

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

March 13, 2024  
7:00 p.m.

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

Chair Jones called the regular meeting of the Culver City Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers and via Webex.

Present: Stephen Jones, Chair  
Nancy Barba, Commissioner  
Jennifer Carter, Commissioner  
Darrel Menthe, Commissioner

Absent: Andrew Reilman, Vice Chair

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Commissioner Barba led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda**

Chair Jones invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, indicated that no requests to speak had been received.

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**Receipt of Correspondence**

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: BARBA, CARTER, JONES, MENTHE  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: REILMAN

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**Consent Calendar**

Item C-1

**PC: Approval of Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2024**

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF JANUARY 24, 2024.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: BARBA, CARTER, JONES, MENTHE  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: REILMAN

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**Order of the Agenda**

No changes were made.

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**Action Items**

Item A-1

**PC - Discussion of City-wide Density Bonus Ordinance Update**

Jose Mendivil, Associate Planner, provided a summary of the material of record.

Jerry Hittleman, Rincon Consultants, summarized new housing legislation; discussed state density bonuses depending on the number of affordable units provided; AB1287; he provided an example of how AB1287 works in turning a project on a one-acre site from 35 units to 131 units that include 20 income

restricted units. He then discussed the process; timeline; and community input regarding the Density Bonus Update. He then summarized next steps such as preparing changes; implementing changes; and adopting the updated ordinance.

Jose Mendivil, Associate Planner, reported that Culver City had met 71% of the RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Assessment) allocation during the last cycle; discussed recommendations on meeting numbers for the current cycle; streamlining development; compliance with state law; clarifying density bonus procedures and processes; expanding eligibility for housing bonuses; and increasing the workforce threshold.

Chair Jones invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, indicated that Jack Walter had signed up to speak, but could not be located in Council Chambers or online.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding being more generous with the recommendations; expanding the community benefit program beyond mixed-use; background on the process; exploration of a City-wide affordable housing overlay; encouraging affordability with density bonuses; expanding to all possible residential uses in Recommendation 1; providing the opportunity for affordability in all neighborhoods; JADUs (Junior Affordable Dwelling Units) and ADUs; multi-generational households; opportunities for providing density; community benefit programs; workforce housing; mixed-use of former commercial properties; height limits in residential zones; application of state density bonuses; state law requiring a minimum number of five units to take advantage of bonuses; the ability to recommend pursuit of all available resources; evaluating the feasibility of increasing affordability production for all options; clarification that conducting an economic feasibility study is not within the scope of the contract with the consultant; meeting RHNA numbers; a study commissioned to look at affordable housing development in Culver City; and preliminary findings indicating the more incentives provided, the more likely affordable units will be built based on the new recommended General Plan and zoning changes.

Additional discussion ensued between Jerry Hittleman, staff, and Commissioners regarding Recommendation 2; demographics for community engagement; housing professionals that responded to the survey; community support for increasing the

