

**APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 13, 2001**

1 **ROLL CALL**

2
3 Time: The meeting was called to order at 7:02.

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5 Location: North Berkeley Senior Center.

6
7 Commissioners Present: Bronstein, Curl, Hicks, Howerton, Poschman, Tabb, Wengraf,
8 Wozniak, Wrenn.

9
10 Commissioners Absent: None.

11
12 Staff Present: Barrett, Cederborg, Thomas.

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14 **ORDER OF AGENDA**

15
16 No change.

17
18 **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

19
20 Ilyse Gordis stated that she would like Zoning Ordinance section 23C04020 modified.
21 She stated that this section prohibits her from building on to her house and would like
22 staff to look into changing it.

23
24 Commissioner Wengraf asked if she applied for a variance.

25
26 Mrs. Gordis replied that when she talked to a planner, she was told that there is a small
27 likelihood she would be granted a variance.

28
29 Commissioner Poschman stated that in this case a variance should be possible.

30
31 Skip Wentz stated that he would like to see the same ordinance amended for add-ons. He
32 urged the Commission to allow staff to review this ordinance and to possibly require an
33 Administrative Use Permit (AUP).

34
35 Connie Tram stated her support for two-way streets.

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37 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

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39 No Report.

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41 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

42
43 No Reports.

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45 **PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

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47 Planning Director Barrett introduced Steve Solomon to the Planning Commission as the
48 new Planning Commission Secretary. She then gave an update on recent City Council
49 actions and vacant positions on the Planning staff.

50
51 Commissioner Wozniak asked how long the positions have been vacant.

52
53 Commissioner Wengraf asked that the Commission set aside time to discuss this situation
54 with the Planning Director.

55
56 Planning Director Barrett stated that there are plans for many of the jobs to be filled in
57 the next month, so she asked to wait to discuss this.

58
59 Commissioner Bronstein asked Planning Director Barrett to come back next month to
60 update the Planning Commission.

61
62 Commissioner Wozniak asked Planning Director Barrett what the plan is to ensure these
63 jobs are filled, and stated that filling these positions should be a high priority.

64
65 Commissioner Hicks asked how wide the search to fill these jobs is.

66
67 Planning Director Barrett stated that advertisements are placed by Personnel and are
68 posted in the APA newsletters and websites, so the audience is wide.

69
70 Commissioner Wengraf asked if the planning salaries for the city of Berkeley are
71 competitive.

72
73 Staff Thomas stated that the salaries recently have fallen behind other cities nearby.

74
75 Commissioner Wengraf suggested lobbying the Council for more money to staff the
76 planning department.

77
78 Commissioner Poschman asked for competitive salary data.

79
80 Planning Director Barrett stated that she will provide this data, but noted that her goal is
81 also to use existing resources most effectively.

82
83 Planning Director Barrett stated that there is currently some flexibility but they are
84 looking into more ways to accommodate those working for the city.

85
86 Commissioner Bronstein asked to place this item on next meeting's agenda

87
88 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

89
90 M/S/C approve the February 12, 2001 minutes with changes (Wrenn/Wengraf). Ayes:
91 Bronstein, Curl, Howerton, Tabb, Wengraf, Wozniak, Wrenn. Noes: None. Abstentions:
92 Hicks, Poschman. Absent: None.

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M/S/C approve the February 27, 2001 minutes with changes (Hicks/Wozniak). Ayes: Bronstein, Curl, Hicks, Howerton, Tabb, Wengraf, Wozniak, Wrenn. Noes: None. Abstentions: Poschman. Absent: None.

SOUTHSIDE PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

Commissioner Wrenn introduced the Public Hearing by describing some of the outstanding issues regarding the Southside Plan.

Commissioner Wengraf asked if the Commissioners were given all of the data previously requested, and if not, when it will be given.

Staff Thomas stated that staff is putting together a database regarding current land use in the Southside, and a meeting has been scheduled at the end of April to discuss the transportation issues. He stated that at the May 8th meeting, staff can present the Commission with the scope of transportation options. He stated that the scope of transportation options could be significantly narrowed if the Commission were able to provide some policy direction on two questions in the staff report.

1. Should the Southside Plan consider a transportation options which may result in “filtering” or diverting cars to adjacent streets?
2. Should the Southside Plan consider a transportation plan which would require elimination of on-street parking?

Staff Thomas stated that at this preliminary stage in the analysis, it appears that one of these two options may be necessary to maintain AC Transit’s service levels and convert to two-way streets.

