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CULVER CITY GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
CULVER CITY GENERAL PLAN  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

October 08, 2020  
7:00 P.M.

**Call To Order & Roll Call**

The special meeting of the Culver City General Plan  
Advisory Committee (GPAC) was called to order at 7:05 P.M.

Members	Cicely Bingener, Member
Present:	Patricia Bijvoet, Member
	Peter Capone-Newton, Member
	Diana Hernandez, Member
	Ken Mand, Member
	Wally Marks, Member
	Yasmine Imani McMorris, Vice-Chair
	David Metzler, Member
	Jeanne Min, Member
	Paavo Monkkonen, Member
	Kristen Torres Pawling, Member (arrived at 7:39 PM)
	Freddy Puza, Member
	Denice Renteria, Member
	Frances Rosenau, Chair
	Laura Stuart, Member (arrived at 7:39 PM)
	Jamie Wallace, Member
	Noah Zatz, Member
Members	Scott Malsin, Member
Absent:	Claudia Vizcarra, Member
	Andrew Weissman, Member
Staff	Ashley Hefner,
Present:	Advance Planning Manager (Secretary)
	Sol Blumenfeld,
	Community Development Director
	Lauren Marsiglia, Associate Planner
	Christopher Minniti, Planning Intern
Consultants	Eric Yurkovich, Raimi and Associates
Present:	Martin Leitner, Perkins and Will
	Carrie Latimer, Perkins and Will

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**Public Comment for Items NOT On the Agenda**

Secretary Hefner invited public comment and stated that no one submitted requests to speak. No attendees requested to speak.

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**Receipt of Correspondence**

Secretary Hefner stated that that none was received.

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**Action Items**

Item A-1

**1. PRESENTATION ON AND DISCUSSION OF LAND USE AND GROWTH ALTERNATIVES IN CULVER CITY.**

Secretary Hefner introduced Martin Leitner of Perkins and Will, the City of Culver City's ("City" = local agency) General Plan Update (GPU) urban design consultants, for the presentation on land use and growth alternatives for the city of Culver City ("city" = place).

Leitner thanked Secretary Hefner and the GPAC Members for having him return to continue the talk on areas of change; reintroduced himself and his associates; summarized comments mentioned during the prior GPAC meeting discussion on change and Culver City's future; and explained that the previous discussion focused on abstract development scenarios and concepts whereas this presentation will show how those abstract development strategies-preservation, incremental growth, and significant growth-would apply across the city; that the maps are not proposals, but are meant to gather feedback from the GPAC Members on how to achieve Culver City's future goals to inform the land use alternatives maps; the meeting agenda; the concept of land use intensity that had not been included previously, including the four prototypical place type strategies-single unit residential, low density residential, commercial corridor, and large commercial or mixed use sites-discussed during the previous meeting; three general models for change for Culver City; the city boundary and key landmarks and major streets; the concept of land use

intensity, which describes the character and extent of land usage and includes five general intensity levels; the respective intensity color code for the three models for change maps; that the colors show a "bird's eye view" of transition and how it is important for the growth of Culver City; what mixed-use/commercial could entail; Culver City's land use intensity map for existing neighborhoods; and the broad categories of place types that exist within Culver City and what could change or not.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about how the single family areas are already experiencing significant changes and the importance of clarifying whether the preservation strategy considers the rules governing a place's physical development and socioeconomic and demographic changes occurring in these places. Leitner responded that most places already allow for physical change, such as by square footage, and not necessarily growth in number of families or households.

Leitner continued the presentation and explained how incremental growth could include missing middle housing and more intense use like three- to four-story apartment buildings; how to integrate residential development into commercial corridors without needing to transition into a higher intensity of medium mixed-use; how large commercial or mixed-use sites can transition to medium or high intensity; three strategies for growth discussed during a prior GPAC meeting; simplified land use intensity maps modeling the three approaches to change.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff on whether the model maps and colors are based on the current General Plan land use map. Leitner explained that the models are based on the current General Plan, GPU Land Use and Community Design Existing Conditions Report, and aerial maps, but do not exactly match the existing land use map. A Member suggested that GPAC and property owners discuss specifics for properties on the maps, especially in areas of change.

Secretary Hefner invited public comment.

Meg Sullivan stated that she owns a low-density residential property; suggested that more consideration be given to the growth opportunities in low density multifamily residential neighborhoods as the presentation appeared to leave these areas mostly unchanged; suggested incentivizing underground

parking in such areas to encourage density, especially around Helms Avenue near the Ivy Station and the Expo Line since that area is already becoming denser.

Staff read an eComment that Travis Morgan sent during the meeting. Travis Morgan, a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Member, suggested enabling “pedestrian sheds,” which are amenities within a quarter-mile of residential areas to further promote walkability; asked how the city’s future growth will affect walkability; and explained the value in incorporating small businesses like “mini-markets” and one- to two-chair hair salons in single family neighborhoods to add more walkable amenities for residents.

