



City of
Santa MonicaSM

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA

WEDNESDAY, March 21, 2018
7:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
ROOM 213, CITY HALL

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Fresco called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**
Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **ROLL CALL:** Present: Mario Fonda-Bonardi
Nina Fresco, Chairperson
Jennifer Kennedy
Leslie Lambert
Jason Parry

Absent: Amy Anderson
Richard McKinnon

Also Present: Elizabeth Bar-EI, AICP, Senior Planner
Susan Cola, Deputy City Attorney
Kyle Ferstead, Commission Secretary
Cary Fukui, Assistant Planner
David Martin, Director of Planning & Community
Development Department
Stephanie Reich, AIA LEED® AP, Design & Historic
Preservation Planner
Roxanne Tanemori, AICP, Principal Planner
Jing Yeo, AICP, City Planning Division Manager

4. **PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**
Mr. Martin gave the Director's Report. He announced the forthcoming meeting schedule as follows: April 4, continued hearing for 1650 Lincoln Boulevard, discussion on Mobility and Parking issues; April 16, Zoning Ordinance Bucket 2B discussion, amendment to the Civic Center Specific Plan for sports fields, 17th Street Cycle Track and a mixed-use development at 3008 Santa Monica Boulevard; May 2, appeal of a fence/wall/hedge modification at 470 19th Street and tentatively the beginning of formal hearings on the Land Use Plan for the Local Coastal Program; and May 16, tentatively scheduled float-up for 101 Santa Monica Boulevard Development Agreement. On March 27, 2018, City Council will review

the annual Development Agreement Monitoring report and extension of the R1 Interim Zoning Ordinance. He reported that Planning has mailed out postcards regarding with the summary of changes for the R1 districts to all property owners, approximately 6600 mailers. He also reported Council will hear the appeal for 2903 Lincoln Boulevard on April 24, 2018.

5. PLANNING COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chair Fresco reported on the March 17, 2018 Planning Commission Retreat, which she deemed a great success. She stated some issues raised have already gone into effect, such as the use the Request to Speak buttons on the dais. She further reported the Commission’s intention to update the Mission Statement, beginning with a discussion to set up a subcommittee at the next Commission Meeting; to have more educational opportunities; more interface with other Boards and Commission including inviting members to Planning Commission meetings and attending others meetings when they have items related to Planning. She also reported on a presentation on Commission approved projects over the years and had a discussion on legal questions. Chair Fresco concluded by saying staff will be providing more information items in the future on these and other topics of interest. Commissioner Parry commented he had just received his first Zoning Administrator agenda and thanked staff for the information.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Lambert made the motion to approve the entire Consent Calendar with amendments to 6-B as requested by Chair Fresco. Commissioner Kennedy seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous voice vote. Commissioners Anderson and McKinnon were absent.

6-A. February 21, 2018

6-B. March 7, 2018

Chair Fresco asked for two corrections on page 7 in the disclosure portion of Item 8-B. The Commission agreed to her corrections.

7. STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL ACTION:

7-A. 2929 Pico Boulevard, 17ENT-0026 and 18ENT-0031

8. STUDY SESSION:

8-A. Draft Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan: A study session to review the Draft Local Coastal Program (LCP) Land Use Plan and to receive Planning Commission comments and possible direction on potential changes to be made in preparation for release of a final draft Land Use Plan.

Senior Planner Elizabeth Bar-El, AICP, and Assistant Planner Cary Fukui gave the staff presentation.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission: Ruthann Lehrer representing the Santa Monica Conservancy; attorneys Jackson McNeill and Paula Larmore with Harding, Larmore, Kutcher and Kozal.

Commissioner Lambert asked staff where the Gateway Master Plan fits in the Coastal Plan. Ms. Bar-El responded that most of the Gateway Master Plan area is outside the Coastal Zone boundary.

Chair Fresco asked staff about parking exemptions for single family dwellings that are adding less than fifty-percent cited in the presentation. Ms. Yeo responded that staff also had questions about this provision and it will be discussed with Coastal Commission staff.

Commissioner Lambert commented that the Coastal Commission has concerns with parking on the Pier and noted there is plenty of parking nearby within walking distance. Ms. Bar-El pointed out Policy 18, which mentions parking within a quarter-mile of the Pier and Beach as well as the parking on the Pier. She stated that Coastal Commission staff seems to be amenable to removing some or all of the parking on the Pier. Commissioner Lambert asked staff about a proposed requirement to have low cost hotel rooms in the Coastal Zone and how people would qualify to rent such rooms. Ms. Bar-El responded that this is not legal per the Coastal Act. Commissioner Lambert asked staff where hotel mitigation fees go. Ms. Bar-El stated the fees go into a specific fund to be used for construction of low cost visitor accommodation projects and using the funds requires a Request for Proposal process to find a developer interested in using that funding to build the low cost visitor accommodations.

Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi commented that the draft document is great, but dense reading. He commented on the uncertainty of sea level rise and asked if changes will affect the Pier. Ms. Bar-El responded that the sea level rise scenarios project that the sea level will not reach the Pier deck with the exception of a 100-year storm. Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi commented on the ideal of being able to approve projects in the Coastal Zone without going through the Coastal Commission process, which is expensive and uncertain. Ms. Yeo agreed, stating the project goal is to bring the approval process into local control and shorten the overall process. Mr. Martin commented that once the LCP is completed, the City will do a fee analysis for the cost of review. Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi asked if any "beach nourishment" is occurring. Ms. Bar-El stated none is being done currently. Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi asked about the potential for increased liquefaction zones and if overlay maps are available that show the progression of liquefaction zones over time. Ms. Bar-El responded that such maps exist and could be added to the document. Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi asked for confirmation that Santa Monica Urban Runoff Recycling Facility (SMURRF) run-off goes into the sewer system (page 66 in the draft document). Ms. Bar-El responded that the information in that section is from the City's Water Resources Division and Public Works, and has been reviewed for accuracy.

Commissioner Parry asked questions on sea level rise including what properties will be affected by these changes, mid-term and long-term, and if there is a proposal for those properties or areas would be subject to changing regulations. Ms. Bar-El referred to Map B, the flood hazard zones, which show the aggregate highest water levels in 2100 up to Palisades Beach Road but not over Palisades Beach Road or to the bluffs. She explained that in the south, the rise is expected to go to Barnard Way, however there is time and the knowledge to begin protecting those areas with the dunes project and beach nourishment to slow store waters. Commissioner Parry asked if the policies will effect homes west of Palisades Beach Road. Ms. Bar-El responded in the affirmative and those properties would be required to disclose the potential of sea level rise. Commissioner Parry asked if there will be additional requirements should the sea level rise as forecast. Ms. Bar-El stated there will be an Implementation Plan per Policy 58. Commissioner Parry asked about reference language to bike parking in one policy says "near the Pier" and asked why not on the Pier. Ms. Bar-El responded there are currently no bike amenities on the Pier and the language is meant to not be too specific.

Chair Fresco expressed her concern regarding the historic tunnels under Palisades Park which are held up by 1930s timbers. Ms. Yeo responded that these tunnels were mentioned in the environmental documents for the Bluffs Stabilization Project and she stated her belief that the tunnels would have been stabilized as part of that project. Ms. Bar-El commented that the storm damage scenarios do not cross Palisades Beach Road. Chair Fresco commented that sea level rise could raise the water table.

Commissioner Lambert asked for clarification on the issue of on-site replacement of affordable hotel rooms and that for new hotel projects 25 percent of the rooms must affordable or mitigation fee is collected toward affordable hotel rooms being built elsewhere in the City. Ms. Bar-El clarified that this is the request from Coastal, however staff does not agree with this request. DCA Cola stated there is no statutory requirement in the Coastal Act.

Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi commented that the area north of Pico Boulevard appears to be more in danger than south of Pico according to the maps and currently there are three capital improvement projects proposed in that area. He suggested more sand dunes could be added or other measures as this is the broadest section of the beach. Ms. Bar-El noted this could be a direction in the future. Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi asked about the Coastal Commission's stance on Mexican Fan Palm and canary Island Palm trees as a non-native species. Ms. Bar-El responded that the proposed policy is that palm trees removed cannot be replaced with the same species except in Palisades Park or City Hall.

Commissioner Kennedy asked about comments from the public regarding scenic corridors. Ms. Bar-El suggested this be addressed under the guided questions portion of the Study Session. Commissioner Kennedy asked if there are any other outstanding issues to be addressed. Ms. Yeo responded that comments from Harding Larmore Kutcher and Kozal will be reviewed. Ms. Bar-El commented on Coastal Commission's parking formula that differs from the City Code. She stated that

until the Implementation Plan is certified and more specific language is set, some of these issues will remain unresolved. Commissioner Kennedy asked about the Ocean Front Walk corridor question. Ms. Bar-El responded that this area has not been analyzed to date. Commissioner Kennedy asked staff if this is the last opportunity for input. Ms. Yeo responded that it is the last meeting for Planning Commission as a body to make comments, but that individuals may continue to comment on the draft. She further stated the draft Plan has been out for public review since January with a small revision in February and the document will return to the Commission for adoption hearings later in the spring and will include a summary of input from other Boards, Commissions and the community.

