

**FINAL MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING AND REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BERKELEY PLANNING COMMISSION**

July 25, 2007

1 **SPECIAL MEETING**

2 Time: The meeting was called to order by Chair Samuels at 6:10 p.m.

3 Location: North Berkeley Senior Center.

4 **Public Workshop: Climate Protection and Berkeley's Built Environment**

5 Timothy Burroughs, the City of Berkeley Climate Action Coordinator, discussed
6 Berkeley's current greenhouse gas emissions inventory and outlined strategies to meet
7 Measure G greenhouse gas emission goals. The presentation addressed the connection
8 between land use and transportation, density and greenhouse gas emission levels,
9 background on the city's green building program, and the relative greenhouse gas
10 emissions expected of the proposed Downtown Area Plan alternatives.

11 **Facilitated Question & Answer with Community Input**

12 Timothy Burroughs facilitated a Q&A with the workshop attendees. Concerns stated by
13 the community included UC Berkeley's influence on emissions and land use, the possible
14 imbalance between jobs and housing affecting vehicle miles traveled, and issues related
15 to parking space requirements.

16 **REGULAR MEETING**

17 Time: The meeting was called to order by Chair Samuels at 8:10 p.m.

18 **ROLL CALL**

19 Commissioners Present: Burke, Ferrazares, Gurley, Poschman, Samuels, Dacey (for
20 Bauce), Williams (for Stoloff), Wengraf.

21 Commissioners Absent: Pollack.

22 Staff Present: Rhoades, Gatzke, Harrison, Wolff, Eakland, Fogarty.

23 **ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

24 Commissioner Burke requested that Information Items 12-14 and 18 be moved to action
25 for discussion after Item 11.

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27 **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

28 Speaker 1: Scott Tolmie, Hillegass Avenue resident, inquired whether a BRT decision
29 was going to be made during the commission meeting. He is opposed to the BRT
30 plan.

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31 Speaker 2: Ralph Elder stated that vehicle miles traveled reduction with the addition of
32 BRT was found to be insignificant in the BRT EIR.

33 Speaker 3: Harvey Sherback stated his support for solar panels as a source for energy.

34 Speaker 4: Len Conly, Friends of BRT representative, asked commission to not take
35 action on the Southside BRT Plan, suggesting that staff should wait for AC Transit
36 input.

37 Speaker 5: Deb Thompson stated her opposition to BRT, expressing concern that it
38 would force traffic onto side streets in her Elmwood neighborhood.

39 Speaker 6: John Caner, Willard Neighborhood Association representative, stated his
40 concern that BRT would divert traffic onto side streets.

41 Speaker 7: Kent Lowendawski, Sierra Club representative, supports the BRT concept,
42 because it will attract more riders, encourage people to get out of their cars and it will
43 be needed as density increases.

44 Speaker 8: Sharon Hudson recommended the original Southside Plan alternative chosen
45 by the Planning Commission, not the one recommended by the Transportation
46 Commission.

47 Speaker 9: Dawn Thomas stated her opposition to BRT.

48 Speaker 10: Mark Bain-Chekel stated his opposition to BRT because it will increase side
49 street traffic and the current rapid bus is empty.

50 Speaker 11: Jim Bullock stated his opposition to BRT and that a reduction in the vehicle
51 miles traveled would be insignificant.

52 Speaker 12: Muffy Kibby stated her concern of increased traffic on Hillegass because of
53 BRT.

54 Speaker 13: Lisa Plourde stated her concern about cyclist and pedestrian safety on
55 Hillegass because of diverted traffic from BRT.

56 Speaker 14: Merrilie Mitchell stated her concern about BRT diesel usage and the need for
57 an "eco-pass" to encourage more rider ship.

58 Speaker 15: Scott Mace stated that BRT would increase auto/cyclist conflicts on
59 Hillegass.

60 Speaker 16: Doug Buckwald stated only those proposals that would increase rider ship
61 should be implemented, not the current BRT plan.

62 **PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

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63 Secretary Harrison identified the late communications regarding the draft Regional
64 Housing Needs Assessment, the proposed auto sales zoning, and preferred Southside Plan
65 alternative; she indicated the staff report for the proposed Tract Map for 2000 Hearst was
66 provided.

67 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

68 None.

69 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

70 **Downtown Area Plan Citizen Advisory Committee**

71 Chair Samuels reported that DAPAC is on break until September. During that time, there
72 will be subcommittee work on various issues. Commissioner Burke reported that
73 committee members are working on alternatives.

