

1 **APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**
2 **APRIL 24, 2002**

3
4 **ROLL CALL**

5
6 Time: The meeting was called to order at 7:10.

7
8 Location: North Berkeley Senior Center.

9
10 Commissioners Present: Bronstein, Curl, Hicks, Howerton, Poschman, Tabb, Wengraf,
11 Wrenn.

12
13 Commissioners Absent: Wozniak.

14
15 Staff Present: Barrett, Cederborg, Stroshane.

16
17 **ORDER OF AGENDA**

18
19 Commissioner Wengraf asked that items 17 and 16 follow item 12.

20
21 **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

22
23 Nancy Holland suggested that the transportation element of the Southside Plan focus on
24 one priority emphasizing non-vehicle transportation. She suggested that the Plan offer
25 incentives to eliminate motor vehicles use, while encouraging the use of public
26 transportation. She suggested employing commuter checks as one such incentive. She
27 stated that these transportation demand management strategies be written into the
28 Southside Plan.

29
30 Commissioner Tabb asked if the University participates in commuter checks.

31
32 Ms. Holland stated that she does not know this information.

33
34 John McBride, representing the Telegraph Area Association, stated that the University
35 should participate in a full commute program. He stated that the language of AC Transit's
36 Major Investment Study (MIS) has not been corrected regarding its use of the term
37 "Transit Mall". He stated that the concept of a "Transit Mall" hinders the safety of the
38 neighborhood and conflict with the bike boulevard. He stated that it should be eliminated
39 from the Plan since it is needlessly divisive. He stated that the Telegraph Business
40 Improvement District is also opposed to the use of this term.

41
42 John English thanked the Planning Commission and the staff for their work on the
43 General Plan. He stated that the transit Eco-pass that the City has instituted is admirable
44 and suggested that the University of California provide an Eco-pass program for their
45 staff as well. He stated that there was some talk about a bus route along Bowditch and he

46 asked that the Commission not consider this since pedestrian traffic is heavy on Bowditch
47 Street and is increasing.

48
49 Steve Geller suggested that the city to eliminate on-street parking on Telegraph. He
50 stated his opposition to a conversion to two-way streets. He stated that it would not do
51 much good for the money it would take to accomplish this. He suggested the only way to
52 reduce traffic is to make traffic worse so that people will be discouraged from driving.
53 He stated that he has mixed feelings about eco pass since he feels that people should pay
54 the cost of their own transportation.

55
56 Commissioner Tabb stated that public transportation would not be possible without
57 subsidization.

58
59 Emily Longfellow, representing Ed Monger, owner of the Granada building, stated her
60 opposition to two-way streets. She stated that AC Transit agreed to eliminate any
61 language of a transit mall, but this term remains in the MIS. She stated that the
62 Telegraph Business Association is also against the idea of a transit mall. She reiterated
63 her reasons for not converting the streets to two-way. She also urged the Planning
64 Commission not to take action on a conversion without a clear definition of the problem
65 two-way streets is attempting to solve. She stated that there are many other solutions to
66 problems such as safety.

67
68 Dorris Willingham stated that the current public transportation system is not optimal and
69 that employees will not use the transit system unless it improves. She asked that staff
70 report to the Commission and the public on the joint UC/City staff transportation meeting
71 that will be held on April 25th.

72
73 Martha Jones stated that if Bancroft is closed off, it will be the 12th street that the
74 University has taken over. She discussed her handouts given during the meeting
75 regarding regional traffic. She stated her support for a conversion to two-way streets.

76
77 Commissioner Curl stated that sixty percent of the traffic is on the peripheral streets.

78
79 Ms. Jones stated that this traffic comes down the corridors and goes through the
80 Southside.

81
82 Commissioner Hicks stated that traffic is compounded throughout the city and there may
83 be nothing that will change this.

84
85 Commissioner Tabb asked when the Commissioners can expect the information they
86 asked for regarding the transportation issues in the Southside.

87
88 Planning Director Barrett stated that the first meeting to address these issues will be
89 tomorrow, April 25th.

90

91 John Cecil, representing the Elmwood Neighborhood Association, stated that he collected
92 data on Berkeley side streets vs. the freeway and found that it is faster on 24 than going
93 through town. He stated that AC Transit planned to complete a study on this issue but it
94 was dropped. He stated his support for a conversion to two-way streets. He stated that
95 Durant and Bancroft are wider to provide a variety of transportation alternatives.

96

97 Commissioner Poschman asked for a copy of Mr. Cecil's study.

98

99 Commissioner Wengraf asked if this study was done prior to the new interchange.

100

101 Mr. Cecil stated that it was done after.

102

103 Roland Peterson, Director of the Telegraph Business Improvement District, reported that
104 the group he represents voted unanimously against the transit mall concept for Telegraph
105 Avenue. He stated his opposition to converting to two-way streets and stated that the
106 discussion to change to two-way streets is premature. He also stated that Dana, as a
107 return route, should be looked at.

