



# City of Santa Barbara Planning Division

## PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 18, 2015

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Thompson called the meeting to order at 3:03 P.M.

### **I. ROLL CALL**

Chair Addison Thompson, Vice-Chair John P. Campanella, Commissioners Jay D. Higgins, Mike Jordan, Sheila Lodge, June Pujo, and Deborah L. Schwartz.

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

George Buell, Community Development Director  
Renee Brooke, AICP, City Planner  
Allison De Busk, Acting Senior Planner  
Danny Kato, Senior Planner  
Beatriz Gularte, Project Planner  
N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney  
Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner  
Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

### **II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:**

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

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing at 3:03 P.M. and, with no one wishing to speak, closed the hearing.

### **III. WORKSHOP:**

**ACTUAL TIME: 3:03 P.M.**

### **COMMUNITY/PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP FOR NEW ZONING ORDINANCE EFFORT.**

This is the first of five Community Workshops being planned for 2015 to allow residents and decision-makers to review and comment on the City's zoning regulations at key stages during the New Zoning Ordinance (NZO) planning process. Each workshop will be conducted in combination with the Planning Commission as a study session, with opportunity for an informal "open house" before or after each workshop.

The purpose of the workshop is to present and receive Planning Commission and public input on the Issues and Options Report. An informal "open house" will follow at 5:00 p.m., where the community can view material and ask questions of planners and consultants.

Contact: Beatriz Gularte, Project Planner  
Email: BGularte@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Phone: (805) 564-5470, ext. 4556

Beatriz Gularte, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Martha Miller, Dyett & Bhatia, gave the Consultant presentation.

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing at 3:22 P.M.

The following people provided comments:

1. Sandra Peterson was interested in whether the NZO process would be making any changes to vacation rentals, and provided her contact information to stay apprized.
2. Joe Rution was interested in the criteria used by the decision maker(s) for Substantial Conformance Determinations (SCDs) or the possibility of eliminating the concept completely.
3. Garth Nobis was interested in knowing if Zoning Information Reports (ZIR)'s would be addressed in the NZO.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 3:30 P.M.

Commissioner's Comments:

- Commissioner Pujo stated it would be beneficial to know what would be included in each of the modules that would be covered.
- Commissioner Pujo referenced the *Lack of Purpose Statements* section on page 12 of the Issues and Options Report (IOR), and stated that she is strongly supportive of adding purpose statements and intent statements particularly for the uses and levels of permits. She added that although there are a number of standards in the zoning ordinance, no matter how clear they are, there will always be a need to determine if an exact project fits the scope of that set of the regulations. Commissioner Higgins concurred.
- Commissioner Pujo supports IOR recommendation *No. 1-D Employ "Use" Group* on page 15. This would help with areas such as solar, and EV's, etc. It will also help in determining when a project represents a true change of use; if in the same "use" group it should not be a change of use.
- Commissioner Pujo also supports IOR recommendation *No. 3: Support Adaptive Reuse and Protect the Character of Distinct Areas* on page 23 and suggested that the Distinct Area language include definition of the area, beyond the physical layout, and inclusion of mixed-use development.