Leitner thanked the speakers for their comments and explained that the presentation was not a recommendation and that no decision on a particular growth plan or strategy had been decided. Secretary Hefner closed the public comment period and invited comment and discussion from the GPAC Members.

A Member discussed the need for a more nuanced, detailed approach that identifies and demonstrates specific opportunities for change; the need for each GPAC Member to review the presentation material further before making recommendations to the city; how the development scenarios or models for change should be shared with the mobility consultants to develop corresponding mobility scenarios and goals and identify specific triggers that reimagine how people get around.

A Member discussed whether a single family residential preservation strategy is necessary since the State enacted the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance, which effectively eliminates single family land use, and if these areas should instead be called low-density residential; how future discussions should distinguish between “extra high density” buildings like structures with 20 or more stories versus “high density” structures of about 6-8 stories; and asked which change model could help the city grow most.

Leitner explained that the Consultant team wanted feedback from the GPAC on height categories and that the first model shows “no change,” but that model has been affected by ADU

law and is a light solution to adding “missing middle housing”; asked if there’s an interest in increasing residential intensity in the first model; and explained that ADUs are helpful by incrementally adding housing, but they do not increase property ownership opportunities.

Eric Yurkovich brought up Culver City’s height limit and asked Leitner to explain it. Leitner explained that Culver City has a 56-foot height limit and that he did not want to focus on that so the GPAC Members can think about the city’s vision and goals for the future.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff on how a commercial corridor is defined and its relationship to transportation and commercial uses, noting that Ballona Creek can be considered a transportation corridor and that commercial uses that exist along it are currently not accessible from the creek; and the challenges of owning versus renting property.

Leitner stated that most major streets in Los Angeles are fronted with commercial uses, though there are some exceptions; this is generally how land use planning is done; most traditional, planned uses are only accessible by car; not everyone has access to a car and it is not sustainable to plan uses that require owning a car for access; and asked what the GPAC would like to see moving forward.

Yurkovich discussed what property ownership means under land use, how fair housing laws and the Housing Element affect how much land will be available to own or rent, and that there are opportunities to promote ownership through policy change, e.g., inclusionary zoning and financial incentives.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about the potential challenges of the City encouraging affordable housing development along Culver City’s commercial corridors when developers do not get a 100 percent return on investment. Leitner noted that this is not unique to Culver City and that inclusionary zoning and density bonuses offer relief; and that staff will note other strategies the GPAC would like to see.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about the relationship between transportation and customers and if increasing residential density along small scale commercial and adjoining residential land use intensities could generate desirable transportation and mobility outcomes, e.g., walking and bicycling. Leitner explained that it makes sense to consider the relationship between residential density and commercial uses and that commercial uses in residential areas tend to be doing better during the pandemic than those in office areas.

A Member discussed neighborhood character and its historical meaning; environmental and health impact burdens on low-income families living in multi-family residential developments along busy streets; a preference for the second and third models; and encouraging alternate forms of transit when increasing density in residential areas.

A Member discussed the existing spatial relationship between schools and housing, the importance of including an overlay showing where future housing development will occur and to see how accessible they will be to schools, traffic issues around schools, and school to youth ratio in Culver City and how Culver City has more schools than students so many students attend using inter-district permits.

Leitner stated that discussions on growth and alternatives maps need to consider pollution and access to amenities like schools.

A Member discussed making all of the city's corridors as bike friendly as the Ballona Creek; aligning land use changes to particular goals, such as tying housing growth to jobs growth; the importance of thinking about the pace of change; the State's changes on single-family and not liking the hierarchical structure of ADUs and junior ADUs (JADUs); and asked about the traditional width for commercial corridors.

Yurkovich discussed the pace of change, gentrification, and neighborhood displacement.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about the relationship between the models for change maps presented and meeting the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requirements. Leitner explained that RHNA has an eight-year horizon and the GPU has a 25-year horizon, RHNA has rules

on what does and does not count as an eligible housing unit, that staff did not want to focus on RHNA for this meeting because it is technical and the conversation is meant to discuss goals and big picture change, and that the GPU is looking at more than RHNA and is about long-term goals.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about the Department of Housing and Community Development's (HCD) plan for affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH) and how the Housing Element will address it, and that AFFH considers the legacy of segregation in cities and aims to overturn that legacy. Leitner asked if one of the GPU's goals is to consider adding more housing than RHNA requires and the Member agreed.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about balancing the needs of low income residents with the financial needs of the developers, i.e., to consider who's building for whom. Leitner questioned how those needs are balanced if crude, simplified models are used to analyze land use changes rather than leaving things to the market.

A Member appreciated the idea of including more "missing middle" housing stock and creating more ownership opportunities in the future; discussed how achieving missing middle housing is a long-term goal; and suggested adding housing to other parts of Culver City outside of Fox Hills to address the housing crisis.

