



DRAFT MINUTES
CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR AGENDA

6:00 p.m., Thursday, May 5, 2016

Council Chambers – City Hall – 300 Forest Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA

1. Call to Order - 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Robin Aeschliman, Bill Bluhm (Vice-Chair), Mark Chakwin (Secretary), Bill Fredrickson (Chair), Don Murphy, Nicholas Smith

Commissioners Absent: Jeanne Byrne

3. Approval of Minutes

a. April 7, 2016

Recommended Action: Approve minutes as presented.

On a motion by Commissioner Aeschliman, seconded by Commissioner Smith, the Commission voted to approve the minutes as presented. The Commission voted 5-0-1-1 (Commissioner Byrne absent, and Commissioner Smith abstain). Motion passed.

4. Public Comments

a. Written Communications

- On March 30, 2016, Ms. Jane Haines submitted an e-mail and commented about the City's website and direct communication with public officials.

b. Oral Communications

The following members of the public spoke:

- Ms. Cynthia Garfield expressed concerns of the Short Term Rental Ordinance's lack of density restrictions along Ocean View Boulevard, and requested the topic be discussed in the future at a Planning Commission meeting.
- Ms. Lisa Cianni discussed the land habitat sensitivity map and research with U.S. Geological Service Emeritus Scientist Dr. Ed Clifton on the Pacific Grove coastline. She supports developing an effective retreat strategy for coastal erosion, and recommends no further armoring. She noted that existing engineered riprap along the Pacific Grove coast is not comparable to the natural coastline. Ms. Cianni stated that the Local Coastal Program should protect the City's unique coastal resources to the best possible degree.

5. Items to be Continued or Withdrawn

None.

6. Consent Agenda

None.

7. Presentations

None.

8. Regular Agenda

a. Lighthouse Avenue Streetscape Concept

Description: Receive a presentation of the Lighthouse Avenue Streetscape Concept.

Zoning/Land Use: C-D, C-1-T, and R-4

CEQA Status: Does not constitute a “Project” per CEQA Guidelines

Staff Reference: Mark Brodeur, Community and Economic Development Director

Recommended Action: Receive a presentation by the Community Development Director and make an “approval in concept” of the Lighthouse Avenue Streetscape Concept to be forwarded to other boards and commission before taking the concept before City Council.

Mark Brodeur, Director of the Community and Economic Development Department, provided a presentation.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment. The following members of the public spoke:

- Mr. Anthony Cianni commended the proposal. He expressed support for the historic status of the main street area, recommended that it be considered under California’s Main Street program, and recommended soliciting public input. His comments reiterated and expanded on his May 4, 2016 e-mail to City Staff and the Planning Commission.
- Ms. Sally Moore supported the proposed diagonal split for parking in both directions on Lighthouse. She expressed concern that the proposed pedestrian safety island could affect the ability for trucks to turn. She inquired about retrofitting existing lighting to LED lighting, and provided input on the bench selection and bioswales.

The Chair closed the floor to public comments.

The Commission discussed the item.

Commissioner Chakwin commended the concept’s goals, discussed alternative bicycle racks, expressed concern that Belgian Blocks might be slippery during rainy seasons, and suggested adding a LED crossing light in downtown crossing zones. He complimented the proposed pedestrian safety zones, and suggested considering placing a stop sign at the intersection of Forest and Lighthouse Avenues.

Commissioner Smith commended the proposal and looks forward to seeing the project develop.

Commissioner Murphy commended the effort, inquired about the Main Street Program, and noted the importance of improving the Forest Hill neighborhood. Director Brodeur provided input on the Main Street America Program, stated that Highway 68 in Forest Hill is a state effort, and emphasized the importance of a vibrant downtown.

Commissioner Bluhm noted that lighting needs to be significantly improved to protect pedestrian safety. He shared his observation that currently, tourists thoroughly enjoy the Pacific Grove downtown. He also suggested placing a stop sign at the intersection of Forest and Lighthouse Avenues.

Commissioner Aeschliman noted that the current LED lights from signage at Lighthouse Avenue's Shell Gas Station do not match downtown. She stated the need for maintaining the City's medians, and requested considering a low-maintenance alternative under the Cypress trees. She recommended a different and creative approach for public seating, and expressed support for the concept of having a town square. Director Brodeur suggested a speed table or rumble strips as an alternative to a traditional stop sign.

Chair Fredrickson expressed concern of drivers disregarding stop signs and visibility of pedestrians on crosswalks. He requested consistent interpretation of driving regulations from police officers. He commended speed bumps, street narrowing devices, and rain gutters on Shell Avenue as effective methods to slow vehicles. He stated a preference for roundabouts instead of stop signs, and commended the proposal.

9. Reports of PC Subcommittees

The Building Standards sub-committee will meet on Tuesday, May 17th, 2016 at 9:30am to discuss off-street parking, lot mergers, and Ocean View Boulevard lots.

10. Reports of PC Members

Commissioner Aeschliman inquired about the City's permitting process and neighbor complaints. Director Broder noted that both City Building and Planning Staff are working on these specific issues.

Commissioner Murphy inquired about the permitting process for short-term rentals in the Asilomar Dunes neighborhood and questioned whether they would be permitted at all after 2018. Director Brodeur clarified that beginning in 2018, new short term rental licenses in the Asilomar neighborhood will need to obtain a Use Permit, but that existing permit holders will be grandfathered and not require a use permit.

11. Reports of Council Liaison

Council Member Huitt updated the Planning Commission on recent City Council items.

12. Reports of Staff

Director Brodeur updated the Commission regarding upcoming Planning Commission agenda items.

13. Adjournment at 7:36pm.