removing the column entitled “General Plan Element”
165 from the background section of the Citizen Participation Element.

166

167 Commissioner Perry stated his concern regarding CP-5 Action E that the standards of
168 notification are too high, and suggested dropping the last sentence in Action E.

169

170 Commissioner Poschman stated that clarification of the notification process is important.

171

172 Commissioner Wengraf suggested revising Action E and the entire Citizen Participation
173 Element to steer clear of negative language.

174

175 Commissioners Morris, Bronstein and Poschman volunteered to work with staff on
176 revisions to CP-4.

177

178 Commissioners and Staff resolved to revisit the language of the Citizen Participation
179 Element once the entire element is redrafted.

180

181 Commissioner Wrenn opened discussion regarding amendments to the Preservation &
182 Design Element.

183

184 Commissioner Wengraf suggested renaming the element “Preservation & Urban Design”.

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185
186 Commissioner Perry suggested the title, "Urban Design and Preservation".
187
188 Commissioners and Staff resolved to change the name of this element to "Urban Design
189 & Preservation".
190
191 Commissioners had no objectives to proposed amendments 1-15.
192
193 Commissioner Wrenn noted that item 16 on this amendment list requires Staff to provide
194 new language.
195
196 Commissioner McCamant stated that each text box should be pulled for discussion.
197
198 Commissioner Poschman noted that Policy PD-2 is redundant.
199
200 M/S/C to make Policy PD-2 an action under PD-1 (Poschman/McCamant). Ayes: Wrenn,
201 Bronstein, Hicks, Wengraf, McCamant, Morris, Poschman, Howerton, Perry. Noes:
202 None. Abstentions: None. Absent: None.
203
204 Commissioner Morris requested that the City support public-private partnerships to
205 preserve landmarks.
206
207 Commissioner Bronstein referred Commissioner Morris to PD-16 and PD-17.
208
209 M/S/C to approve item 20 on the proposed list of amendments to the Preservation &
210 Design Element (Morris/Bronstein). Ayes: Wrenn, Bronstein, Poschman, Howerton.
211 Noes: Wengraf, McCamant, Morris, Perry. Abstentions: Hicks. Absent: None.
212
213 Commissioner McCamant stated her objection to this amendment because there is not a
214 historic scale to the Downtown area. She suggested deleting this policy because the
215 Downtown Plan is already referenced.
216
217 M/S/C to strike the entire policy PD-5 (Perry/Wengraf). Ayes: Wengraf, McCamant,
218 Morris, Hicks, Perry. Noes: Wrenn, Bronstein, Poschman, Howerton. Abstentions: None.
219 Absent: None.
220
221 Staff Thomas explained the rationale behind item 38 on the amendment list.
222
223 Commissioner Perry stressed the need for certainty and predictability in the review
224 process.
225
226 Commissioner Wrenn suggested that Staff compose an additional action to PD-23
227 regarding predictability and certainty in the process.
228

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229 M/S/C to defer this item for language revision (Perry/Hicks). Ayes: Wrenn, Bronstein,
230 Hicks, Wengraf, McCamant, Morris, Poschman, Howerton, Perry. Noes: None.
231 Abstentions: None. Absent: None.
232
233 Commissioner Bronstein stated that citizen participation should not be discouraged in
234 favor of timeliness.
235
236 Commissioners Perry, Morris, and Bronstein volunteered to work with Staff on revised
237 language for PD-5.
238
239 Commissioner Wengraf stated that the Downtown design guidelines contain all of the
240 information in PD-26.
241
242 Commissioner Perry noted that this language discourages bias towards a specific design
243 style.
244
245 M/S/F to delete policy PD-26 (McCamant/Wengraf). Ayes: Hicks, Wengraf, McCamant,
246 Perry. Noes: Wrenn, Bronstein, Morris, Poschman, Howerton. Abstentions: None.
247 Absent: None.
248
249 M/S/C to accept item 40 on the amendment list for the Preservation & Design Element.
250 (Poschman/Wrenn). Ayes: Perry, Wrenn, Bronstein, Morris, Poschman, Howerton.
251 Noes: McCamant. Abstentions: Hicks, Wengraf. Absent: None.
252
253 Commissioner Morris asked how to balance sustainable design with other design
254 guidelines as it pertains to item 44 on this amendment list.
255
256 Commissioners and Staff resolved to revisit items 44 and PD-23 once language is
257 developed.
258
259 Commissioner Wrenn opened discussion regarding amendments to the Economic
260 Development Element of the Plan.
261
262 Commissioner Wengraf asked if the 1990 data is the most recent data available for
263 inclusion in the background section of the Economic Development Element
264
265 Staff Lambert replied that it will be the most recent until the complete results of the 2000
266 Census are released.
267
268 Commissioner Poschman suggested altering the graph on page 118 of the Economic
269 Development background section.
270
271 There were no objections to proposed amendment items 1-7 to the Economic
272 Development Element.
273

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274 Staff Thomas stated Staff concerns with the actions under ED-3. He noted that Action G
275 may raise some expectations that the City is not capable of meeting. He also stated that
276 some of the actions are not consistent with the Policy's heading.

277
278 Commissioner Perry suggested changing the heading to "Local Businesses".

279
280 Commissioner Bronstein suggested creating a separate policy that deals with regulating
281 formula businesses.

282
283 Commissioner Wrenn suggested moving ED-3 Actions D and G to a separate policy.

284
285 Commissioner Morris stated that the current language is too broad.

286
287 M/S/F to replace "locally-owned" with "local, small" (Perry/Hicks). Ayes: Hicks,
288 Wengraf, McCamant, Perry. Noes: Wrenn, Bronstein, Morris, Poschman, Howerton.
289 Abstentions: None. Absent: None.

290
291 Commissioner Morris suggested adding the phrase "and business incubators" to Action
292 E.

293
294 Commissioner Perry opposed this suggestion. He also stated that emphasizing the
295 preservation of industrial uses is inconsistent with the current state of the economy.

296
297 Commissioners and Staff resolved to revisit this policy once new language has been
298 drafted.

299
300 Commissioner Wengraf suggested that a public parking garage be considered in Policy
301 ED-6.

302
303 Commissioners and Staff resolved to revisit the parking issue during discussion of the
304 Transportation Element, and to examine linkages to the Economic Development Element
305 at that time.

306
307 Commissioner Morris raised the issue of non-auto delivery systems, home-based
308 businesses, and all-day handicapped parking availability.

309
310 Commissioner Perry noted that the Economic Development Element fails to address
311 Berkeley's longstanding history as an intellectual center, and that this element should
312 include a policy which address this issues. Staff Thomas agreed to work with
313 Commissioner Perry on the policy language

314

315

316 **ADJOURNMENT**

317

318 Meeting adjourned at 10:34 pm.