Commissioner Lambert asked if the Landmarks designations for properties along Ocean Front Walk mentioned their adjacency and context to the Pier. Ms. Yeo stated she did not recall. She commented that as a Coastal policy approach, emphasis is on public views to the beach, ocean and mountains.

Chair Fresco commented there are palm trees adjacent to the Civic Auditorium and asked why they are not also protected as an exception based on the Landmark status. She commented that they are a character defining feature of the site. Ms. Bar-El responded that they were not included or analyzed.

Chair Fresco initiated the discussion using the Guided Questions from page sixteen of the staff report.

Access

- Is the general policy approach of continuing to support robust mobility choices to the coast appropriate?
- Are the proposed exemptions from CCC parking standards appropriate to resolve potential conflicts between CCC and City requirements?
- Is there any other language that is needed to resolve parking standards conflicts that arise in the CDP process?

Commissioners Fonda-Bonardi and Parry were fine with the Access policies. Commissioner Lambert asked if this is where removal of required parking on the Pier should be cited as part of the Implementation Plan. Ms. Yeo cited Policy 16, which provides flexibility on this issue. Commissioner Lambert commented that in reality all the large site projects Downtown will include on-site parking. Chair Fresco had nothing to add.

Recreation

- Is the general policy approach of continuing to provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities appropriate?
- Do the draft LUP policies regarding Pier access and use provide sufficient flexibility for future decision-making?

All the Commissioners were fine with these policies as proposed.

Sea Level Rise

- Is the tiered approach to sea level rise policies and adaptive management strategies appropriate?

The majority of the Commissioners were fine with the proposed policies. Commissioner Parry commented he was generally fine with the approach and it raises interesting questions for the Implementation Plan. He stated, on the aggressive side, it is important to make the beach more resilient. Chair Fresco expressed her concern regarding future stability of Palisades Park.

Environmental Quality

- Is the general policy approach of incorporating the City’s best practices on stormwater retention and water quality into the draft LUP appropriate?

All the Commissioners were fine with these policies. Commissioner Fonda-Bonardi commented that he likes the City’s stormwater retention practices.

SCENIC & VISUAL RESOURCES

Scenic and Visual Resources

- Is the general policy approach of carefully identifying non-contributing views and specifying “what to preserve” appropriate?
- Does the Commission agree with the identified vantage points and scenic corridors?

The majority of the Commissioners were fine with these policies. Commissioner Kennedy commented that the document is not inclusive enough and more should be done to preserve additional views. Commissioner Lambert agreed with this comment. Ms. Yeo stated it is important to focus on “public” views rather than private view protection. The Commissioners agreed that staff should analyze Ocean Front Walk as a potential view corridor. Chair Fresco expressed the opinion that the beach bike path is also a scenic corridor that includes views toward the bluffs as well as the ocean. She also commented on the old articles she forwarded to the Commission on the history of the bluff plantings (Palisades Park), which was part of a Public Works Administration (PWA) project when Palisades Beach Road was called the Roosevelt Highway, the crimson lake bougainvillea and the eucalyptus trees planted as part of that project are thus significant contributors to the historic views inland from the ocean. She also expressed her delight that the Main Street Bridge was added and expressed support for the Ocean Front Walk scenic corridor.

Cultural Resources and Historic Preservation

- Are the policies proposed to resolve conflicts regarding cultural landscapes appropriate?

The majority of the Commissioners were fine with proposed policies. Commissioner Lambert congratulated staff on the good report and document. Chair Fresco commented she had a few edits for the document, which she will forward to staff. She also commented that the term “restoration” is inaccurate for the dunes project as the beach was historically a flat area. She concluded by saying the LUP is a

great document and thanked staff for their efforts.

Commissioner Lambert expressed concern regarding the birds under the Pier. Ms. Bar-El explained that the City has tried many ways to encourage the birds to live elsewhere and that the netting remediation under the Pier, which seemed to work, had been vandalized and not replaced.

Chair Fresco closed the Study Session.

9. **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:** None.
10. **FUTURE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEMS:**
Chair Fresco stated the discussion on the Commission's Mission Statement will be agendaized for the April 4, 2018 meeting.
11. **PUBLIC INPUT:** None.
12. **ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Fresco adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

APPROVED: APRIL 18, 2018