

FINAL MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

June 13, 2007

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

2 Location: North Berkeley Senior Center.

3 **ROLL CALL**

4 Commissioners Present: Burke, Ferrazares, Gurley, Pollack, Poschman, Samuels, Tabb
5 (for Wengraf), Stoloff.

6 Commissioners Absent: Bauce.

7 Staff Present: Eakland, Gatzke, Harrison, Wolff.

8 **ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

9 **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

10 Speaker 1: Fran Haselsteiner, Transportation Commissioner representing District 2,
11 stated her support for Bus Rapid Transit from Berkeley to San Leandro, citing an
12 expected 31% increase in rider ship with its implementation. She stated that BRT
13 addresses the problems most people see with buses, that they are slow and
14 inconvenient, and that light rail is too expensive and inflexible. In addition, the
15 funding for BRT is dedicated to infrastructure, not operations, and will be lost if it is
16 not used.

17 Speaker 2: Elyce Judith, Ecocity Builders/Citizens for a Strawberry Creek Plaza
18 representative, stated that Ecocity Builders has received a \$150,000 grant to develop a
19 concept plan for Strawberry Creek Plaza water feature. They have hired Walter Hood,
20 a local landscape architect who did the landscape design for the de Young grounds.
21 On July 9th, Ecocity Builders will host an event at the Gaia Building to meet Walter
22 Hood.

23 Speaker 3: Stephen Wollmer, Neighbors for a Livable Berkeley representative, stated his
24 opposition to the proposed Priority Development Area (PDA) designations. He stated
25 that in his opinion the PDAs focus on the poor neighborhoods that the State Density
26 Bonus Law has already damaged. He expressed concern that to de-designate a PDA
27 might be considered down zoning and that the PDA designation could lead to
28 additional density bonus units.

29 **PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

30 Secretary Harrison reported that Item 12, a Public Hearing on Tract Map 7755, has been
31 canceled because the applicant withdrew their application, the Telegraph Avenue
32 economic assistance amendments package went before the City Council for a first
33 reading on June 12 and was approved, and the June 27 meeting will be canceled if no
34 items carry over from tonight.

35 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT** - None.

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36 **COMMITTEE REPORTS** - Downtown Area Plan Citizen Advisory Committee - None.

37 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

38 M/S/C to approve the draft minutes of June 13, 2007 with corrections
39 (Poschman/Pollack). Ayes: Ferrazares, Gurley, Pollack, Poschman, Samuels, Stoloff.
40 Noes: None. Abstain: Burke, Tabb. Absent: Bauce.

41 **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS**

42 The chair noted the Bus Rapid Transit Environmental Impact Report Public Hearing will
43 be held on June 14th, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the North Berkeley Senior Center.

44 **ACTION ITEMS**

45 **Item 9 DAPAC Quarterly Update:**

46 Matt Taecker, DAPAC Secretary, and Will Travis, Chair of the DAPAC, provided an
47 overview of the Committee's work to date, and indicated they intend to provide the goals,
48 policies, and strategic statements for all chapters of the DAP to the Planning Commission
49 in November, but not the graphics or implementation strategies. Commissioners
50 discussed the DAPAC's recommendation on the Center Street plaza impacts and design
51 study, the downtown parking issues, the DAPAC Subcommittee on BRT and
52 Transportation, and the DAPAC's vote on the proposed Priority Development Area
53 application.

54 **Item 10 Bus Rapid Transit Draft Environmental Impact Report Discussion:**

55 Speaker 1: Hank Resnik, a nine-year member of the Transportation Commission and
56 bicycle advocate, stated his support for Bus Rapid Transit as a cost effective way to
57 reduce dependence on the private auto and address prejudice against busses. He
58 stated that its success and efficiency will depend on dedicated lanes and pre-payment
59 stations.

60 Principal Planner Allan Gatzke presented background on the project, reminded the
61 Commission of the AC Transit Public Hearing on June 14th and requested the
62 Commission provide comments on the Draft EIS/R for attachment to the City's comment
63 letter. Gatzke explained that staff will return to the Commission with a process for
64 developing a consensus for a preferred alternative. The Commission discussed the
65 benefits and affects of BRT, including the amount of time saved en route and while
66 waiting for a bus, use of bus lanes for bikes, and the role of density along the Telegraph
67 Avenue corridor.

68 M/S/Withdrawn to support the BRT concept without endorsing specific stations and other
69 details (Stoloff/Burke).

70 The Commission requested staff provide more details about how the BRT will affect the
71 city and discussed the impact of dedicated lanes and the source of rider ship expectations.

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72 The Commission provided comments on the Draft EIS/R based on draft DAPAC
73 comments on the downtown.

74 **Item 10 Priority Development Area**

75 Principal Planner Gatzke introduced the late material from the Office of the Mayor
76 related to PDA designations for five areas of the City and stated that staff would report
77 the Commission's decision on this proposal to the City Council at their June 19, 2007
78 meeting. The Commission discussed the proposal, some stating that they are in favor of
79 applying for this designation because the areas already qualify for the state funding based
80 on current zoning and general plan regulations.

81

82 M/S/C to approve the recommendation from Mayor's report (Stoloff/Pollack). Ayes:
83 Burke, Gurley, Pollack, Samuels, Stoloff, Tabb. Noes: Ferrazares, Poschman. Abstain:
84 None. Absent: Bauce.

85 **ADJOURNMENT**

86 **The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.**

87

88 For the June 13th, 2007 Planning Commission meeting, the following will be reported:

89 Commissioners in attendance: 8

90 Members of the public in attendance: 10

91 Public Speakers: 4

92 Length of the meeting: 2 hour 40 minutes