amount of affordable housing throughout the City; voluntary demographic information provided at the joint General Plan and Density Bonus meetings available on the project website for the General Plan; bringing community benefit to the community; the feeling that housing developers would know whether provisions go far enough to create more affordable housing opportunities; feedback from the focus group with developers indicating support for going further than state law; other cities that have allowed for 5% more density bonus than state law allows; ADU encouragement and affordability in San Diego; frameworks within residential areas where densities can occur; requested concessions; flexibility with concessions for projects that provide an additional level of affordability; defining and clarifying options; type of concessions vs. the number of concessions allowed; lack of developer participation at the current meeting; and whether proposed changes would make a difference.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Recommendation 3; providing transparent access to developers for everything they can combine; administrative review; site plan review; amending so that the density portion is always done administratively to be consistent with state law; limiting discretion of the Planning Commission and the City Council with regard to density; moving the site plan review to be administrative; benefits to the developer of eliminating the only chance the public has to talk about developments going in next to their properties; benefits of allowing people to express themselves; allowing residents to be heard at the City Council cell phone tower hearing; the current requirement for at least one community meeting for site plan review with projects that are administratively approved; current work being done by the City Council subcommittee and staff to ensure that public notification and community meeting policy adheres to state law; a community meeting with HCD (Housing and Community Development) on March 28 on key housing streamlining legislation; providing a forum for community input without a discretionary review process; using the total number of units as a threshold; clarification that the City would always request that projects meet with surrounding communities; requiring meetings; administrative vs. Planning Commission review; compliance; community meetings vs. public hearings; an observation that the more bonuses are given, the larger the projects are likely to be; public concern with larger projects; and assuaging public concerns.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Recommendation 4; encouraging all types of housing in the City; concern with increasing the percentage of the county's average median income; providing housing opportunities for everyone; average household income in Culver City; comparing income levels to housing costs; people that do not qualify for affordable housing, but cannot afford to live in the City; expanding the workforce housing range to 140%; comparisons with other cities; concern with taking away benefit from people who need it most; incentivizing state affordable levels if developers are providing workforce housing; the inability to force a developer to provide state affordable levels; creation of a workforce housing only development; and expanding the number of people who can apply.

Jerry Hittleman, Rincon Consultants, noted that the recommendations meant to increase the amount of workforce housing and very low- and low-income housing; discussed making more housing available; and efforts to be inclusive of everyone with the changes.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding interest in 100% affordable projects; concern with shifting units from those with lower income to those with higher income; and adding to the overall housing supply.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Recommendation 5; Culver City as a high opportunity city in terms of jobs, schools, and access to mass transit; providing more creative density bonuses; improving mass transit; addressing the housing/jobs imbalance; incentivizing adding affordable housing with additional bonuses; an emailed suggestion to complement state density bonuses in a progressive manner; attracting developers by allowing more incentives than Los Angeles; City Council direction on an affordable housing overlay in 2022; allowing a developer to build a mix of moderate and lower income units in areas where the zoning allows less than 5 units; having new apartments in neighborhoods that are not going to have any affordable housing built; affordable housing developments in small lots in smaller neighborhoods; the basis for analysis; examination of incentives at all density levels; 100% affordable state density bonus law; inclusionary zoning; and application to smaller lots.

Jerry Hittleman, Rincon Consultants, discussed other cities with similar situations; difficulty for smaller projects with affordable housing to pencil out without the inclusionary requirements; and developers that buy up multiple smaller lots to make a larger project.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding references to the use of  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre lots in the study; obtaining enough land to make the project feasible; encouraging projects when there are not opportunities for consolidation; finding ways to open up other neighborhoods in the City to affordable housing; making lots even smaller with SB9; different types of construction; going from 1 unit to 4 units on small lots; research into the smallest lot size used for affordable housing projects; the current zoning code for mixed-use requiring that lots be 5,000 square feet; the high cost of land; creating opportunity for density; the need for more housing; determining the feasibility of affordable units on small lots; and profitability for commercial vs. for affordable housing developments.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Recommendation 6; bringing attention to the Los Angeles Executive Directive; affordable housing projects created without public funding; the importance clearly defining bonuses, concessions, and waivers for clear implementation to encourage development; Culver City as surrounded by Los Angeles; and providing consistency with other cities.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Recommendation 7; studies indicating housing density provides greater reduction in energy use than can be achieved with energy technology alone; addressing climate change; intention; policy choices to incentivize certain types of housing; concern with a city full of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) buildings and no affordable housing; layering bonuses and incentives; providing a mix of housing and commercial on commercial corridors; whether incentives for ground floor or commercial are necessary; bonuses that allow for housing on commercial corridors; reduced setbacks to allow building to the property line with greenery, sunlight, and community inside; combining elements; creating more space by allowing for more density; and ensuring that more housing is being built.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Recommendation 7; lack of caps with state density law except for 100% affordable housing; providing some control on how much height increase above the height limit that someone can ask for; lots likely to be impacted; concern with limiting providing housing with a height cap; concern with disincentivizing 100% affordable housing by providing a height concession for DOBI developments that do not provide 100% affordable housing; public attention on height; addressing issues on a case-by-case basis; generally requested height increases as a concession; potential scenarios; providing scenarios so that everyone is clear; other cities with maximum heights on concessions; providing flexibility for projects that need a little bit more; and allowing for staff discretion.

