

MINUTES

**CITY OF PACIFICA
PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2212 BEACH BOULEVARD**

January 4, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Chair Hauser called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners Devine, Berman, Leal, Godwin,
Wright and Chair Hauser
Absent: Commissioner Ferguson

Chair Hauser stated that Commissioner Devine was participating remotely due to just cause and she asked her to explain for the record her reason for remote participation due to just cause.

Planning Director Murdock stated he was trying to get her video on the screen, stating that she was having a problem connecting visually.

Chair Hauser asked if she needed to be on video.

Planning Director Murdock stated that she did and they will try to figure out the problem. He stated that she will try to disconnect and rejoin and hopefully will be able to connect by video.

Commissioner Devine was finally connected.

Chair Hauser then asked Planning Director Murdock if he thought they should officially start the meeting now, and with his approval, she called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and readdressed the state code allowing remote participation for just cause.

Commissioner Devine stated that she was participating remotely due to just cause of need for child care.

Chair Hauser then asked her, according to the code, to identify if any individuals over 18 are present in the room from which she is present remotely.

Commissioner Devine confirmed that there were no individuals present in the room with her.

Planning Director Murdock then took a verbal roll call.

SALUTE TO FLAG: Led by Vice Chair Leal

STAFF PRESENT: Planning Director Murdock
Asst. City Attorney Murphy
Sr. Planner Harkousha
Sr. Planner Cervantes

Chair Hauser opened public comments for anyone wanting to speak on administrative business.

**APPROVAL OF ORDER
OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Berman moved approval of the Order of Agenda; Commissioner Godwin seconded the motion.

Planning Director Murdock took a verbal roll call.

The motion carried **6-0**.

Ayes: Commissioners Devine, Berman, Leal, Godwin,
Wright and Chair Hauser

Noes: None

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES:**

None

DESIGNATION OF LIAISON TO CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF JANUARY 22, 2024:

Chair Hauser explained the need for a liaison if the present item moves forward to Council.

Commissioner Wright stated, if no other volunteers, he would volunteer as the liaison.

Chair Hauser appreciated his consistency in volunteering.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Sr. Planner Cervantes introduced the call-in speaker.

Clif Lawrence, Pacifica, explained that on Channel 26, they are not seeing the visual meeting and that is technically not an open forum.

Chair Hauser explained that they can participate by Zoom, and mentioned the process.

CONSENT ITEMS:

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 1. GPA-106-24** **File No. 2023-025 – General Plan Amendment GPA-106-24**
for consideration of Planning Commission recommendation to City Council on adoption of an Initial Study/Negative Declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and on Adoption of the 2023-2031 Housing Element of the General Plan. Recommended CEQA Action: Adoption of an Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND).

Planning Director Murdock presented the staff report.

Chair Hauser asked if they could check with Mr. Lawrence that they are able to follow the meeting remotely and when he confirmed that, she passed it back to Planning Director Murdock to continue the report.

Planning Director Murdock completed the staff report.

Chair Hauser thanked him for the thorough report and asked if he would like to introduce his team.

Planning Director Murdock agreed, and stated he had Asst. City Attorney Karen Murphy, Sandi Counsel, sites expert, Carol Johnson, constraints analyst, Sabrina Mora, fair housing analyst, Sr. Planner Brianne Harkousha, assisting staff member and Nick Hamilton of Good City Company via Zoom who is available to answer questions.

Chair Hauser asked if Councilmembers had any questions before public comment. She had a couple but she would save them for after public comment and then opened the Public Hearing.

Sr. Planner Cervantes introduced the call-in speakers.

Clif Lawrence, Pacifica, expressed his thoughts and concerns on negative declaration instead of an environmental impact report (EIR).

Sam Casillas, Pacifica, stated that he agreed with Mr. Lawrence's comments, and then expressed his thoughts and concerns on the negative declaration.

Chair Hauser closed the Public Hearing and asked staff if they wanted to add anything else before moving on to Councilmember questions or comments.

Planning Director Murdock clarified staff's position on concerns expressed by commenters on the EIR process. He explained that they will not be deferring to individual companies but will be doing an initial EIR.

Commissioner Berman asked clarification regarding their review and potential recommendation for approval of the housing element EIR before the processing of the zoning changes.

Planning Director Murdock explained that this is a policy level document setting forth a number of policy and programs, etc., but not effectuating the rezoning in the General Plan amendments

that would allow the housing elements to occur, thus, no resulting effect on the environment from this housing element adoption. He added that the rezoning and General Plan amendments to the land use element would be part of program No. 1 and would have the potential for physical impacts to the environment and warrant preparation of the EIR, thus staff is taking preparation of one.

Commissioner Berman asked if staff foresees any issues with effectively committing to this housing element prior to adopting the zoning changes and reviewing the EIR.

Planning Director Murdock did not think so at this time as they have gone through a robust public process to identify sites that make sense for that housing element process. They have yet to get final confirmation from HCD and believe it is a solid site list, but it is not the final list, pending certification. However, they are confident the list will not need to be changed.

Commissioner Berman appreciated that they have a 36% buffer for RHNA which gives them some confidence.

Chair Hauser stated she was going to go down the line, person by person, and asked if she has any further to add.

Commissioner Berman stated that was her last question and she will wait for deliberation.

Chair Hauser then started with Commissioner Leal.

Commissioner Leal stated he didn't have any additional questions.

Commissioner Godwin stated that Planning Director Murdock answered all his questions via text.

Commissioner Wright stated he had a few process related questions. He understood this started when the state put a mandate down and acknowledged how much time it took to put this together. He has appreciated the public input and how staff has incorporated that as well as Commission suggestions, etc., and he thanked them for all their hard work and doing it in a timely manner. He asked if he could share how they did it all with the constraints put on them from above.

Planning Director Murdock thanked him for his thoughts, agreeing that it has been a team effort by everyone, and he thought it started on the basis of public input stemming from the General Plan Update process. They heard the concerns about maintaining open space, and they did their best to find locations on infill sites, not hillsides, and resulted in proposed higher densities, in addition to transit concerns causing them to try to find sites near transit routes. Thus staff did their best to incorporate all aspects from input for the ultimate product.

Commissioner Wright acknowledged staff's effort to provide a progressive buffer system to get what our priorities are. He mentioned how impressed he was at the last meeting at the amount of community input there was and he loved being a Pacifican where we all care about our community and appreciated how staff wrapped their arms around that and tried to get the best produce for the city. He asked staff's thought on the best time to get community input in the process to help get the best product that they want.

Planning Director Murdock stated that staff welcomed the community input and provided a website for that purpose and they got a lot of input from them on the housing element website, adding that they can go to Pacifica.gov to get updated information, give input and get onto lists to receive updated info on meetings, etc.

Commissioner Devine stated that she wanted to understand a little bit more about the process with the EIR and what will be brought up, such as the rezoning sites.

Planning Director Murdock stated that the city is obligated, during the CEQA process, to consider potential alternatives and one of the processes that could possibly be brought up is modifying a housing element site if there are significant and unavoidable environmental impacts. They hope that is not the case, as it complicates things in revising the housing element and sending it back to the state for review, but it is one of the many options when addressing environmental impacts that could be identified in the EIR process.

Commissioner Devine realized how much time and effort went into this and she really appreciated staff's work.

Chair Hauser has a few questions and clarifications. The first is referring to items in Appendix F that were added to the first draft, and she asked if it was possible to add the graphics on those for clarification.

Planning Director Murdock thought she was referring to the Oddstad Boulevard site and Skyline water tank site.

Chair Hauser responded affirmatively.

Planning Director Murdock asked if her concern was related to the highlighting of the parcel line versus the polygon outline.

Chair Hauser responded affirmatively, adding that she thought, on the other polygons, the graphics are clear, and when you add that second cyan polygon without any explanation, it is confusing as to why. She thought the polygons look great and the appendix is well worded.

Planning Director Murdock thought they could make the changes to have them align with the other sites. And, in referring to a motion, it is Figure F9 and Figure F10.

Chair Hauser referred to page 182, Appendix D, stating all the figures are very clear but she wasn't sure they have been updated to reflect the lower income versus market rate income changes made in the body of the document, and she asked if staff could check that before it goes to Council.

Planning Director Murdock asked confirmation that it was on the red line on page 182.

Chair Hauser responded affirmatively, stating that it trickles through all the Appendix D figures and asked if they were updated. She stated that there were some that didn't match page 14. She referred to the last RHNA cycle where there was a category for extreme low income and it is talked about but there isn't a separate category for it and she asked for an explanation.

Planning Director Murdock agreed to do that, adding that Sandy Council could then possibly add on or clarify. He stated that the category is for very low income and there is methodology to split 50-50 for very low and extremely low income and that is where the breakdown comes from, but it is not specifically a RHNA allocation for ELI but other provisions require that you assess the need and accepted methodology that many if not most communities use.

Chair Hauser understood. She then referred to the six objective development standards (ODS) they studied were part of the rezoning effort, and she appreciated that all that work was going into that effort instead of a bigger document. She then thanked staff for all the amazing work they did incorporating everything they received into the document. She then asked if any Commissioners had anything to deliberate.

Commissioner Wright stated that he had one more question. He stated that, as they are ready to put this work forward, he knows they did their best, and asked if they had any suggestions as to how that is going to be received.

Planning Director Murdock stated they hope very well, assuming he was referring to being received by California Housing and Community Development. He stated that staff believes the housing element they have prepared through the process complies with state law and their hope is that, when the state reviews the document, they find they agree with the city that the document is compliant with state law. Staff won't know until they resubmit after City Council hopefully adopts it later this month, but they wouldn't be the first city to have to go through another round of work with HCD in order to achieve substantial compliance. They are cautiously optimistic, as they put their best foot forward as mentioned and they hope to be found in substantial compliance.

Commissioner Wright stated that they all appreciate staff's continued support of the community's priorities in this process even if they take a chance that it will be sent back and have to revisit it.

Chair Hauser stated that she didn't see any strong feelings about deliberating so they can either entertain a motion or deliberate.

Commissioner Berman stated she wasn't deliberating, but wanted to echo the appreciations expressed for city's staff because of all the hard work that has gone into this and she also appreciated the Commission's hard work. She acknowledged that she had to miss several meetings because of being on maternity leave, but they put in a lot of work and she feels that, as a city, they have done really well.

Commissioner Devine stated that she was pouring over the redline documents and felt confident and pleased with how much time went into this. She felt they did their best to process it and she was pleased at the community members who showed up they did their best to read their comments and she was pleased to see where this goes. She appreciated the process for her since she joined the Commission, mentioning her initial concerns at the possibility of significant changes in the city she, her husband, and his family grew up in, but she has learned a lot and appreciated the process.

Chair Hauser stated that she was willing to make a motion. She didn't think she had to make any comments about the graphics they talked about.

Chair Hauser moved to adopt the attached resolution that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt an Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the project title “Housing Element Update – 2023-2031”, State Clearinghouse No. 2023110438 in accordance with CEQA and Recommend that the City Council approve the 2023-2031 Housing Element of the General Plan in the form included as Attachment B to the staff report; and incorporate all documents and testimony into the record by reference; Commissioner Godwin seconded the motion.

Planning Director Murdock took a verbal roll call.

The motion carried **6-0**.

Ayes: Commissioners Devine, Berman, Leal, Godwin,
Wright and Chair Hauser

Noes: None

Chair Hauser declared that anyone aggrieved by the action of the Planning Commission has ten (10) calendar days to appeal the decision in writing to the City Council.

CONSIDERATION:

None

COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner Godwin reminded everyone that these aren't approved projects and can be approved with substantial lower density when they come before the Commission and this is just the housing element and what actually happens is yet to be determined.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Planning Director Murdock thanked the Commission for their significant work, attention to detail, leadership in preparing the draft housing element and regarding the continuation of the process, Council is currently scheduled to consider the draft housing element and Planning Commission's recommendation to adopt on Monday, January 22, and staff invites any community members who continue to participate in the process to give further public comment at that hearing.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business for discussion, Commissioner Berman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m.; Commissioner Wright seconded the motion.

Planning Director Murdock took a verbal roll call.

The motion carried **6-0**.

Ayes: Commissioners Devine, Berman, Leal, Godwin,
Wright and Chair Hauser

Noes: None

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Medina
Public Meeting Stenographer

APPROVED:

Planning Director Murdock