74 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

75 M/S/C to approve the draft minutes of June 13, 2007 with corrections 76 (Poschman/Ferrazares). Ayes: Burke, Ferrazares Gurley, Samuels, Poschman Wengraf, 77 Williams (for Stoloff). Noes: None. Abstain: Dacey (for Bauce). Absent: Pollack.
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78 **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS**

79 No discussion.

80 **ACTION ITEMS**

81 **Item 9 Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance, General Plan, and West Berkeley Plan**
82 **Amendments and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration to allow Automobile**
83 **Sales in West Berkeley for business retention**

84 M/S/C to open the public hearing (Poschman/Burke). Ayes: Burke, Dacey, Ferrazares, 85 Gurley, Poschman, Stoloff, Wengraf, Williams. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: 86 Pollack.

87 Speaker 1: Zelda Bronstein requested that no decision be made tonight on Item 9, West
88 Berkeley Auto Sales, and suggested further economic analysis on the sales tax
89 revenues of existing businesses in the Ashby area are needed.

90 Speaker 2: Jessica Hobbs, of The Shipyard and All Power Network, stated that West
91 Berkeley is a cultural hub, incompatible with auto sales.

92 Speaker 3: Rick Auerbach, a WEBAC representative, stated that the Ashby Lumber site
93 was targeted as a possible auto dealership location. He is opposed to the proposed

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- 94 auto use zoning in the Ashby area because there is no vacant land and industrial uses
95 are more compatible.
- 96 Speaker 4: Steve Lautze, Oakland and Berkeley Recycling Market Development Zone
97 representative, stated that auto sales is inconsistent with Berkeley's goal to reduce
98 greenhouse emissions and questioned whether an Ashby auto dealership location
99 would be visible from I-80; he prefers a more surgical map for Eastshore and Gilman.
- 100 Speaker 5: Mark Gorrell, Ecology Center representative, stated that south of Ashby is not
101 a reasonable location for auto dealerships and the city's recycling enterprises are in
102 the areas proposed for rezoning and could be affected by the rezoning.
- 103 Speaker 6: Jeff Hogan, owner of Ashby Lumber, stated that he was insulted that the
104 Ashby Lumber site was a prototypical site for an auto dealership. He stated that
105 Ashby Lumber has been in the city for 40 years and one of the top 25 businesses.
- 106 Speaker 7: Jack Harrison stated his support for allowing auto sales uses in the Gilman
107 area, but questions the merit of the south of Ashby area, adding that more traffic
108 planning is needed.
- 109 Speaker 8: Merrilie Mitchell stated that the auto dealerships should focus on "green" cars.
- 110 Speaker 9: Dan Knapp, an Urban Ore and Berkeley Transfer Station representative, stated
111 his opposition to the proposed rezoning and that the large regional discard
112 management facilities will be threatened by the auto overlay.
- 113 Speaker 10: Bernard Marzalek, an Ink Works Press representative, stated that the West
114 Berkeley Plan was a community effort but this is stealth zoning and the value of
115 West Berkeley businesses is being ignored.
- 116 Speaker 11: John Curl, a WEBAC representative and member of a co-op woodshop,
117 stated that the overlay would displace existing businesses.
- 118 Speaker 12: Daniel Caverro stated that the tax revenue received from auto dealerships is
119 an insignificant portion of the city's total revenues and does not warrant an overlay.
- 120 Speaker 13: Betsy Thagard, a South Shattuck resident, stated her support for the West
121 Berkeley auto overlay because it would allow for more housing at the existing
122 dealership sites on South Shattuck which are near transit.
- 123 Speaker 14: Steve Moran, owner of an auto restoration operation at 751 Folger, stated
124 that he would like to add a sales component but a variance is more appropriate for
125 his interests.
- 126 Speaker 15: Nancy Gorrell stated her opposition to the auto overlay, adding that it would
127 not preserve the community and displacing Urban Ore is irrational.

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128 Speaker 16: Mary Lou Van Deventer read a letter from the Northern California Recycling
129 Association that requested an EIR, stating that the auto overlay would displace
130 recycling facilities, and it is not consistent with Berkeley's goal of achieving zero
131 waste.

132 Speaker 17: David Tam stated that the EIS is deficient because it does not address the
133 displacement of recycling facilities.

