



City of Santa Barbara

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

APRIL 21, 2022

1:00 P.M.
City Hall, Council Chambers
735 Anacapa Street; and
1026 Via Los Padres
Santa Barbara 93111

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Gabriel Escobedo, Chair
Roxana Bonderson, Vice Chair
John M. Baucke
Jay D. Higgins
Sheila Lodge
Devon Wardlow
Lesley Wiscomb

STAFF:

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Escobedo called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Gabriel Escobedo, Vice Chair Roxana Bonderson, Commissioners John M. Baucke, Jay D. Higgins, Sheila Lodge, and Lesley Wiscomb

Absent: Devon Wardlow

STAFF PRESENT

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Daniel Gullett, Principal Planner
Julia Pujo, Project Planner/ Environmental Analyst
Alelia Parenteau, Acting Sustainability & Resilience Director
Tony Ruggieri, City TV Production Supervisor
Janet Ahern, City TV Production Specialist
Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

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

No requests.

B. Announcements and appeals:

Daniel Gullett, Principal Planner announced that staff is requesting that two Planning Commissioners to help out with policy development for the Housing Element update.

Chair Escobedo selected Commissioner Wiscomb and himself as primaries and Commissioner Higgins as the alternate.

C. Review, consideration, and action on the following draft Planning Commission minutes and resolutions:

1. April 7, 2022 Planning Commission Minutes
2. Planning Commission Resolution No. 001-22
418 N Salsipuedes Street
3. Planning Commission Resolution No. 002-22
1384 Shoreline Drive

MOTION: Lodge / Wiscomb

Approve the minutes and resolutions as presented.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Wardlow)

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

Public comment opened at 1:07 p.m., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

III. DISCUSSION ITEM

ACTUAL TIME: 1:07 P.M.

HOUSING ELEMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE PROGRAM EIR SCOPING HEARING

The Planning Commission will hold a public scoping hearing to receive comments from agencies, the public, and Planning Commissioners on the scope of analysis for a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to be prepared for the Housing Element and Climate Action Plan Updates. The Program EIR will evaluate physical impacts on the environment that could result from adoption and implementation of the Housing Element and Climate Action Plan Updates.

Comments on the scope of analysis can include: potential environmental impacts of the Housing Element and Climate Action Plan Updates; technical issues that should be addressed in the Program EIR; potential mitigation measures; and an appropriate range of alternatives to evaluate in the Program EIR.

The Planning Commission will take no action at this scoping hearing on the environmental review or substance of the Housing Element and Climate Action Plan Updates. All interested

individuals, agencies, and organizations are welcome to provide verbal or written comments to inform the scope of the Program EIR.

Julia Pujo, Project Planner/Environmental Analyst gave the Staff presentation. Daniel Gullett, Principal Planner and Alelia Parenteau, Acting Sustainability & Resilience Director were available to answer questions.

Public comment opened at 1:21 p.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Manley McNinch
2. Jonathan Durac

Public comment closed at 1:26 p.m.

Commissioner comments:

Commissioner Higgins:

- Glad to hear that the Climate Action Plan will have a strong connection to the Housing Element.
- With respect to the no project alternative, climate impacts increase if housing doesn't increase. There would be obvious impacts to air quality, traffic, and environmental justice.
- Consider recent cuts to public transportation in the analysis and adequacy of transportation services.
- Believes that if we don't produce housing in a more efficient way, in terms of energy compliant and use of space, then we exacerbate unsafe housing conditions.
- Would like to see hazardous materials included. Older homes contain lead and asbestos, and unsafe housing conditions that place people at risk.
- Would like to see aesthetics included with respect to the no project alternative. The City has a lot of older neighborhoods and apartment structures that should be updated. When they are not updated it can be a blight.
- Looking forward to the population and housing discussion.
- Intentional development and clear policies are incredible goals and should be worked into the discussion and into the guiding principles.
- Does not see anybody complaining about some of the recent projects that have been built under the AUD Program and believes that we need to get back to that.

Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Agrees with Commissioner Higgins on aesthetics.
- Would like to see the bike share test program included in existing conditions.
- Believes that it is important to look at adaptive reuse: the advantages, disadvantages, and potential impacts because it can be great in areas where it can be accomplished.
- Hopes that under environmental effects, ample consideration be given to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan and be well coordinated into the EIR.
- Recreation is important and the impacts to those spaces, programs, and activities are important as we potentially increase the City's population.
- Would like to go further than potential consistency and consider what we can do to create housing and benefit the climate. For example, a consolidated Storm Water Plan for downtown.

