



# City of Santa Barbara

## PLANNING COMMISSION

### MINUTES

### JUNE 4, 2020

1:00 P.M.

This Meeting was Conducted Electronically  
[SantaBarbaraCA.gov](http://SantaBarbaraCA.gov)

#### COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Deborah L. Schwartz, Chair  
Lesley Wiscomb, Vice Chair  
Roxana Bonderson  
Gabriel Escobedo  
Jay D. Higgins  
Sheila Lodge  
Barrett Reed

#### STAFF:

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney  
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner  
Heidi Reidel, Commission Secretary

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#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Schwartz called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

#### **I. ROLL CALL**

Chair Deborah L. Schwartz, Vice Chair Lesley Wiscomb, Commissioners Roxana Bonderson, Gabriel Escobedo, Jay D. Higgins, Sheila Lodge, and Barrett Reed

#### **STAFF PRESENT**

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney  
Gregory Lusitana, Assistant City Attorney  
Renee Brooke, City Planner  
Daniel Gullett, Principal Planner  
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner  
Rob Dayton, Transportation Planning & Parking Manager  
Jessica Metzger, Project Planner  
Melissa Hetrick, Project Planner  
Ellen Kokinda, Planning Analyst  
Timmy Bolton, Associate Planner  
Tony Ruggieri, City TV Production Supervisor  
Heidi Reidel, Commission Secretary

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

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

No requests.

**B. Announcements and appeals:**

Ms. Ostrenger announced that she will need to leave the meeting at 3:30 p.m. and Greg Lusitana, Assistant City Attorney, will take over for her.

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

1. Planning Commission May 14, 2020 Minutes
2. Planning Commission Resolution No. 003-20  
1 Clyde Adams Road

**MOTION: Wiscomb / Lodge**

Approve the minutes and resolution as presented.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 7 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

3. Planning Commission May 21, 2020 Minutes

**MOTION: Wiscomb / Lodge**

Approve the minutes as presented.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 7 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

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

Public comment opened at 1:11 p.m., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

**III. NEW ITEM**

**ACTUAL TIME: 1:12 P.M.**

**AVERAGE UNIT-SIZE DENSITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS FOCUSED ON THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider the following proposals and forward a recommendation to the City Council to:

- A. Amend the City of Santa Barbara General Plan Land Use Element to incorporate revisions to the Average Unit-Size Density Incentive Program, amend the General Plan Map to reflect proposed designation changes within the Central Business District, and make environmental findings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act; and
- B. Amend Santa Barbara Municipal Code Chapter 30.150 to facilitate construction of more housing units within the Central Business District.

**\* THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 1:14 TO 1:21 P.M. \***

Jessica Metzger, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation. Renee Brooke, City Planner; Daniel Gullett, Principal Planner; Melissa Hetrick, Project Planner; Rob Dayton, Transportation Planning & Parking Manager; Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney, and Gregory Lusitana, Assistant City Attorney were available to answer questions.

**\* THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 3:47 TO 4:00 P.M. \***

Public comment opened at 5:33 p.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Alex Pujo
2. Cassandra Ensberg
3. Ellen Bildsten
4. Gil Barry
5. John Campanella
6. Linda Honikman
7. Melissa Cunningham

Public comment closed at 6:00 p.m.

**\* THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 6:00 TO 6:05 P.M. \***

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support setting aside section one of the draft Ordinance from the Planning Commission's current scope of review, as it includes language that references other AUD amendments outside of the scope of City Council's direction on the downtown focused amendments?  
Ayes: 6 Noes: 1 (Lodge) Passed

Individual Comments: Commissioner Lodge opposed because she believes section one is a placeholder for future action per City Council's prior direction.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support removing any reference from section two of the draft Ordinance that is not relative to the downtown-focused amendments?  
Ayes: 6 Noes: 1 (Lodge) Passed

Individual Comments: Commissioner Lodge opposed because she believes the sections should be kept together as a package of items.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support extending the area within the Central Business District that would be exempt from the open yard requirement, to include the area generally bound by Santa Barbara and De la Vina Streets, including parcels that abut both sides of Santa Barbara Street and De La Vina Street?  
Ayes: 3 Noes: 4 (Schwartz, Wiscomb, Bonderson, and Lodge) Failed

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support extending the staff-recommended area within the Central Business District that would be exempt from the open yard requirement, to include parcels that abut both sides of Anacapa Street and Chapala Street?  
Ayes: 6 Noes: 1 (Lodge) Passed

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support the concept of an in-lieu parking fee?  
Ayes: 2 Noes: 5 (Schwartz, Escobedo, Higgins, Lodge, and Reed) Failed

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support a parking maximum of one space per unit, with zero spaces minimum required?  
Ayes: 6 Noes: 1 (Lodge) Passed

Straw poll: How many Commissioners support changing unbundled residential parking to an allowance rather than a requirement?  
Ayes: 6 Noes: 1 (Higgins) Passed

Individual Comments: Commissioner Higgins was uncomfortable with making this change.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support eliminating both the 250-unit cap and the 8 year expiration date as triggers to expire the AUD Program?  
Ayes: 6 Noes: 1 (Lodge) Passed

Individual Comments: Commissioner Lodge opposed eliminating the 8-year expiration date but supports eliminating the 250 unit cap.