M/S/C to open the public hearing (Poschman/Wozniak). Ayes: Bronstein, Curl, Hicks, Howerton, Poschman, Tabb, Wengraf, Wozniak, Wrenn. Noes: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: None.

Sarah Sayde, representing BFBC, stated that she created a report which includes converting Bancroft and Durant to two-way streets and filtering cars off Telegraph which she gave to the Commission. She stated that safety is her main concern.

Commissioner Poschman asked how the Commission should weight the priority given to cyclists, pedestrians, and transit.

Commissioner Wozniak stated that there are dangers for cyclists on two-way streets as well.

Faith Stein stated that she agrees with the staff report that indicates that there may be less housing opportunities under the proposed zoning.

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138 Commissioner Tabb asked Ms. Stein what position the ASUC holds regarding
139 transportation for the Southside.

140
141 Ms. Stein stated that the ASUC does not hold a position on transportation for the
142 Southside.

143
144 Commissioner Wengraf asked for a written copy of her presentation.

145
146 Emily Longfellow, representing Ed Munger, stated her objection to two-way streets in the
147 Southside. She pointed out an inaccuracy in the draft plan on page 62 which states that
148 there was general agreement on converting the streets to two-way. She stated that two-
149 way streets will be a detriment to emergency vehicles and already poor traffic conditions.
150 She is opposed to AC Transit's plans to block off Telegraph to cars and states that this
151 will directly impact businesses, specifically their ability to receive deliveries.

152
153 Sally Sachs, representing the Berkeley Architectural Association (BAHA), stated her
154 opposition to LU-AS as prepared by staff. She stated her concern with subsections one
155 and two, but recommended that subsection three be eliminated entirely. She stated that
156 the Commission needs to add prescriptive language to developers.

157
158 Dave Campbell, representing the Bicycle-Friendly Berkeley Coalition, stated that two-
159 way streets would be safer for bicyclists. He suggested to replace the word "diversion" in
160 the Plan and stated that it is a loaded term. He also suggested to the Commission that
161 they give guidance to staff regarding safety and traffic concerns, and that they should be
162 weighed differently.

163
164 Commissioner Tabb asked for evidence showing that two-way streets are safer than one-
165 way streets.

166
167 Mr. Campbell stated that he did not have this information.

168
169 Commissioner Wengraf asked if the BFBC would support diverters being removed from
170 the streets in order to return the streets to a normal traffic flow.

171
172 Commissioner Poschman asked Mr. Campbell if he represented UC students, and what
173 his interest is in Bancroft Way.

174
175 Mr. Campbell stated that many of the Coalition's members are UC students and he
176 represents them as well as the members who live in the Southside.

177
178 Roland Peterson, representing the Telegraph Business Improvement District, stated that
179 the board is unanimously opposed to a transit mall on Telegraph. They are also strongly
180 against high speed buses which will impact pedestrian and bicycle safety.

181
182 Kathryn Swift, representing the BFBC, stated her support for a two-way street conversion
183 for Bancroft and Durant due to the high speeds on the roads. She stated that the two-way

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184 streets will produce a neighborhood atmosphere, and will be beneficial for emergency
185 vehicles as well.

186

187 Commissioner Hicks asked for an analysis of one-way streets and two-way streets in
188 regard to traffic.

189

190 Martha Jones suggested that the Commission discuss the traffic issues in the Southside
191 with Peter Hillier, the traffic manager. She stated her support for two-way streets.

192

193 James Carman, representing the Berkeley Canterbury Foundation, requested that the
194 process for the Southside move quickly. He stated that on page 161 of the draft plan the
195 definition of affordability be clarified in regard to students living in a rooming house and
196 that the density per square foot in the draft be more definite. He asked that the city
197 indicate what the incentives are for owners to seismically improve their buildings as
198 mentioned on page 35, AU-A4. He asked that the city indicate whether the state historic
199 resources inventory has been updated, and if so how many times as discussed in LU-A5,
200 on page 35. He also stated that on page 31, LU-A3 is unclear.

201

202 Stephanie Green, representing the Berkeley Canterbury Foundation, asked for the
203 Commission to clarify the 350 square feet for group living quarters. She asked what all
204 that includes and how is that determined and if it may be reduced to 175 square feet. She
205 also would like clarification in regard to the word "encourage" used throughout the plan,
206 and what is really meant by this term.