A Member asked that we explore the definition of a corridor.

A Member outlined a concern with the transition timeline for the land use intensity and suggested including a phasing approach to each of three model maps; echoed the request to define corridors; and how the city's growth will impact public utilities and infrastructure; supports inclusionary zoning; how to provide incentives for developers; and options for affordable housing construction incentives like an affordable housing trust fund and linkage fee.

Leitner explained that the language the team is using may not fit Culver City and can point out whether terms need to be clearer or changed, e.g. neighborhood character, so that the materials reflect Culver City; and the maps are not proposals but are intentionally simple to discuss strategies and tradeoffs.

A Member discussed redefining neighborhood character as people, not the buildings; to whom we make the city accessible, especially with affordable housing; Portland's Residential Infill Program that conditionally links use to affordability; and the City of Los Angeles' Transit Oriented Communities program as a model for inclusionary and density bonus regulations.

Secretary Hefner noted that the presentation slides and models for change maps will be made available on the GPAC website for further review and comment by Members.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about staff posting the maps so GPAC Members can comment on them. Leitner asked that people also explain their preferences for different models for change based on high-level tradeoffs.

A Member discussed the importance of articulating the goals for the city's future before developing the specifics maps of models for change; if the General Plan or the market should drive change; and how to encourage more local amenities, e.g., coffee shops and markets, within walking or biking distance and not just on commercial corridors.

Members discussed how GPAC Members may react differently than most Culver City residents; that the GPAC is diverse; that people are open to change; owning a single family home and having financial barriers to constructing an ADU; and the possibility of the City taking a larger role in supporting financial incentives for single-family homeowners to add units and transition properties into multi-family residential.

Leitner suggested co-ops and discussed opportunities for homeowners to come up with their own solutions.

Yurkovich noted a City of Minneapolis-funded pilot program that expanded single- to multi-family, the importance of



laying out goals around land use and urban design and how they are high level for the current GPU phase, and how the GPU visioning, informed by community conversations, will be posted soon for public comment.

Secretary Hefner noted that the Westside Cities Council of Governments is performing a regional analysis looking at different strategies to creatively fund ADUs, how to easily process ADUs, and AFFH.

Leitner opened the discussion on areas of the city that currently do not have residential and areas that should not be developed for residential in the future.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about how open spaces should not be developed and should be intertwined with other uses and another Member explained how design charrettes can help to envision changes. Leitner explained how that activity can ensure proposals fit an area's context.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about using cemeteries for open space and how schools are typically built horizontally rather than vertically and recommended rethinking school development.

Leitner noted that schools are typically sprawled and asked where "extra" high-rises, e.g., 20-story buildings, should go in Culver City.

Discussion ensued between Members on possible locations, including the Hayden Tract and near the train by Willat and Hoke Streets as locations, to promote a "value capture" mechanism for large scale development that funds mobility solutions. Another Member commented on height limit restrictions and adding an exception or flexibility for development along transit corridors, e.g., reducing parking space requirements and allowing more useable levels.

Leitner thanked all participants for their comments and explained how it would be tied back to the goals of Culver City.

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**Public comment – Items NOT on the agenda (Continued)**

Secretary Hefner opened the discussion for public comment. One speaker, Travis Morgan, commented on the impact of pollution along the I-405 Freeway and how developing high-rises can act as both pollution and noise barriers for existing single-family residential near the freeway and the possibility of incorporating a percentage cap of multi-family residential development growth in single-family residential land use in lieu of and “all or nothing” scenario.

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**Items from Members/Staff/Consultants**

Secretary Hefner noted that City Council approved the modified GPU Engagement Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including a story bank and volunteer communications network; City Council directed that GPAC Members do not need to be Culver City residents if there is a strong community tie; Council Member Lee will appoint a new GPAC Member to fill Sierra Smith’s vacancy after her resignation at the October 26 meeting so there may be a new Member at the November GPAC meeting; the technical advisory committees (TACs) are almost finalized and an orientation is scheduled for October 27; Serena Wright-Black, Assistant City Manager, will update City Council next Monday on the results of the public safety review effort including final report of survey; and that all previous GPAC meeting videos are posted on the City’s website.

Eric Yurkovich explained that the next November GPAC meeting will focus on mobility and transportation with team members from Nelson\Nygaard presenting on existing mobility conditions, new innovative strategies possible for the GPU process, and issues from prior meetings regarding the intersections of mobility, equity, and public safety.

Secretary Hefner invited others to share and there were no further comments.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 9:00 P.M., the General Plan Advisory Committee adjourned to a regular meeting on November 12, 2020, at 6:00 P.M.

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Ashley Hefner  
SECRETARY of the Culver City General Plan Advisory Committee  
Culver City, California

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

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Frances Rosenau  
CHAIR of the Culver City General Plan Advisory Committee  
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.

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Jeremy Green  
CITY CLERK

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Date