108

109 Commissioner Curl asked if he could suggest any solutions to keeping the loading zones
110 clear for deliveries.

111

112 Mr. Peterson stated that the parking laws should be enforced by the Berkeley Police.

113

114 Wendy Alfsen stated her support for the Southside Draft Plan. She recommended
115 walking be included as a transportation demand management strategy, and that an
116 expansion of the pedestrian streetscape amenities should be looked into in addition to
117 identifying additional pedestrian routes. She suggested to equalize subsidies given to
118 bikes and pedestrians vs. cars and to push the eco pass for the UC.

119

120 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

121

122 Commissioner Bronstein announced that the General Plan was approved by City Council.

123

124 She asked that when a large crowd is anticipated, a list of citizens to attend the meeting
125 be given to the police, so that those such as the Planning Commissioners can be sure to
126 get into the meeting.

127

128 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

129

130 There were no reports.

131

132 **PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

133

134 Planning Director Barrett stated that staff is working on making the General Plan
135 available in CD-ROM format and on the web.

136

137 She reviewed the schedule for tomorrow's transportation meeting and stated that the staff
138 will report back to the Planning Commission on this meeting on May 8.

139
140 She stated that the staff is working on the Santa Fe Right of Way.

141
142 She stated that Council did receive the MU-LI report and the item is on their agenda.

143
144 She stated that she was given a large item from Howie Muir regarding building height
145 limits and was asked to circulate this to all the Commissioners. She stated that this item
146 will be available for the Commissioners at the next meeting.

147
148 Commissioner Tabb stated that he would prefer Howie Muir's item via e-mail rather than
149 in hard copy.

150
151 Planning Director Barrett discussed Zoning Ordinance Section 23A.20 concerning
152 proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments. She stated that the Commission could choose
153 to move ahead with changes to this section of the Ordinance that are separate from the
154 current disagreement with the City Attorney's office over the Planning Commission's
155 role in zoning amendments. Focusing on the other changes separately could help to
156 clarify, simplify, and standardize the Ordinance.

157
158 Commissioner Bronstein asked that the City Attorney be scheduled to discuss this issue
159 at the next meeting.

160
161 Planning Director Barrett stated that this item will be scheduled for the May 8th meeting.

162
163 She stated that the city is filling a number of vacancies although the Advance Planning
164 department still need to be staffed. She stated that they are moving into serious budget
165 discussions.

166
167 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

168
169 M/S/C to approve the April 10, 2002 minutes with changes (Poschman/Wrenn). Ayes:
170 Bronstein, Curl, Hicks, Howerton Poschman, Tabb, Wengraf, Wrenn. Noes: None.
171 Abstentions: None. Absent: Wozniak.

172
173 Commissioner Wengraf stated that it was very unorthodox for the Planning Commission
174 to hear from the public at the end of a meeting and felt rushed into making a decision
175 regarding Measure Q. She stated that is good public policy to have other viewpoints
176 presented.

177
178 Commissioner Poschman stated that Mr. LaForce was not able to present his information
179 during Public Comment since he was attending the Waterfront Commission meeting held
180 on the same night. He also stated that City Council voted to approve this item and asked
181 for the Parks Commission's action results.

182

183 **FUTURE AGENDAS**

184

185 Commissioner Wrenn suggested that no more Public Hearings on the Southside be
186 scheduled until more information is heard. He stated that additional hearings should be
187 in response to the EIR on the draft Southside Plan. He stated that at the May 8th meeting,
188 there will be a general discussion and possible amendments. He asked that staff add
189 discussions of the Southside Plan to the May 22nd and the June 12th meeting agendas. He
190 also stated that at the May 8th meeting the staff should report back to the Planning
191 Commission regarding the transportation meeting held on April 25th.

192

193 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: ZONING ORDINANCE**
194 **AMENDMENT TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF DANGEROUS AND/OR SHARP**
195 **MATERIAL IN OR ON TOP OF FENCES IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS**

196

197 Commissioner Poschman stated that it may be necessary to word the ordinance to
198 differentiate between a dangerous fence and one that is ornamental. He stated that it will
199 be necessary to look into other jurisdictions' handling of this issue. He stated that he will
200 report further findings either next meeting or the meeting after next.

201

202 Commissioner Hicks stated that some beautiful fences though they may not intend to be,
203 are dangerous.

204

205 Commissioner Poschman stated that the wording is critical. He stated that the ordinance
206 should use more precise words such as "sharpening" instead of "dangerous".

207

208 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: CONFIRM ESTABLISHMENT OF A**
209 **SUBCOMMITTEE TO ADDRESS AND CLARIFY STATE LAW ON LAND USE**
210 **DENSITY**

211

212 Commissioner Bronstein stated that appointments to the subcommittee will need to be
213 confirmed. Committee members are Poschman, Tabb, and Hicks.

214

215 Commissioner Wrenn stated that he would like to know how the density bonus works in
216 practice in the city.

217

218 Commissioner Poschman stated that the subcommittee will be looking at density in
219 Berkeley and how it is implemented.

220

221 Commissioner Wrenn stated that there also needs to be an investigation of how
222 developers use the density bonus.

223

224 Staff Stroshane stated that there is a data table in the housing element, and information
225 can be gathered by staff on this issue and presented to the Planning Commission.

