



City of Santa Barbara

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

MARCH 13, 2025

1:00 P.M.
City Hall, Council Chambers
735 Anacapa Street
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Devon Wardlow, *Chair*
Lucille Boss, *Vice Chair*
Brian Barnwell
John M. Baucke
Donald DeLuccio
Benjamin Peterson
Lesley Wiscomb

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON:

Mike Jordan

STAFF:

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Megan Arciniega, Senior Planner
Jasper Carman, Commission Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wardlow called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Devon Wardlow, Vice Chair Lucille Boss, Commissioners Brian Barnwell, John M. Baucke, Donald DeLuccio, Benjamin Peterson (until 3:40 p.m.), and Lesley Wiscomb

Absent: None

STAFF PRESENT

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, City Planner
Dan Gullett, Principal Planner
Melissa Hetrick, Resilience Program Supervisor
Timmy Bolton, Climate Adaptation Analyst
Christopher Bell, City TV Production Supervisor
Janet Ahern, City TV Production Specialist
Jasper Carman, Commission Secretary

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

A. Requests for continuances, withdrawals, postponements, or addition of ex-agenda items:

Ms. DeBusk announced that item III.B, Update on Adaptation & Resilience Program and 30-Year Waterfront Adaptation Plan, will be heard out of order as the first discussion item today.

B. Announcements and appeals:

No announcements.

C. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda:

Public comment opened at 1:03 p.m.,

The following individual spoke:

1. Steve Johnson

Public comment closed at 1:04 p.m.

Written correspondence from Ronald Arruejo and Steve Johnson was acknowledged.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. ACTUAL TIME: 2:06 P.M.

*** This item was heard out of order. ***

2024 GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Application Number: PLN2025-00050

Applicant: City of Santa Barbara, Planning Division

The General Plan Annual Progress Report outlines key initiatives, including General Plan amendments, housing production, zoning ordinance updates, and other implementation programs. In accordance with state law, the report also assesses the City's efforts to plan for housing needs as required by the Housing Element and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

State law (Senate Bill 1333) requires the City to submit a General Plan Annual Progress Report (APR) to the State Office of Planning and Research and the Department of Housing and Community Development by April 1 of each year. The APR provides an overview of the City's General Plan implementation for calendar year 2024, evaluating compliance with state mandates and the City's long-term vision.

The APR serves as an informational resource for the Planning Commission, providing insight into ongoing initiatives and highlighting those completed in 2024 that are now in effect.

Dan Gullett, Principal Planner gave the Staff presentation.

Public comment opened at 2:19 p.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Steve Johnson

Written correspondence from Steve Johnson was acknowledged.

Public comment closed at 2:21 p.m.

Commissioner comments:

Commissioner Baucke:

- Thanks staff for all the work put into the report and commended them for their transparency and honesty.
- Clear structural and system failure based on the regulatory system and state mandates.
- Given that the private sector's requirements are 10% or less affordable housing units per development to achieve the state density bonus, the RHNA goal numbers for affordable housing in Santa Barbara seem unachievable.
- Glad that the housing trust fund has been established so there is a place to put money for affordable housing.
- Need to secure the funding for HE31 as the private sector will not accomplish this.
- Every action listed under HE31 has to be completed with no exceptions.
- Understands there are limitations on resources and staff within the City but feels this project is not moving along as fast as it could be.
- Believes an enhanced infrastructure finance district would be the most effective way to get substantial amounts of capital into the housing fund.
- Notes that there are several large housing projects coming up for approval soon which we could collect the increased property tax revenue from if these programs are implemented in time.
- Anticipates large property valuation changes from these projects and thinks it is critical to get property taxes from them to contribute to the housing fund.
- Concerned that progress is not being made.

Vice Chair Boss:

- Appreciates staff's transparency and acknowledgement that the progress being made towards addressing housing needs is not significant.
- Recognizes that there are a lot of unanswered questions and misrepresentations in the report that need to be corrected before it is reviewed by a larger body.
- Recommends that all of the Commission's comments are taken into consideration prior to presentation to City Council or the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).
- Outstanding questions from the Commission need to have answers before the report is presented to City Council and the California HCD as they will likely have the same questions the Commissioners had.
- The Commission and the public need to see the progress and policies being implemented.
- Need to see progress in the very low, low, and moderate income affordable housing, which can't happen until the policies and programs are implemented.

Commissioner Barnwell:

- Thanks staff for their honesty.
- Echoes the comments from Commissioners Baucke and Boss.
- Understands that there are limited resources in the City which is slowing the programs from being implemented, but feels the community could be better served

by triaging actionable items and prioritizing these critical programs such as the inclusionary housing and in lieu fees.

- Need to have the ordinances in place that will allow these impending large projects to contribute in the manner they are most effective.
- Supports the idea from Commissioner Boss that this report is not ready to pass on to City Council because the same questions the Commission asked, will be asked by the Councilmembers.
- Believes the City and the Commission could share their expertise on land use and development with the community who aren't as educated on the topic.
- Sidewalk width should be monitored around new developments.
- Under allocating parking for new housing developments pushes residential cars to street parking which negatively impacts the businesses nearby by reducing parking available for consumers.
- Parking needs to be fit into the discussion of housing.
- Felt the map dictating open space was confusing and would like that to be redefined.