134 Speaker 18: Jesse Arreguin stated that the plan undermines the zoning ordinance and
135 pressures small business.

136 Speaker 19: Paul Barraza stated he was concerned that local business would be displaced.

137 Speaker 20: Doug Buckwald stated that industrial zoning must be preserved in order to
138 provide diversity in the community.

139 Speaker 21: Rick Auerback stated his support a variance for Steve Moran. He stated he
140 disagrees with the proposed language in the district purposes which states the auto
141 sales use will "enhance the economic viability of the area." He also stated that the
142 believes the new use will impact land costs in the area.

143 Dave Fogarty, of the Office of Economic Development, indicated that dealerships would
144 not displace current land uses because as land-intensive uses that do not have high
145 profits, they cannot afford to buy large sites in commercial areas and thus would not
146 place pressure on land values. Commissioners discussed the possibility of a variance for
147 the Moran site. Dealership representatives were requested to be present at the upcoming
148 meeting.

149 Commissioners commented on the Proposed Negative Declaration, indicating the
150 mitigation measure limiting dealerships allowed before the roundabout to 4.5 acres needs
151 better explanation.

152 M/S/C to continue the public hearing to September 5 (Wengraf/Poschman). Ayes: Burke,
153 Dacey, Ferrazares, Gurley, Samuels, Poschman, Wengraf. Noes: None. Abstain:
154 Williams. Absent: Pollack.

155 **Item 10 Public Hearing: Tract Map, 2000 Hearst Street.**

156 M/S/C to open the public hearing (Poschman/Burke). Ayes: Burke, Dacey, Ferrazares,
157 Gurley, Poschman, Samuels, Wengraf,. Noes: None. Abstain: Absent: Williams, Pollack.

158 No public comment. Tommy Harp, the applicant, briefly discussed the number of parking
159 spaces in response to Commissioner questions.

160 M/S/C to close the public hearing (Wengraf/Gurley). Ayes: Burke, Dacey, Ferrazares,
161 Gurley, Poschman, Samuels, Wengraf, Williams. Noes: None. Abstain: Absent: Pollack.

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162 The applicant clarified that the building was not designated soft story. Planning Manager
163 Rhoades indicated one parking space was removed to accommodate a handicap-
164 accessible parking space, bring the required number of spaces down to 27.

165 M/S/C to approve tract map with staff-proposed amendments to include 27 parking
166 spaces (Wengraf/Poschman). Ayes: Burke, Dacey, Ferrazares, Gurley, Poschman,
167 Samuels, Wengraf, Williams. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Pollack.

168 **Item 11: Transportation Commission Comments on the Southside Plan Preferred**
169 **Alternative.**

170 Commission discussed reaffirming their action of April 25 regarding the selection of the
171 Southside Plan preferred Alternative 2 for the purposes of continuing work on the draft
172 EIR.

173 M/S/C to reaffirm their April 25 action regarding endorsement of planned Phase One
174 improvements and selection of preferred transportation Alternative 2 for the purposes of
175 continuing work on the draft EIR for the Southside Plan. (Wengraf/Gurley). Ayes:
176 Dacey, Ferrazares, Gurley, Poschman, Samuels, Wengraf, Williams. Noes: None.
177 Abstain: Burke. Absent: Pollack.

178 **Item 12: City of Berkley Application for Priority Development Area Designation**

179 Commissioner Burke requested clarification on the contents of the downtown areas in the
180 PDA application and the DAPAC's recommendation. The Commission discussed the
181 application and did not carry the item to the subsequent meeting.

182 **Item 13: Call for Nominations: Focus Priority Development Area Designation**

183 Planning Manager Rhodes discussed nominating the waterfront as a Priority
184 Conservation Area.

185 M/S/C to direct staff to nominate the Berkeley waterfront as a Priority Conservation Area
186 (Wengraf/Burke). Ayes: Burke, Dacey, Ferrazares, Gurley, Poschman, Samuels,
187 Wengraf, Williams. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Pollack.

188 **ADJOURNMENT**

189 **The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.**

190 Note on Commission Meeting Reporting:

191 In June 2005, the City Council adopted a plan that requires commission secretaries to
192 submit an annual report that summarizes for each meeting a) the number of
193 commissioners in attendance, b) the number of members of the public in attendance, c)
194 the number of public speakers and d) the length of the meetings.

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196 For the July 25, 2007 Planning Commission meeting, the following will be reported:

197 Commissioners in attendance: 9

198 Members of the public in attendance: 50

199 Public Speakers: 37

200 Length of the meeting: 4 hours 50 minutes