207

208 Commissioner Wrenn asked Ms. Green approximately how many square footage does
209 she suggest.

210

211 Ms. Green replied that it depends on how it is defined.

212

213 Commissioner Poschman stated that it is defined by lot area.

214

215 Dorris Willingham, representing CENA, stated that there are inconsistencies in the Land
216 Use element and encouraged the Commission to talk with Peter Hillier.

217

218 Andy Katz agreed with Faith Stein. He stated that there is a potential to reduce housing
219 opportunities under the proposed zoning and he asked for a site by site analysis.

220

221 Commissioner Wozniak asked what should be the housing goals.

222

223 Mr. Katz stated he didn't have a number for the Commission.

224

225 Don Schweter, representing the Berkeley Bicycle Coalition, presented Portland, Oregon
226 as a model for a transit mall.

227

228 Commissioner Wengraf asked how the businesses receive deliveries.

229

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230 Mr. Schweter replied that he did not have this information.

231

232 Steve Finacom stated that the UC is working on preparing data for the next roundtable
233 meeting. He suggested that the Commission spend some time in the Southside on a
234 weekday and a weekend to get an idea of the existing conditions. He provided some
235 history explaining the current building situation in the Southside.

236

237 Commissioner Tabb asked what Mr. Finacom thought about one-way vs. two-way streets
238 in terms of safety.

239

240 Mr. Finacom stated that many pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers do not follow the laws.
241 He stated that a two-way street may result in slower traffic, and is not sure of its impact
242 on safety.

243

244 Jim Novosel stated his support for the draft Southside plan and stated his concern with
245 the density limits and the reduction to open space.

246

247 Commissioner Tabb suggested that he submit the design he referred to.

248

249 Commissioner Wrenn asked for suggestions on group limit quarters.

250

251 Mr. Novosel stated that he does not have a figure, but believes they should be higher than
252 what they are now as outlined in the Plan.

253

254 Merrilie Mitchell asked for information regarding UC extension students. She stated it is
255 imperative to ascertain where they are coming from and where they are living.

256

257 John McBride stated that a visit to the Southside is a good idea. He stated that the
258 proposed Plan is appropriate, but it may need some fine tuning.

259

260 M/S/C to close the public hearing (Hicks/Poschman). Ayes: Bronstein, Curl, Hicks, 261 Howerton, Poschman, Tabb, Wengraf, Wozniak, Wrenn. Noes: None. Abstentions: 262 None. Absent: None.

263

264 Commissioner Wozniak stated that on many issues, there still is not enough data to make
265 a decision, especially on the issue of safety.

266

267 Commissioner Hicks stated that needs must be prioritized before a decision can be made.

268

269 Commissioner Wrenn stated that there needs to be more discussion on group living
270 quarters in regard to the affordability standards and the amount of square feet per unit to
271 define this. He stated that under the proposed zoning, many housing opportunities will
272 be available in the Southside.

273

274 Commissioner Wozniak stated that he is unclear of what the effects of this Plan will
275 really be in terms of transportation and housing and stated there is not a lot of analysis.

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277 Commissioner Poschman stated that realistic housing gains do exist under the proposed
278 housing, but there still are questions on the issue of transportation.

279

280 Commissioner Curl asked what the effect was from transitioning the streets from two-
281 way to one-way, and how might businesses be hurt if they are converted back to two-way
282 streets.

283

284 Commissioner Bronstein stated that at the April 10th meeting, the land use and housing
285 issues should be resolved. She asked the Commissioners to send any other outstanding
286 questions to her before the meeting.

287

288 Commissioner Wozniak stated that he wants to know what the impact of the Plan will be,
289 and would like expert analyses.

290

291 **ELECTIONS**

292

293 Commissioner Curl nominated Commissioner Poschman.

294

295 Commissioner Wrenn seconded the motion.

296

297 Commissioner Wengraf nominated Commissioner Wozniak.

298

299 Commissioner Tabb seconded the motion.

300

301 Commissioner Tabb stated that the vice-chair needs to represent the partisan minority.

302

303 Commissioner Bronstein stated that the Commission is not a divided body but many
304 times comes to consensus.

305

306 Commissioners voting for Commissioner Poschman for vice-chair; Bronstein, Curl,
307 Howerton, Poschman, Wrenn.

308

309 Commissioners voting for Commissioner Wozniak for vice-chair; Hicks, Tabb, Wengraf,
310 Wozniak.

311

312 **ADJOURNMENT**

313

314 Meeting was adjourned at 9:40.