- Commissioner Pujo stated that a review of required findings is missing from the report.
- Commissioner Pujo also found it very confusing as a Planning Commissioner, as a user, or as an applicant, to determine how Public Works standards and conditions fit in with the permit requirements. For example, as a Planning Commissioner, it is difficult to determine when right-of-way requirements are within the purview of a discretionary permit, and when not. It happens often enough that it is becoming a concern. Commissioner Higgins added that he, too, would like to see a tie in between Public Works standards and the NZO.
- Commissioner Pujo asked if a bifurcated CUP process would be considered, where some could require a Performance Standard Permit or less review such as a major or minor CUP.
- Commissioners Campanella and Jordan agreed that it might be good to include the methodology and reasons for any proposed zoning changes. The end product after all modules should include how we arrived at the proposed step to see the differences.
- Commissioner Campanella stated that if there are many modifications granted for the same type of request, then perhaps it should become a rule rather than a modification.
- Commissioner Campanella supported the use of illustrations, and suggested an illustration such as a height or setback, would be helpful.
- Commissioner Campanella referenced discussions on bonus density and asked that information be gathered on frequently requested incentives, such as parking, setbacks, etc. that could be looked at as something modified in the zoning ordinance rather than being a requested exception. Recommends that this review be incorporated sooner than later.
- Commissioners Campanella, Lodge and Jordan appreciate the Committee's set up of Modules and the goal of simplifying the zoning ordinance while still maintaining Santa Barbara standards.
- Commissioner Jordan explained Councilman White would like to see variable setbacks included in the conversation on setbacks.
- Commissioner Jordan tied into Commissioner Pujo's comment on the intent of a standard by stating that if a project is asking for relief (ex., setback, height, etc.), then the intent of the standards should also be looked at.
- Commissioner Higgins looked at what is not included in the scope of the NZO project and wondered at what point these items could be included and how they relate to other agencies.
- Commissioner Higgins stated that if you are going to re- do a zoning ordinance, you really need to look at fundamental development standards such as height, open space standards, FARs, RSUs, and CUPs for cell sites.
- Commissioner Higgins stated that this process will create another set of non-conformities and wondered how those would be addressed.
- Campanella suggested having input provided from the DART team to the NZO process on what they are seeing that works and does not work.

- Commissioner Schwartz was pleased to see consolidation of standards to help the Commission and the public with comprehensive and consistent tools.
- Commissioner Schwartz requested that the NZO process look at neighborhoods in transition because the nexus between the neighborhood transitions and design guidelines have the Commission disconnected with making findings for approval or denial of projects.
- Commissioner Pujo echoed support for the scope of the project and figuring out what we have before we begin adding to it. Would like to see a list of public comments from the modules included on the public NZO site.
- As a point of interest, Commissioner Lodge shared some of the history of Santa Barbara zoning, beginning with the City's first Planning Commission hearing in September 1923, where a consultant was hired to work on a zoning ordinance. Efforts were fast moving and resulted in the zoning ordinance being adopted in May 1924. Community opposition was strong. One month later the Planning Commission asked the City Council to repeal the ordinance.

Ms. Miller summarized the focus of the NZO process by stating that sometimes to move forward, you have to understand where you are at. In the City of Santa Barbara, it is challenging in that the zoning ordinance is presently unorganized and convoluted, so before offering any changes, the focus will be on reviewing what we have. Mr. Kato added that the scope of the NZO process was limited by City Council's mandated 2-year timeline and approved budget allocation. The focus is targeted to update the City's Zoning Ordinance, which applies solely to private property, and will specifically look at updating the standards, requirements, and processes for private property.

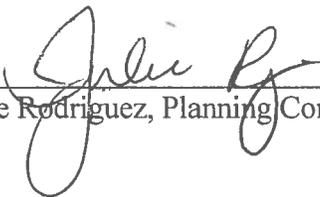
Beatriz Gularte, Project Planner, stated that the next Community/Planning Commission Meeting will take place on Thursday, June 25, at 3:00 p.m. in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room. Information on upcoming meetings and reference materials can be found on the website for this effort at [www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/NZO](http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/NZO).

Renee Brooke, City Planner, suggested that as we move forward it might be helpful to show the big picture of what the NZO process is covering since there are items that are not being covered at this time. The intent of the NZO is to specifically look at development standards and how to organize and access them to make the process more user-friendly. Other process type improvements that were brought up by the public in the workshop are not a part of the NZO, but are taking place as separate efforts.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

At the conclusion of the workshop, Chair Thompson recessed the meeting at 4:30 P.M. to the open house in the lobby. Since a quorum of the Planning Commission could be in attendance, the open house was noticed as a meeting of the Planning Commission to comply with the Brown Act.

Submitted by,

  
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Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