- The Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan should be looked at and referenced, where applicable, because there are flood zone areas that exist and may be impacted by Sea Level Rise.
- Appreciates Chair Escobedo's question on conjoining the Climate Action Plan and Housing Element EIR because they go hand and hand.
- The Climate Action Plan doesn't have a periodic update requirement yet and is something that the City could discuss with the State to combine the Climate Action Plan and Housing Element environmental reviews. Makes sense to keep the Climate Action Plan and Housing Element on the same schedule.
- Would like to include the Street Tree Shade Study and the Street Tree Master Plan in policies or mitigation measures.
- Documents like the Urban Forest Master Plan should be looked at and perhaps be used to develop mitigation measures.
- There is a lot of information and documents that could be really helpful and it is important to look at past and current works and develop mitigation measures that make sense with these.

Commissioner Baucke:

- Would like to include clear policy that sets forth intentional decision making of where development should and shouldn't happen in the City. Look at a block-by-block level.
- Believes there is an extreme housing shortage in the City and that we need to figure out what can actually be accomplished.
- Believes there needs to be a discussion on a value recapture mechanism before allowing more development.
- In order to fund workforce housing and other affordable housing programs, the City needs to create funding programs.
- Sea level rise and climate change have an interrelationship that should be understood and considered when making public changes; for example, elevations, streets, and drainage programs. Sea level rise has economic impacts.
- Believes that there is a need for more forestation or carbon sequestration, especially street trees, because over time there has been a slow deforestation in the City.

Commissioner Bonderson:

- Appreciates the comments that have been made, especially by Commissioner Wiscomb.
- Appreciates Commissioners Higgins' and Baucke's comments about intentional development and clear policies.
- Would like to emphasize the intentionality of the public awareness effort.
- As Staff and Commissioners put in so much effort into projects like this, doesn't want that effort to be lost when perhaps members of public don't understand the depth of the effort, goals, or intentions of what is being put forward.
- Public awareness programs, like workshops and outreach, have to be one of the priorities so the effort made doesn't disappear by pushback and unfortunate misunderstanding or lack of information.
- Would like the public to embrace the efforts being made because it affects the people who live in the City.
- Is passionate about planting trees.
- The landscaping and beauty we try to maintain in the City is part of why the City is so beautiful and successful.
- Encourages continued effort on public awareness and engaging the public.

Commissioner Lodge:

- Agrees with comments made about trees. Trees and the urban forest have a big impact on the environment.
- Short-term vacation rentals and second homes are a big problem here and should be considered and better regulated in order to reclaim housing.
- The number of vacant homes has gone up in the City.
- Hoping that at the Joint Meeting with City Council there will be a discussion about adopting something that is effective in reclaiming housing for residents instead of visitors.

Chair Escobedo:

- There is a good relationship between Housing Element and the Climate Action Plan and supports analyzing the Housing Element and Climate Action Plan in the same EIR.
- Highlights the public comment heard regarding skilled labor and how important that is for both of these goals.
- Would like to analyze and include the impact of skilled labor because we cannot build housing without skilled labor and we cannot install the appliances that we need if we don't have skilled labor to install them.
- Looking forward to seeing the comparison between the environmental impacts of building housing, the environmental impacts of not building housing, or if we continue on the trajectory we are on now.
- Seconds the comments made by fellow Commissioners about being intentional about development in terms of who is it for and what happens after it is here.
- Looking forward to a discussion about short-term vacation homes and second homes.
- As the City makes changes to parking under the Multi-Unit Housing Policy, there should also be changes made in alternatives for transportation and would like to see that in the EIR.
- Would like to see an apprenticeship program as an opportunity to partner with SBCC and other organizations to create the jobs of the future.
- Excited to see the EIR when it comes out and ultimately the Housing Element and Climate Action Plan.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

ACTUAL TIME: 2:33 P.M.

A. Committee and Liaison Reports:

1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

No report.

2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

- a. Commissioner Bonderson reported on the April 18, 2022 meeting of the State Street Advisory Committee.
- b. Commissioner Bonderson announced the upcoming Transportation and Circulation Committee meeting on April 28, 2022.
- c. Commissioner Wiscomb announced the upcoming Plaza De La Guerra Working Group and Historic Landmarks Commission joint meeting on April 22, 2022.
- d. Commissioner Lodge reported on the April 20, 2022 meeting of Creeks Advisory Committee.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Escobedo adjourned the meeting at 2:41 p.m.

Submitted by,

Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary