

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY
PLANNING COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

September 24, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Menthe informed the public that Planning Commission would be starting 15 minutes late in observance of the second day of Rosh Hashanah which ended at sundown. The Chair called the regular meeting of the Culver City Planning Commission to order at 7:15 p.m. in Council Chambers and online.

Present: Darrel Menthe, Chair
Jen Carter, Vice Chair
Jeanne Black, Commissioner
Stephen Jones, Commissioner
Alexander van Gaalen, Commissioner

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Pledge of Allegiance

Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

Chair Menthe invited public comment.

Edward Chojnacki was called to speak but was not present in person or online.

Anne Garrett was called to speak but was not present in person or online.

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Receipt of Correspondence

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR CARTER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BLACK AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

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Consent Calendar

Item C-1

Approval of Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of August 13, 2025

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR CARTER AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE DRAFT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 13, 2025.

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Order of the Agenda

Item A-1 was heard before the Public Hearing Item.

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The following item was considered out of sequence.

Action Items

Item A-1

Discussion and Recommendation to City Council on the Top Redevelopment Proposal for 11029 Washington Boulevard

Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Chair Menthe discussed procedures for consideration of the item.

West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation

Jesse Slansky, West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation (WHCHC), introduced members of the team and provided background on the organization.

Anup Patel, WHCHC, provided a presentation on the design concept for Washington Palms; discussed activating the corridor; maximizing housing opportunities while allowing for pop-up retail opportunities; artist space; modular units; community terraces and balconies; creating a welcoming gateway and vibrant space; people prioritized over cars at the street level; alcoves to showcase artist works; landscaping; gated access; the community arts center; noted that 25% of the units are to be restricted to extremely low-income households without the need for Project Based Vouchers (PBVs) or rental subsidies; discussed sources of income back to Culver City in exchange for the land; tax credits; potential financing sources; total cost per unit; and free services provided to residents once construction is completed.

Venice Community Housing Corporation

Allison Riley, Venice Community Housing (VCHC), introduced members of the team; provided background on the organization and a presentation on Culver Commons; discussed providing senior housing; community cultural spaces; co-creating the community space through community engagement activities; space set aside for commercial activation; limited parking availability; challenges with availability of operating subsidies; creating sustainable housing in the long run; ground leasing the property; the partnership with Culver City; Culver City ownership of the land; the proposed capital lease payment offered and pro-rata share of residual receipts over the long-term; the proposed timeline; commitment to community engagement at all stages of the development process; and, responding to inquiry, she indicated that the 9% low income housing tax credit would have a 62 year old minimum age requirement.

Decro

Armeen Neshat, Decro Corporation, provided background on the organization; introduced the team; and presented the vision for 11029 Washington Boulevard.

Brian Adolph, Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects (LOA), provided background on the organization; discussed recent projects; and recent recognition.

Armeen Neshat, Decro Corporation, discussed the intent to provide much-needed affordable housing for Culver City; number of units proposed for senior households; nearby amenities for seniors; and providing dedicated community and commercial public spaces and an iconic asset for the community while focusing on environmentally friendly business practices.

Brian Adolph, LOA, discussed managing height and density; massings that maintain the vision of the design; prioritization of community benefit and ground floor activation; experience providing public spaces and public parks; creation of a striking and functional form; and building to appropriate scale for the neighborhood.

Armeen Neshat, Decro Corporation, discussed financial benefits generated for Culver City; the long-term ground lease; estimated value generated for Culver City; total project cost; leveraging public and private funding to create an iconic building without use of City funding while still creating deep affordability for residents; and he expressed appreciation for the opportunity to present.

Develop with Skill, Design with Skill

Samantha Hill, Develop with Skill/Design with Skill, introduced the team; provided a presentation on their proposal for 100% affordable student-focused housing at 11029 Washington Boulevard; discussed openness to other community-serving residents equally impacted by Culver City's housing shortage; and key program features.

Ekta Naik, SoLa Impact/Model Z, provided background on the organization; discussed modular technologies; and average cost per unit.

Andre Bueno, Better Angels, provided background on the organization; discussed their partnership with Model Z; work on a similar-sized project in Westchester; other recently completed projects; and the aim to provide sustainable community-rooted housing in Culver City.

Jason Yap, SoLa Impact/Model Z, discussed the market and costs to live in Culver City; the plan to build for 80% AMI (Annual Median Income) tenants; people who have not been able to benefit from the success of Culver City; the employment base of Culver City; part time students at West LA Community College; and people who cannot afford to live in Culver City.

Ekta Naik, SoLa Impact/Model Z, discussed design components and materials; the proposed timeline; streamlining processes; and reduced costs.

Samantha Hill, Develop with Skill/Design with Skill, discussed the direct partnership between Culver City and the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) through Measure LA; the prime corridor location; outreach to student groups, educators, and small businesses; cost per unit; and she requested Commission support for their proposal.

Eleos

Jenna Hornstock, Eleos Ventures, LLC, introduced the team; provided background on herself and the company; discussed the project proposal; design components; the 100% affordable project proposed; density bonuses; lower and very low-income units; helping Culver City meet RHNA goals; providing housing to missing middle households; project financing; proposed terms of the deal; community engagement; and the proposed timeline.

Chair Menthe invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Commission:

Benjamin Seligman provided background on himself; was looking forward to having new neighbors; expressed appreciation that affordable housing was determined to be a priority in the RFPs (Request for Proposals); discussed the rubric; the extent of community engagement and community space provided; WHCHC, Decro, and Eleos; looking at what is being provided to area residents; and he wanted differences in community engagement to be considered when following the established rubric.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the fact that all the proposals were for affordable housing; the focus on the arts in the WHCHC; live work spaces; activating Washington Boulevard; appreciation for the focus

tailored to ageing by the VCHC proposal; appreciation for the architectural design of Decro; confusion with the vertical park and the focus on low income seniors; those who would be using the stairs; services provided by WHCHC and VCHC without supplemental funding; the need for ongoing services and programming for the senior population; difference in cost per unit; competitiveness between the proposals; staff ratings; concern with community reaction to height of the WHCHC proposal; and concerns that offset each other with the different proposals.

Responding to inquiry, WHCHC representatives indicated that they would be looking at a pool of modular construction providers to get a competitive rate noting that there were several viable candidates that they had worked with in the past; clarified that prefabricated components had been used in the past, but a fully modular project had not been done; and discussed scale of previous projects.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding concern with prefabricated components for tall structures; lack of parking in all designs but one containing public parking for profit on the first floor; distance to the nearest grocery store; the need to consider local amenities for the residents; support for the WHCHC project; making the best use of the opportunity; and concern with using artist lofts to activate the streets

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the staff scoring process; financial and feasibility capacity numbers; affordability levels and financial feasibility funding sources; cash flow; repayment of the residual receipt loan to Culver City; the ground lease; similarity of timelines; appreciation that five developers were pitching affordable housing projects to Culver City; concern with City funding required for the Eleos project; appreciation for the Decro design but the desire to have more units; support for accommodating the extremely low units and the number of housing units with the WHCHC proposal; a current artist space on Washington Boulevard; design of the artist space to encourage interaction; inclusion of services; cost per unit; concern with the name of the WHCHC project; palm trees; and the Urban Forest Master Plan.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding appreciation for the presentations; concern with the smaller

amount of units provided by Decro but support for the design; and the importance of activating at the street level.

Discussion ensued between Decro Corporation representatives, staff, and Commissioners regarding repayment of the lease through a residual receipts loan; the 99 year ground lease and 99 year affordability; the cumulative estimated amount of \$20.7 million that would be repaid to Culver City over the life of the ground lease; the residual receipts loan of 2.5% of effective gross income per year; openness to capitalizing a portion of the payment for the proposed building; the five stories proposed; and feasibility of a park with eight stories.

Additional discussion ensued between Design with Skill representatives, staff, and Commissioners regarding number of Model Z units produced to date; projects in the pipeline; five story building projects; and the existing five story modular project in downtown Los Angeles.

Further discussion ensued between Eleos representatives, staff, and Commissioners regarding their lower cost per unit; the way deals are structured to get funding; in-house work to reduce consultant costs; the lower cost structure that has to do with the financing structure; projects completed and those currently under construction; private financing; the prevailing wage project; and confidence in costs.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding community meetings held; public feedback on use of the site; the RFP that indicated a preference for housing; the City purchase of the property to extinguish the non-conforming use; generating revenue from the site; the fact that affordable housing does not generate income; subsidized housing; potential residual receipt payments; clarification that money will not come back to the City for the property that nobody wanted; scoring; the fact that the most expensive project got the highest score; increased financial risk with an increased price tag; potential future costs for the City; estimates based on rosy assumptions; per unit cost to build; examination of the vision for modular units; cost effectiveness; parking; the need to provide parking for seniors; parking intrusion into the neighborhoods; deliveries; disabled parking; public parking; the deferred developer fee as an expression of confidence in the project; building height in the neighborhood; support for the design of the Decro project; a statement in the RFP that indicated

willingness to waive or modify zoning regulations as needed that the proposals did not take advantage of; and concern that WHCHC had not identified who would be building the modular units.

Additional discussion ensued between WHCHC representatives, staff, and Commissioners regarding financial risk; lack of Culver City experience with affordable housing; level of risk with units being predominantly at the lower end; cross subsidies; the rigorous selection process; demand for extremely low-income units; rental subsidies; and flexibility with changing the name of the project.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the discussion about the highest and best use; providing housing and recovering some of the purchase price of the property; the Venice project that capitalizes the lease; support for flexibility provided with WHCHC not being settled on a provider for the modular housing; concern that the technology is not ready for a building of such height; feasibility; experience; and not binding anyone to the technology with an approval.

Additional discussion ensued between WHCHC representatives, staff, and Commissioners regarding the current concept contemplating modular housing; competitive bids; costs to build affordable housing; costs to have features that everyone wants in new construction; lack of incentive to inflate costs; conferring with other developers to understand how costs are calculated; public community space in the proposals; and support for the outdoor space with Decro but the feeling that housing needs to prevail.

Chair Menthe moved to recommend Design with Skill as the top proposal. Motion died for lack of a second.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER VAN GAALEN THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION: RECOMMEND WASHINGTON PALMS BY WEST HOLLYWOOD COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION AS THE TOP PROPOSAL FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF 11029 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: BLACK, CARTER, JONES, VAN GAALEN
NOES: MENTHE

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Recess Reconvene

Chair Menthe called a brief recess from 8:45 p.m. to 8:55 p.m.

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Public Hearings

Item PH-1

Consideration of a Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Vehicle Service Facility Within an Existing 42,333 square-foot Industrial Building Located at 10150-10200 Jefferson Boulevard in the Mixed-Use Corridor 2 (MU-2) Zone

Gabriel Barreras, Senior Planner, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding public comment received; parking provided; and accommodating ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) spaces.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECONDED BY CHAIR MENTHE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT PLANNING COMMISSION OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Chair Menthe invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission:

Dan Broderick, Cadillac of Beverly Hills (applicant), asserted that the project was in line with a number of needs for Culver City in pursuit of clean mobility goals; discussed myths of EV (electric vehicles); efforts to change propulsion systems to EV; creating infrastructure necessary to have EV; gaps in infrastructure; different requirements for servicing EV vehicles; increased demand with the exponential growth of EV sales; modern quiet, clean customer-facing facilities; sound and other issues that are no longer a legitimate concern; the adaptive reuse consideration; mindfulness in use of the facility; consideration of neighbors in Raintree; traffic flow considerations and noise generating activities; placement of charging stalls; community availability; and impact on traffic.

Darryl Chernes spoke on behalf of the Electric Vehicle Association of Culver City in support of approving the proposed facility; discussed statements by the owner indicating installation of 9 EV chargers available to the public at the location regardless of the make and model; benefits to Culver City; and proximity to Raintree that does not have chargers available to their owners.

Lauren Fishelman provided background on herself; discussed the livable community; appreciation to the Planning Commission; serious concerns about the project; fire risks with lithium batteries; concern with appropriate land use by placing an auto service center that works with combustible materials next to the Oil Fields and 20 feet from where children play; concern with the assertion that the area is not environmentally sensitive; proximity to the maximum fire risk designation of the area by the Culver City Fire Department (CCFD); concern with bringing pollution to one of the most densely populated areas in Culver City; traffic; lived experience with Jefferson Boulevard; increased congestion; affects to livability of the area; CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) requirements; and she noted that her job as a mother is to protect her children, and the job of the Commission is to protect the community.

Lois Whitman, Raintree Townhomes, discussed her adjacency to the project; serious concerns about safety and pollution; the storage facility; multiple EV vehicles on the site; asked about mitigation measures; and she expressed concerns with adding car carriers parked in the center lane to the already increased traffic on Jefferson Boulevard.

Anne Garrett was called to speak but was not present in person or online.

Kate Hungerford, Raintree Community Board President, echoed previous comments; expressed disappointment in the lack of transparency on the application for the facility; discussed adjacency to active wells; constant reports about methane leaks from Sentinel; issues with the new lithium batteries; number of EVs parked on the property; and she asked the Commission to consider resident concerns.

Vimal Duggal discussed the loud truck that would come at 2 a.m. to the textbook company that used to inhabit the building; noise with the cars coming and going as well as

from employees talking and yelling; quality of life for the neighbors of the facility; and a recent experience where a battery exploded and caused great damage.

Dan Broderick, Cadillac of Beverly Hills (applicant), discussed studies about the relative fire risk of EVs vs. an Internal Combustion Engine (ICE); mitigation of risks with every safety feature possible; work done inside; utilization of the facility; pollution concerns; and differences between what is being done currently with the TUP (Temporary Use Permit) and what will be done.

Jim Suhr, Entitlements Consultant, discussed the limited range of uses allowed with a TUP and the broader range of services allowed with a CUP (Conditional Use Permit).

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding approval of the TUP and CUP by the CCFD and enforcement of charging limits.

Commissioner Black reported meeting with Jim Suhr.

Dan Broderick, Cadillac of Beverly Hills (applicant), reported that most of the vehicles flowing through the facility would be from the factory and arrive in a transit mode with a 20% charge or less and, responding to inquiry, he discussed fire mitigation strategies.

Chair Menthe and Vice Chair Carter reported meeting with the applicant.

Additional discussion ensued between the applicants, staff, and Commissioners regarding the business plan in the Transportation Report; potential to service the full-sized SUVs (Sport Utility Vehicles) coming from LAX (Los Angeles International Airport); retention of the Beverly Hills service facility; clarification that almost no car carriers would be coming through the facility; wait times to get in for service; the inability for the facilities to keep up; training; air filtering; use of an AQMD (Air Quality Management District) compliant air filtration system for ICE vehicle maintenance; estimated revenue; taxable portion of revenue generated and parts sold; facts that were not presented as part of the staff report and that are not required to discuss the findings; the task to look at land use impacts of the proposed entitlement; jurisdiction; and

clarification that the Planning Commission is the decision making body unless the item is appealed to the City Council.

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR CARTER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BLACK AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Moved by Chair Menthe and seconded by Commissioner Black that the Planning Commission approve the staff recommendation.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding efforts by the applicant to address community comments; unacceptable fire risk; clearing legal loopholes; concern with the proximity of the proposed development to residential; issues with the nearby intersection; current traffic conditions; tinder behind the oil wells; toxic emissions; the dirty business that no one wants in the neighborhood; the feeling that the only people getting an advantage are those on the business end; rarity of needing service for EVs; driving to a non-residential community to get EVs serviced; the CUP process; concern that providing chargers does not overcome the downsides of the project; whether the project meets the findings; the feeling that it is not responsible to insist that all repair facilities be in other communities; living next to commercial activity; the area that is zoned for mixed-use, not commercial; automotive services as an allowable use under the zoning; the permissible use with a CUP; and the ability to stipulate conditions on the project to allow the use.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER VAN GAALEN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BLACK THAT PLANNING COMMISSION:

1. ADOPT A CLASS 1 CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FOR THIS PROJECT, PURSUANT TO CEQA SECTION 15301- EXISTING FACILITIES, FINDING THERE ARE NO POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT; AND,
2. APPROVE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, P2025-0174-CUP, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AS STATED IN PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 25-P011; AND,
3. EXTEND TEMPORARY USE PERMIT, P2025-0141-TUP, FOR THE CONTINUATION OF TEMPORARY USES AND ALL CONDITIONS THEREIN UNTIL THE APPLICANT IS ISSUED FINAL BUILDING PERMITS.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: BLACK, MENTHE, VAN GAALEN
NOES: CARTER, JONES

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)

Chair Menthe invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Current Planning Secretary, reported that no requests to speak had been received.

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Items from Planning Commissioners/Staff

Mark Muenzer, Planning and Development Director, discussed the Hayden Tract Specific Plan Open House at Syd Kronenthal Park on September 25 and he noted there had been an update to the virtual Open House.

Chair Menthe indicated that he would have to recuse himself from the item, but received clarification that he could attend as a member of the public.

Emily Stadnicki, Current Planning Manager, discussed upcoming agenda items and meeting schedule noting that the October 8 meeting would likely be cancelled.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:59 p.m., the Culver City Planning Commission adjourned to a regular meeting to be held on October 22, 2025.

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RUTH MARTIN DEL CAMPO
SECRETARY of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED _____

DARREL MENTHE
CHAIR of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Bocchino
CITY CLERK

Date