Commissioner DeLuccio:

- Thanks staff for their efforts.
- Believes the report needs editing before it is reviewed by larger bodies.
- Would like to explore the potential use of city owned real estate for housing.
- Would like to explore how to incorporate more parking with our housing efforts because the reduction of parking due to state policies has been negatively impactful.
- Other governing bodies have mechanisms in place for in lieu fees, such as the state density bonus, but our city does not and needs to implement a solution.
- Acknowledges that staff is working on the nexus study and inclusionary housing amendments but until those are in place it is unclear how money is going to be added to the housing trust fund.
- Upcoming large housing projects could provide benefit to the city if the programs are in place in time.
- Frustrated that the report can be fixed but housing is not going to be built until the housing trust fund can be built up which constitutes a need for the in lieu fee program to be in place.

Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Expresses appreciation to staff for their transparency and responses.
- Knows that this is due to the state on April 1st, recommends that the changes and modifications identified in the discussion be reflected to City Council so both Councilmembers and the public know what has already been identified to be amended.
- Getting the local housing trust fund permanently funded, which is required by the state, could be accomplished through assignment of a portion of the recent sales tax measure.
- Developers don't want to be in the business of managing affordable housing, we need to give them an opportunity to provide in lieu fees instead.
- Study inclusionary, consider if a higher inclusionary rate is warranted.
- Cannot emphasize enough how much the Commission would like to see this advance forward at a faster pace.

- Priority number one is identifying a permanent source of funding for the housing trust fund.
- Priority number two is completing the BAE study that will advance in lieu fees which gives developers a choice to deposit money or manage units.
- Priority number three is to review the inclusionary requirements and see if anything should be modified.

Chair Wardlow:

- Thanks staff for their time and helpful discussion.
- Commends staff for their honesty and appreciates the time that went into producing the report.
- Agrees with many of the comments by the Commission.
- Notes that there is resounding feedback to emphasize the triaging of the housing crisis, which the Commission sees as the biggest issue in the community.
- Encouraged to see the report and the other infrastructure projects that staff is working on, including projects outside of housing.
- Everyone is either impacted themselves or knows someone that is impacted by the housing crisis.
- Concerned that we are still so far away from the goal affordable housing numbers, understands that this takes time but frustrated by the fact that they aren't getting addressed until halfway through the housing cycle.
- The Commission wants to see more affordable housing.
- Represent the information in the report as accurately as possible to City Council.

*** THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 1:57 TO 2:06 P.M. ***

B. ACTUAL TIME: 1:04 P.M.

*** This item was heard out of order. ***

UPDATE ON ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE PROGRAM AND 30-YEAR WATERFRONT ADAPTATION PLAN

Application Number: PLN2025-00050

Applicant: City of Santa Barbara, Sustainability & Resilience
Department

The Sustainability & Resilience Department's Adaptation & Resilience Program prepares our community for climate change impacts from sea-level rise, increased rainfall and flooding, wildfire, and other hazards. The Adaptation & Resilience program team operates as a central and coordinated hub for City adaptation work efforts by leveraging partnerships throughout the City organization, other governmental agencies, and our community at large. The team also secures funding for City adaptation projects.

The 30-Year Waterfront Adaptation Plan is a key Adaptation & Resilience Program work effort that will create a practical plan that prepares the Santa Barbara Waterfront for

increased storm surges, erosion, and flooding by providing solutions that preserve and enhance recreation, commerce, beach access, habitat, and critical infrastructure.

Timmy Bolton, Climate Adaptation Analyst and Melissa Hetrick, Resilience Program Supervisor gave the Staff presentation.

Public comment opened at 1:33 p.m., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

Commissioner comments:

Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Thanks staff for the presentation.
- Excited to see the implementation stages of the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan.
- Happy to see that the guiding principles have been useful.
- Glad that a multi-modal path is getting incorporated by Leadbetter beach.

Commissioner DeLuccio:

- Thanks staff for their expertise and leadership.
- Impressed by the community and bilingual outreach.
- Notes that it could be worth studying kiosks around the city for potential benefits.
- Appreciates the presentation, analysis and modeling that was completed.
- Concerned that grant funding could be affected by state and federal allocation changes.

Chair Wardlow:

- Thanks staff for the presentation, appreciated the time and effort put forth.
- Helpful presentation to get a high level understanding of work being completed and long term plans for the protection of our community.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

ACTUAL TIME: 4:06 P.M.

A. Committee and Liaison Reports:

1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

No report.

2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

- a. Commissioner DeLuccio reported on the March 12, 2025 meeting of the Historic Landmarks Commission.

B. Discussion on Subcommittees and Workshops

No discussion.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wardlow adjourned the meeting at 4:08 p.m.

Submitted by,



Jasper Carman, Commission Secretary