

OFFICIAL MINUTES

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL AND
PLANNING COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

January 27, 2021
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Mayor Fisch called the special joint meeting of the City Council and the Planning Commission to order at 7:09 p.m. in the Mike Balkman Chambers at City Hall via Virtual Webex.

Present: Alex Fisch, Mayor
Daniel Lee, Vice Mayor
Göran Eriksson, Council Member
Yasmine-Imani McMorris, Council Member
Albert Vera, Council Member

Present: David Voncannon, Chair
Dana Sayles, Vice Chair
Nancy Barba, Commissioner
Ed Ogosta, Commissioner
Andrew Reilman, Commissioner

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Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Fisch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Community Announcements by City Council Members/Information Items from Staff

Jeremy Green, City Clerk, announced that applications were being accepted for vacant positions on Commissions, Boards and Committees, and she invited those interested to visit culvercity.org/serve noting that the official application period for all bodies begins in March/April with appointments made in June, and service beginning on July 1, 2021.

Mayor Fisch asked everyone to boost the message and encourage people to apply.

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Joint Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

Mayor Fisch invited public comment.

Amanda Mayeda was called to speak but did not respond.

Jeremy Green, City Clerk, explained procedures for making public comment.

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Receipt and Filing of Correspondence

Mayor Fisch reported that 15 pages of correspondence had been received.

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR SAYLES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND CITY COUNCIL RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Action Items

Item A-1

Joint City Council and Planning Commission Workshop to Discuss and Provide Comments on General Plan Update Land Use Strategies

Ashley Hefner Hoang, Advance Planning Manager, provided a summary of the material of record; introduced Planning staff; and discussed the Community Workshop held earlier in the day.

Eric Yurkovich, Raimi + Associates, reported that they were leading the General Plan consultant team for the City; provided an overview of the General Update process; discussed the purpose

of the General Plan; state mandates; engagement milestones to date; community vision; core values; and the revised draft vision and guiding principles for the General Plan.

Martin Leitner, Perkins & Will, indicated that they were serving as the Urban Design Partner and Advisor for the General Plan Update; discussed the urban design analysis; existing conditions; the physical design of the City; goals and aspirations as a City; the need for more housing opportunities; neighborhoods and corridors; parcel scale; and defining features of the City that have a major influence on the physical structure of the City.

Eric Yurkovich, Raimi + Associates, discussed the existing General Plan; alternatives to the General Plan land use map; existing conditions; work done to date; establishing the policy direction for every parcel in the community; state requirements; density and intensity of uses; understanding tradeoffs with different patterns of growth; policies and programs to support the future land use map; the process to create alternatives; work with the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC); land use strategies; evaluation of land use alternatives; baseline conditions; environmental considerations; usage demand; changes due to the pandemic; the housing market; housing growth vs. jobs growth; neighborhoods most affected by shocks and stressors; the Housing Element Update; Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers; and identifying more housing in the community.

Martin Leitner, Perkins & Will, discussed different land use strategies and models for change in the City; the usual approach of taking a large portion of the City off the table and concentrating growth onto limited land resources; creation of Missing Middle housing; existing place types; strategies for different areas and usage; land use intensity scale; different models for change; dispersed growth; identification of who the housing growth is for; the importance of scale; support for small developments across the City rather than very large developments in one area; diversity of opportunity for housing; allowing increased housing near transit; the importance of resident health when designating areas for new development; and non-housing targets.

Eric Yurkovich, Raimi + Associates, discussed their request for feedback and ideas.

Mayor Fisch invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the City Council and Planning Commission:

Jeff Schwartz expressed support for the recommendations of Culver City for More Homes (cc4mh.org); discussed the small town feel of Culver City; jobs and companies in the City; Culver City as a suburb of Los Angeles; dependence on the economic and cultural vitality of surrounding cities; previous exclusionary housing policies and their effects on the community; and he quoted Fran Liebowitz: "Pretend it's a city."

Joshua Cohen discussed adjustments with housing diversity and inclusion; expressed concern with developers building and taking money out of the City; and he wanted the focus to be placed on helping Culver City residents develop projects more easily.

Elias Platte-Berme voiced strong support for pro-housing land use policies; felt that more needed to be done to support people from all backgrounds and income levels; supported legalizing additional multi-family housing across the City; endorsed all the recommendations of Culver City for More Homes; and he felt the General Plan Update was an important opportunity to create more affordable housing, provide more access, and to support renters.

Patrick Meighan, Culver City for More Homes, discussed insufficient planning in the last update; incoming workers who priced-out existing residents; the failure to build new housing; he asserted that housing could not be equitable and diverse if half the town was set aside for wealthy single-family homeowners; he wanted to see gentle rezoning throughout the City; discussed the actions of Sacramento; and he wanted to see a General Plan that supported efforts of Culver City to be equitable, progressive and sustainable.

Michelle Weiner expressed support for the aims of Culver City for More Homes and for the consultant presentation; discussed the need to ensure housing opportunities for all income levels, all walks of life and for unhoused neighbors; the recent City Council approval of density bonuses for mixed use development; she felt that allowing four units on all parcels across the City would do much to address the Missing Middle; and she encouraged everyone to learn more about Culver City for More Homes at cc4mh.org.

Disa Lindgren, Culver City for More Homes, provided background on herself; expressed support for the diverse progressive

community; discussed the value of building an inclusive and respectful community; the need to reimagine Public Safety; impacts of global climate change; significant housing challenges; racial and economic justice; the need to address the racist history of the City by changing policies and addressing the infiltration of white supremacy; unhoused neighbors; people being pushed out of their homes; commuting; she expressed support for all recommendations put forth by Culver City for More Homes; and she thanked the City Council for their leadership.

Lisa Marie Desai was called to speak but was not in the meeting.

Joy Kecken expressed support for the work of the City; discussed racism and work still to be done; and she hoped to see recognition of the history of Culver City as a "Sundown Town".

Roderick Hall was called to speak but did not respond.

Christine Anderson was called but was not present at the meeting.

Jared Morgan was called to speak but did not respond.

Jennifer Carter was called to speak but did not respond.

Ken Mand, GPAC Member, indicated that he was speaking on behalf of himself; felt it was important to rely on the GPAC to dig into specifics of the recommendations, models and alternatives being developed by the consultants; and he wanted to make sure that mobility solutions were implemented in advance of, and in conjunction with, housing goals.

Kelly Kent, Culver City for More Homes, thanked the City, staff and consultants for their work and presentation; provided background on herself; discussed an art teacher in the City who had to move an hour away due to difficulties finding housing in the City; expressed support for increasing affordable options; equity; concern with losing good people to other areas with more affordable housing; and she expressed support for the recommendations of Culver City for More Homes.

Mark Lipman discussed concern with providing truly affordable housing in the community; disagreements about zoning changes; funding for groups like California YIMBY and Abundant Housing LA by the high tech industry that is moving into the community; the slant of upzoning to create more market rate housing for

rich people while nothing is done to provide affordable housing for people who need it; supply and demand; creating a vacancy tax to provide more affordable housing and more available units overall; landlords and corporations keeping housing off the market to artificially inflate rents; creative strategies to provide more affordable housing that doesn't take the opportunity for housing and put it into a market situation; and he proposed creating public housing with a full and open conversation on the matter.

Roderick Hall discussed other jurisdictions having similar conversations about housing; the need to rethink land use; addressing the housing and homeless crisis; the need for several solutions; pricing; target market for the homes; the need to protect those worried about losing their homes as well as to get those on the street into homes; people who have left due to COVID; and providing homes for newcomers as well as for long-term residents.

Jared Morgan provided background on himself; felt it important that the City provide more affordable housing; discussed the need to provide housing for workers; keeping the City diverse; and he noted that housing was an equity issue.

Scott Kecken acknowledged the complexity of the issue; expressed support for the recommendations of Culver City for More Homes, discussed his experiences as a renter in the City; housing insecurity; rent burden; finding a pathway to stay in the City; and he urged the City Council to be bold and creative, to view the process through the lens of equity and justice, and to include components like ownership for people who were excluded from owning.

James MacGaffey expressed support for Culver City for More Homes; wanted to see more public engagement in the process; encouraged High School students to participate; expressed concern that the City is becoming a City only for the wealthy; discussed people excluded due to the racist past of the City; appreciation for the comments of Dr. Kent about teachers being unable to afford to live in the City; the need for more affordable multifamily housing all across the City; and help for people to realize the dream of having a home.

Commissioner Barba reported being a member of Culver City for More Homes, and she reassured the public that she was present to listen to the subject matter experts, staff, advisors and the public.

Discussion ensued between the consultants and Commissioners regarding factors that inform risk of displacement; differences between incremental and moderate densification; number of housing units created in different scenarios; clarification regarding whether changes were preferred for the future housing mix or for the established housing mix; single-family choices covered by existing stock; number of people included in the survey referenced in the report; conducting a survey with larger participation; including those who are generally not civically engaged in the conversation; including the preservationists in the process; broadening outreach to engage a wider portion of the community; the virtual process; social media; established methods; ensuring that a representative sample is received; focus groups; lowering barriers; diversity of engagement activities; those who fought against mansionization; the RHNA process; the ten-fold increase in the City's allocation; realism vs. idealism; changing laws around the Housing Element; encouraging housing at all income levels; addressing issues from the previous RHNA cycle; implementation strategies; previous efforts to protect single-family housing; preservation of single-family homes while acknowledging the need for additional housing; concern with upzoning every zone in the City; support for diversification; looking at use that determines a neighborhood; new ways to mix use and scramble notions of traditional zoning; Jackson Market; current planning policies; allowing existing commercial buildings on Sepulveda to become housing; thinking outside the box; specific strategies to achieve the general goals; the current public process for small scale development; removing procedural barriers to allow for additional development; focusing on housing where needed; tax credit allocation; creating opportunities for people to live closer to where there is access to services; support for densifying the corridors; neighborhoods more suited to take additional housing due to proximity to schools, parks and shopping; incremental growth opportunities in single-family neighborhoods; the balance between providing choice and allowing preservation of single-family housing; allowing duplexes and triplexes; the importance of size and scale; creating smaller living opportunities; building two homes on a lot vs. building one and an ADU; inclusionary housing; incentive-based programs; the need for permanent supportive housing; transitional zoning; incremental strategies; modular housing; innovation in the housing industry; housing as an issue in the entire region; achieving housing in an equitable way; legalizing the creation of more homes; costs associated with the entitlement process; and in-lieu fees.

Discussion ensued between Council Members regarding the GPAC process; the connection between housing and public health; the legacy and intentionality of single-family zoning to be racist; the fact that only 1/3 of homeowners are People of Color (POC); previous policy decisions for restrictive covenants; ensuring a space for people at every stage of their lives; health impacts of housing on transit corridors; the population living in dense developments; the importance of having the community reflect the diversity that they say they value; abolishing parking minimums; supporting renters' rights; affordable housing; considering the Ballona Bike Path as a transit corridor; and consideration of what can be in 2045.

Additional discussion ensued between Council Members regarding concern with painting the City with one broad brush; the need for housing; support for teachers in the community; working to make Culver City a model community; public/private partnerships; benefits for everyone in the community; businesses that no longer require brick and mortar sites; unintended consequences with broad up-zoning; advantages for developers who will come in, build and leave; providing ownership opportunities in whatever is built; concern with corporations taking advantage of up-zoning; concern with making the next generation into renters; the economic downturn in 2008; changes to single-family ownership in the United States since 2008, with 1/3 being occupied by renters; concern with playing into the trend of corporations buying and renting out homes with up-zoning; increased density with ADUs and JADUs allowed by state law; narrow streets and utilities; mansionization; clear sentiment expressed by residents regarding keeping neighborhood character; changes to behavior as a result of the pandemic; conversion of unused office buildings over time; support for mixed use and building along commercial corridors; incremental zoning; support for building middle housing with ownership potential; unintended consequences; and concern with selling out the town to Wall Street investors.

Further discussion ensued between Council Members regarding fear around allowing different types of development in R-1 neighborhoods; concern with placing too much focus on ownership; the legacy of racism and favoring white people to the detriment of POC; streamlining the permitting process; the need for anti-gentrification and anti-displacement policies; alternative land uses; the public land survey; the focus on affordable housing and permanent supportive housing; interpretations of the Public Land Survey; enhancements; potential collaborative development;

constructing a policy encapsulating the use of public land; precedent; open air parking lots, big lot stores, and the mall; alternative development options; redevelopment; crafting a cohesive policy for large parcels; addressing RHNA numbers; the Cumulus project on La Cienega that drained affordability requirements out of the project; opportunities for density; ensuring equity; increased traffic with development on corridors; support for even distribution of new housing; government as a segregating force in housing; creative policies for adaptive reuse; the Creative Economy; production companies coming in to Culver City for in-person work; burdening those at the lowest income levels with the longest commutes; exploring building on public lands; having plans in place for when shopping centers, malls and big box stores change use; providing incentives; and ensuring equity.

Additional discussion ensued between Council Members regarding social, financial and psychological benefits for cities that are more dense; dense cities ranked as happiest while achieving affordability; consideration of the entire City; change happening all the time; functional down-zoning; explicitly segregationist zoning; ways to make neighborhoods exclusive; forcing a high price floor on housing; disaggregating land price from housing price; multi-family housing as paying less per household for the same land; anti-growth strategies; evidence that market rate development decreases rents and displacement risk, and below-market housing reduces displacement; reduced incidences of homelessness with increased vacancy rates and increased affordability; household overcrowding; naturally cheap housing; different options available; policy within the control of local government that will have the greatest impact on climate change; empty retail space with improperly placed mixed use projects; the importance of thinking for the future; support for things in the City now that would not currently be allowed; public services; increased land prices; non-conforming uses; changes as a result of the pandemic; unintended consequences of policy; economic reality; competing with corporations that are buying up housing by building more housing; ADUs; support for flexibility; providing ownership for those who want it; support for the actions of Sacramento; allowing triplexes everywhere; deeply held aesthetic references; values and principles; the current model as unsustainable; and the inevitability of a denser future with different mobility.

Further discussion ensued between the consultants, staff, Commissioners and Council Members regarding requested input from

the Commission and Council; appreciation for the discussion; participation of the GPAC; value of the joint session; a suggestion for an additional session when the implementation strategies come out; facilitating greater participation by creating a hybrid model of online and in-person meetings when the pandemic is over; and next steps in the process.

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Public Comment - Items Not on the Agenda

Mayor Fisch invited public comment.

No public comment was received.

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Items from Council Members/Commissioners

None.

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Council Member Requests to Agendize Future Items

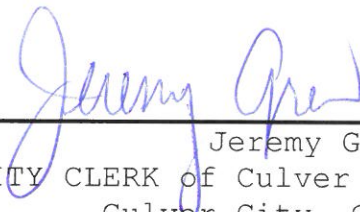
None.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 10:44 p.m., the City Council and Planning Commission adjourned the meeting.

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Jeremy Green
CITY CLERK of Culver City, California
Culver City, California



ALEX FISCH
MAYOR of Culver City, California



DAVID VONCANNON
CHAIR of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Culver City, California

Date: 22 February 2021