



CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE
300 Forest Avenue, Pacific Grove, California 93950

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Members of the Planning Commission
FROM: Donald Murphy, Chair of the Planning Commission
MEETING DATE: January 9, 2020
SUBJECT: Planning Commission Annual Report for 2019
CEQA: Does not constitute a "Project" under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15378

RECOMMENDATION

Receive as information and discuss.

Meetings

The Commission held seventeen (17) scheduled meetings. Eight meetings were cancelled because Planning Department staff did not have items for the Commission to consider. The number of meetings was consistent with meetings held annually during the previous five years: 2018, 16 meetings; 2017, 18 meetings; 2016, 23 meetings; 2015, 21 meetings; and 2014, 15 meetings. The commission held neither special meetings nor joint meetings with the City Council in 2019.

Permits

The Commission considered the following permits:

1. Jan. 17: 935 Jewell Ave., Use Permit, approved
2. March 7: 642 Hillcrest Ave., Use and Administrative Architectural Permits, approved
3. March 21: 550 Central Ave., Architectural Permit; appeal of HRC denial of the permit, denied the appeal
4. March 21: 207 16th St., Use Permit, discussed and continued
5. May 2: 207 16th St., Use Permit, approved
6. Sept 5: 301 Grand Ave., Use and Architectural Permit, denied
7. October 17: 207 Crocker Ave., Architectural Permit, appeal of ARB approval of the permit, denied the appeal

Two Commission decisions were appealed to the City Council: the denial of the Architectural Permit for 550 Central Ave. (the Pacific Grove Public Library remodel) and the denial of the Architectural Permit for housing units at 301 Grand Ave. The City Council reversed the decision of the Commission in both instances.

Zoning Changes

The Commission spent significant time considering zoning issues, including regulations for accessory dwelling units, wireless telecommunications facilities and land subdivision.

1. On June 20, the Commission approved a zoning map amendment for three (3) properties on Piedmont Avenue.
2. On Aug. 8, the Commission forwarded draft amendments to Title 23 and Title 24 of the Pacific Grove Municipal Code (PGMC) regarding subdivision of land to the City Council. The Council adopted the amendments on Sept. 23.
3. On Nov. 7, the Commission approved revisions to Title 23 of the PGMC to cover wireless telecommunications facilities outside the public rights-of way. Those revisions and a draft Wireless Design Manual were forwarded to the City Council for approval. The council approved the design manual and a first reading of the ordinance on Dec. 18.
4. On Dec. 19, the Commission recommended approval of rezoning the Mission Linen Property at 801 Sunset Drive.

Presentations

Planning staff provided several thorough presentations on housing issues. Topics included the Housing Element, the City's Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program, density bonus regulations, tools for affordable housing development and accessory dwelling units. Heather Adamson, director of planning at AMBAG, provided a presentation on State and regional housing issues.

Review of the Planning Commission Annual Plan

The Commission did not adopt a formal work plan, but on Dec. 8, 2018, identified twelve items as "topics for consideration or action in 2019." The Commission's success in addressing those items was mixed, at best. Commission agendas were developed in collaboration between the planning director or senior planner and Commission chair.

There are several reasons for the Commission's failure to consider items on the list and those reasons vary from item to item. Not all items matched City Council goals or the city manager's priorities for city staff. Agendas were limited by staff workload constraints.

Below is an evaluation of the Commission's work on the plan items:

1. Construct an annual work plan — Not done
2. Review and revise the city appeal process — Not done
3. Review and revise city parking regulations — Not done
4. Develop, review or revise a wireless communications ordinance for private property and in the public right-of-way — Complete
5. Review the zoning code for validity and appropriateness — Not done
6. Develop affordable housing and an inclusionary housing ordinance — Discussed, but not accomplished
7. Review the subdivision code for the Retreat and Additions to the Retreat and the lack of an appeal process for subdivision decisions — Accomplished, although the revised Title 24 did not change regulations for the Retreat
8. Review the approved uses for the traditional 30' x 60' lots — Under discussion, but no action taken
9. Develop a Downtown Master Plan in the context of business development — Not done
10. Revise the city's lot merger code — Not done
11. Review and participate on the Shoreline Management Plan — The plan is expected to come to the Commission in 2020
12. Periodic review of all major open projects, at least every six month — Not done

Miscellaneous Information

No scheduled meetings were cancelled for lack of a quorum. Commissioner Aeschliman had perfect attendance. No Commissioner had more than three absences. Meetings began at 6. All but four ended before 8 pm. No meeting lasted past 9 pm. The City adopted a new Boards, Committee and Commissions Handbook in March. Starting in September, Commission meetings were live-streamed and shown on local public television. Video recordings are available to the public through the City website. Public attendance has declined since then, although it is not clear that there is a link.

On Dec. 18, the City Council ratified the city manager's decision to change the Commission schedule from two meetings to one meeting a month. On Jan. 17, 2019, the Commission had voted against such a change.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Donald Murphy

Donald Murphy, Chair
Pacific Grove Planning Commission