Jerry Hittleman, Rincon Consultants, discussed waivers.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding waivers for a small amount of increase; highlighting the cap; clarifying height restrictions; and encouragement to make the process easy.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Executive Directive 1; concern that there are not more developers present at the meeting; concern that developers are not interested in Culver City; affordable or mixed-use projects in process; and outreach.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission:

Jack Walter asserted that small projects were not feasible; discussed prices paid for land by developers; promoting the production of affordable housing; competition; allowing larger projects; costs to develop projects; small margins; projects that get sold at auction or go back to the bank; materials; and he felt that most projects would be in the 7-8 story range.

Treven Goldsmith echoed comments made by the previous speaker; noted requests for feedback from developers regarding incentives and concessions; discussed feasibility; margins; and he indicated that developers were listening.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding state density bonuses; complementary bonusus; community benefit; requiring that affordability be perpetual;

feasibility; the problem of expiring affordability covenants; the percentage of affordable units in the 5700 Hannum project and length of time to achieve the required numbers at that rate; difficulty obtaining funding for the 100% affordable project on Sepulveda; getting creative to achieve more 100% affordable projects; working to increase feasibility; federal funding; the importance of addressing the issue; and insufficient grants available.

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Item A-2

**PC - (1) Presentation and Comments Regarding Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Advance Planning Division and Current Planning Division Work Plan Accomplishments and Proposed FY 2024-2025 Work Plans; (2) Authorization to Transmit to City Council**

Emily Stadnicki, Current Planning Manager, introduced the presentation and discussed Current Planning accomplishments during fiscal year 2023-2024 and the 2024-2025 work plan.

Troy Evangelho, Advance Planning Manager, discussed Advance Planning accomplishments during fiscal year 2023-2024 and the 2024-2025 work plan.

Emily Stadnicki, Current Planning Manager, indicated that staff recommended the Commission transmit the accomplishments and work plans to the City Council.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding appreciation to staff for their efforts; the application for the HCD pro-housing designation; congratulations to staff; the amount of work done by staff that is not seen; online applications; and virtual plan checks and virtual appointments.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION TRANSMIT FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 ADVANCE PLANNING DIVISION AND CURRENT PLANNING DIVISION WORK PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROPOSED FY 2024-2025 WORK PLANS TO THE CITY COUNCIL.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: BARBA, CARTER, JONES, MENTHE  
NOES: NONE



ABSENT: REILMAN

Chair Jones received clarification that no public comment had been received for the item.

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**Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)**

Chair Jones invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, reported that no additional requests to speak had been received

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**Items from Planning Commissioners/Staff**

Emily Stadnicki, Current Planning Manager, indicated that it was likely that the second meeting in March would be cancelled noting that the workshop on subdivisions would be held on April 24, 2024.

Mark Muenzer, Planning and Development Director, reported that the City Council would be meeting next week to hear work plans from various departments with the Planning Commission presentation expected on March 20, 2024.

Commissioner Barba received clarification that the public workshop with HCD was planned for March 28 and would be virtual and open to the public.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 9:03 p.m., the Culver City Planning Commission adjourned to a regular meeting to be held on April 24, 2024.

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RUTH MARTIN DEL CAMPO  
SECRETARY of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED April 24, 2024

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STEPHEN JONES  
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.

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Jeremy Bocchino  
CITY CLERK

29/APRIL/2024  
Date