



Planning Commission

1 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**
2 **January 21, 2026**

3 The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

4 **Location:** North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709

5 **1. ROLL CALL:**

6 **Commissioners Present:** Emily Marthinsen, Jeff Vincent, Christina Oatfield, Savlan Hauser,
7 Angela Wang, Alfred Twu (Arrived 6:40 pm)

8 **Commissioners Absent:**, Darrell Owens, Blaine Merker, Charles Kahn

9 **Staff Present:** Secretary Justin Horner, Clerk Faye Messner, Liza McNulty

10
11 **2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

12 The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of
13 xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-
14 chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the
15 sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great
16 importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin
17 our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the
18 documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound,
19 and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's
20 residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen
21 land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating
22 the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also
23 recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay
24 communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan
25 Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land
26 acknowledgement.

27 **3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA: 1**

28 **4. ORDER OF AGENDA:** No change

29 **5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT:**

- 30 • Chair Marthinsen reported on:
31 • Her correspondence with the Chair of the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission.
32 The Chairs are looking for ways to connect on parks, open space and urban planning.
33 • Participation in the Vision Zero Advisory Committee. This committee engaged Berkeley
34 Commissions on the status of the 2020 Vision Zero plan.

- 35 • Proposed future discussion on the role of the Planning Commission and objective design
36 guidelines.
- 37 • Continued informal discussion of Planning Commission goals with fellow Commissioners.
38

39 **6. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS**

- 40 • None

41 **7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 42 • None

43 **8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 44 • **Upcoming PC Meeting Items:**

- 45 • **February:**
- 46 • Corridors Small Business policies and ground floor ODS,
- 47 • Density Bonus and the C-AC,
- 48 • Chair and Vice Chair Elections
- 49 • **March:**
- 50 • Safety-EJ Discussion
- 51 • San Pablo Specific Plan
- 52 • SLTE 2026
- 53 • 5th Street GP and Zoning Amendments
- 54 • **April:**
- 55 • SB 79 and AB 893 implementation

- 56 • **Upcoming City Council Items:**

- 57 • **January 20:**
- 58 • ADU Condos
- 59 • Program 32 and Design Review
- 60 • **February 24:**
- 61 • Undergrounding of Transformers
- 62 • **March 10:**
- 63 • SB 684 Implementation

64 **9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

65 Motion/Second (Vincent/Hauser) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from
66 December 3, 2025.

67 Ayes: Marthinsen, Vincent, Oatfield, Twu, Hauser and Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None.
68 Absent: Owens, Kahn, Merker (6-0-0-3). Motion passed.
69

70 **10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

71 **A. Action: Pier-Ferry Project Use Permit Application**

75 Liza McNulty, Capital Improvement Program Manager (Parks, Recreation and Waterfront
76 Department) presented the Use Permit Application for the Berkeley Pier-Ferry project.
77 Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including but not
78 limited to: the Planning Commission's role in the Use Permit approval, future transportation
79 needs of the area, other uses on the Pier and in the Marina, the importance of the Ferry as an
80 emergency transportation option, connecting to San Francisco to support tourism and Berkeley
81 businesses, impacts to and connections with BART and AC Transit, and the importance of
82 reinvigoration of the Waterfront and Marina.

83 **Public Comments: 5**

84 Motion/Second (Vincent/Twu) to approve staff recommendation in Attachment 1 to approve
85 the User Permit for the Berkeley Pier Ferry project.
86
87 Ayes: Marthinsen, Vincent, Oatfield, Twu, Hauser and Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None.
88 Absent: Owens, Kahn, Merker (6-0-0-3). Motion passed.
89

90 **B. Public Hearing: Amendments to BMC Title 23 (Zoning) to update the regulation of**
91 **Nonconforming Lot Coverage, Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and Density for Residential Uses in**
92 **the Residential Multi-Unit 1 (R-1), Residential Multi-Unit 2 (R-2), Residential Multi-Unit 2A**
93 **(R-2A), and Mixed Use-Residential (MU-R) Zoning Districts.**

94 Assistant Planner Faye Mingham presented proposed amendments to BMC Title 23 (Zoning)
95 Section 23.324.050 to update the regulation of nonconforming lot coverage, FAR and density for
96 residential uses in the R1, R-2, R-2A, & MU-R zoning districts. Commissioners took public
97 comment, asked questions and made comments including but not limited to: clarifying the intent
98 of Middle Housing development standards and defining nonconforming structures versus
99 alterations.

100 **Public Comments: 1**

101 Motion/Second (Vincent/Wang) to close the public comment.
102
103 Ayes: Marthinsen, Vincent, Oatfield, Twu, Hauser and Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None.
104 Absent: Owens, Kahn, Merker (6-0-0-3). Motion passed.
105

106 Motion/Second (Vincent/Oatfield) to approve staff's recommendation with the addition of
107 language from 23.324.050(D)(3)(b) to ensure nonconformities are not increased or exacerbated.
108
109 Ayes: Marthinsen, Vincent, Oatfield, Twu, Hauser and Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None.
110 Absent: Owens, Kahn, Merker (6-0-0-3). Motion passed.

111 **C. Nominations for February Elections**

112 Commissioners put forward nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair election.

113 Motions/Seconds for Chair and Vice Chair:
114 1. (Hauser/Vincent) to nominate Commissioner Marthinsen for Chair and Commissioner
115 Hauser for Vice Chair.
116

117 **Public Comments: 0**

118 **11. INFORMATION ITEMS**

119 None

120 **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

121

122 **13. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 6:30 PM.**

123 **14. ADJOURN**

124 Motions/Second/Carried (Twu/Oatfield) to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm.
125
126 Ayes: Marthinsen, Vincent, Oatfield, Twu, Hauser and Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None.
127 Absent: Owens, Kahn, Merker (6-0-0-3). Motion passed.
128

129 **Members of the public in attendance: 16**

130 **Public Speakers: 6**

131 **Length of the meeting: 1 hour and 40 minutes**