226

227 Commissioner Bronstein stated that perhaps the subcommittee should be expanded.

228

229 Commissioner Wrenn stated that the subcommittee should report back when they have
230 more data.

231

232 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: ESTABLISHMENT OF A**
233 **SUBCOMMITTEE TO ADDRESS THE DEFINITION OF DEMOLITIONS**

234

235 Planning Director Barrett stated that she was asked by the Landmarks Preservation
236 Commission for input from the Planning Commission regarding a definition of
237 demolition.

238

239 Commissioner Hicks asked that the item be deferred.

240

241 **DISCUSSION OF SOUTHSIDE PLAN: DISCUSSION OF TRANSPORTATION**
242 **ELEMENT**

243

244 Commissioner Wrenn stated that there are two main issues regarding the transportation
245 element of the Southside Plan. One is how to increase safety for bicyclists and
246 pedestrians and the other is how to speed up the bus service through the Southside.

247

248 Commissioner Wengraf pointed out there are conflicts involving turns onto a one-way
249 street from a one-way street which creates a safety issue for pedestrians and bicyclists.
250 She asked for data on these intersections and if these intersection are found to be the most
251 dangerous.

252

253 Jim Cunradi, representing AC Transit, explained what AC Transit would like to see in the
254 Southside; improvement of transit, efficient buses, and limited stops on Telegraph. He
255 stated that they are preparing the EIR on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) this summer. He also
256 noted that Mayor Dean and Council member Worthington are members of AC Transit's
257 policy advisory committee.

258

259 Commissioner Bronstein asked how AC Transit will proceed.

260

261 Mr. Cunradi stated that they will elicit city participation, and would like to have an
262 ongoing relationship with the city.

263

264 Commissioner Bronstein asked how coordinated are AC Transit's and the city's efforts
265 and what is the schedule.

266

267 Mr. Cunradi stated that the Major Investment Study (MIS) was created over the last two
268 years, and by Summer 2004, all the studies will be complete. The purpose of MIS is to
269 figure out which strategy to subject to environmental review. He stated that the scoping
270 process will occur this summer.

271

272 Commissioner Bronstein asked how they will proceed.

273

274 Mr. Cunradi stated that AC Transit will come to the Planning Commission with the
275 results from their studies. He mentioned that all ideas will be on the table this summer.
276
277 Commissioner Bronstein stated that she was hoping the two plans, the Southside and the
278 AC Transit plan could intersect.
279
280 Commissioner Wrenn stated that the city can complete the Southside Plan without having
281 AC Transit's own plan fully completed. He stated that guidelines to facilitate the
282 direction for AC Transit's Plan in the Southside can be fashioned such as the placement
283 of bus stops and street direction. He stated that staff should give recommendations for
284 how to get unneeded cars out of loading zones, and stated that there needs to be better
285 enforcement of these rules set up ahead of time. He suggested that the staff discuss this
286 with UC staff as well.
287
288 Commissioner Poschman stated that the city needs better enforcement of keeping the
289 loading zones on Telegraph clear. He asked for data in order to track whether parking
290 laws are being enforced. He asked for the ticket volume on that street.
291
292 Commissioner Tabb asked if the BRT will result in a loss of parking spaces on College.
293
294 Mr. Cunradi stated that the study was done on Telegraph and College and that the loss of
295 parking spaces was scaled back on College Avenue.
296
297 Commissioner Tabb asked how many spaces will be lost on Telegraph.
298
299 Mr. Cunradi stated that 12% of all spaces will be lost overall. He stated that the plan was
300 designed to keep the maximum number of spaces.
301
302 Commissioner Tabb asked for a ballpark figure of how many spaces would be lost.
303
304 Mr. Cunradi stated that he did not have this information.
305
306 Commissioner Wrenn asked if there would be a dedicated bus lane on Bancroft.
307
308 Mr. Cunradi stated that they would have to look at all the bus routes as a whole before
309 determining this.
310
311 Commissioner Poschman asked if there are specific tables and graphs in the full MIS
312 report to help understand the particular areas in the Southside.
313
314 Mr. Cunradi stated that the final version of the MIS will be out in a couple of weeks.
315
316 Commissioner Poschman asked why AC Transit chose for their acronym BRT to be so
317 similar to BART.
318
319 Mr. Cunradi stated that this is the generally accepted phrase.

320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL ON INTERIM CONTROLS ON OFFICE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIXED USE-LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT OF WEST BERKELEY

Commissioner Wengraf stated that the Planning Commission report to the City Council on this matter does not include the Planning Commissioners' voting results regarding the MULI action. She asked that the report be corrected to include the final voting results in time for the April 29th City Council meeting.

INITIATIVE PETITION REGULATING HEIGHTS OF BUILDINGS

Commissioner Wengraf asked what the implications are on the adopted General Plan and other plans if building heights are amended.

Planning Director Barrett stated that staff will be preparing a report on the impacts of the Building Height Initiative in Berkeley and that all plans would need to be revised and reapproved if the height limits were changed.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.