Commissioner comments:

Commissioner Reed:

- Supports the density increase in the Central Business District.
- Supports increasing the maximum building height from 45 feet to 48 feet and could support up to 50 feet for housing projects in the Central Business District. Would like to allow up to 60 feet without special findings but won't press the matter at this time.
- Recommends that the open yard exemption be extended to both sides of Santa Barbara and De la Vina Streets. Supports clarifying the boundaries, whatever they may be.
- Supports eliminating the in-lieu fee policy for parking in its entirety.
- Supports allowing unbundled parking as an option. Would like zero parking requirements.
- Supports eliminating the expiration provisions of the AUD Program. Agrees with Commissioner Escobedo that the expiration date results in developer apprehension, and urges fellow Commissioners to eliminate the expiration entirely.
- An aggressive effort needs to be taken to reform the Community Development Department.

Commissioner Escobedo:

- Supports the density increase in the Central Business District.
- Supports increasing the maximum building height from 45 feet to 48 feet by right and encourages a conversation about the process to propose up to 60 feet in the CBD.
- Supports eliminating the open yard requirement.
- Supports eliminating the in-lieu fee policy and replacing it with a parking maximum.
- Supports unbundled parking as an option, changing the word "shall" to "may" in the ordinance.
- Supports eliminating the 250 unit cap on the program.
- Noted that the AUD Program expiration date creates anxiety in development.

## Commissioner Bonderson:

- Supports the density increase in the Central Business District.
- Supports increasing the maximum building height from 45 feet to 48 feet and the discretionary limitation up to 60 feet. Would like staff to give attention to why and how the 48 feet would be used. Keep in mind that additional height may be used to make residences more luxurious which goes against the intended purpose of the program.
- Supports extending the elimination of the open yard requirement to both sides of Chapala and Anacapa Streets.
- Supports keeping the in-lieu fee policy and allowing unbundled parking. Does not feel comfortable speaking on the topic of in-lieu parking fees until provided with further information.
- Supports the removal of the 250 unit limit on the program.

## Commissioner Lodge:

- Supports the density increase in the Central Business District.
- Does not support increasing the maximum building height from 45 feet to 48 feet or eliminating the open yard requirement. Flat roofs can be used for open space.
- Supports eliminating the in-lieu fee policy in its entirety and allowing unbundled parking as an option.
- Supports eliminating the 250 unit cap but does not support eliminating the program expiration date.

## Commissioner Higgins:

- Supports the density increase in the Central Business District.
- Supports increasing the maximum building height from 45 feet to 48 feet and eliminating the open yard requirement but recognizes that height may affect affordability.
- Supports eliminating the in-lieu fee policy in its entirety and would like unbundled parking as a requirement. Uncomfortable with changing “shall” to “may” in unbundled parking.
- Supports eliminating the 250-unit cap and the program expiration date.

## Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Supports the density increase in the Central Business District. Would like staff to review and clarify Section 30.150.075.A.
- Supports increasing the maximum building height from 45 feet to 48 feet but believes that increasing to 60 feet would need to be a thoroughly vetted process.
- Supports extending the elimination of the open yard requirement to both sides of Chapala and Anacapa Streets.
- Supports the in-lieu parking fee policy with the comment that the Planning Commission could recommend a lower limit to the fee.
- Supports unbundled parking.
- Supports eliminating the 250 unit cap and the program expiration date.

Chair Schwartz:

- Supports the density increase in the Central Business District.
- Supports increasing the maximum building height from 45 feet to 48 feet.
- Supports eliminating the open yard requirement with the expanded definition to include both sides of the street. Supports Commissioner Reed's proposal to extend the exemption area further, to Santa Barbara and De la Vina Streets.
- Supports eliminating temporal constraints on multi-unit housing program, including 250 unit cap and 8 year limit.

**MOTION: Wiscomb / Escobedo**

Recommend that City Council amend the General Plan Land Use Element's Average Unit-Size Density Incentive Program Map, Land Use Map, and text; and amend Municipal Code Chapter 30.150, Average Unit-Size Density Incentive Program, as revised.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Individual Comment: Commissioner Lodge opposed because she believes the amendments will negatively impact the downtown.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**

No reports given.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted by,

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Heidi Reidel, Commission Secretary