



**PLANNING COMMISSION
SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
Regular Meeting
February 15, 2024**

West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers
625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California

THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD HAS ADOPTED BRIEF SUMMARY AND ACTION MEETING MINUTES, WHICH PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND POINTS OF DISCUSSION ONLY. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSIONS REGARDING ANY ITEM SUMMARIZED IN THESE MINUTES MAY BE OBTAINED BY VIEWING THE ARCHIVED VIDEOS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS AT www.weho.org/weho-tv/other-city-meetings

Land Acknowledgment: “The West Hollywood Planning Commission acknowledges that the land on which we gather and that is currently known as the City of West Hollywood is the occupied, unceded, seized territory of the Gabrieleño Tongva and Gabrieleño Kizh peoples.”

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Carvalho called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:36 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Jeffrey Seymour led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commission Secretary Gillig stated for the record Commissioner Copeland filed her official resignation from the West Hollywood Planning Commission, effective February 13, 2024.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Edwards, Gregoire, Jones, Vice-Chair Lombardi, Chair Carvalho.

Commissioners Absent: Matos.

Staff Present: Doug Vu, Senior Planner, Jennifer Davis, Senior Contract Planner, Roger Rath, Associate Planner, Ric Abramson, Urban Design and Architecture Studio Manager, Jennifer Alkire, Current and Historic Planning Manager, Isaac Rosen, Legal Counsel, and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

Chair Carvalho requested Item 14. Items from Staff and Item 16. Items from Commissioners to be moved and heard after Item 8. Consent Calendar.

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission agenda of Thursday, February 15, 2024, as amended. **Moved by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Vice-Chair Lombardi and passes, noting Commissioner Matos absent.**

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

A. February 1, 2024

ACTION: Approve the summary action draft minutes of Thursday, February 1, 2024, as presented. **Moved by Commissioner Gregoire, seconded by Commissioner Edwards and passes, noting Commissioner Matos absent.**

6. PUBLIC COMMENT. None.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Nick Maricich, Community Development Director stated the City Council denied the appeal and upheld the Planning Commission's recommendation of approval for the project located at 8025 Santa Monica Boulevard.

At the upcoming City Council meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, the City Council will hear the appeal of the Planning Commission's approval for the property located at 910-916 N. Wetherly Drive.

He stated his appreciation Commissioner Copeland made to the Planning Commission and the community.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

The following item was moved and heard out of order as part of the amended agenda.

14. ITEMS FROM STAFF.

A. Planning Manager's Update.

Jennifer Alkire, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager provided an update of tentative items scheduled for upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

B. Subcommittee Management.

Chair Carvalho noted there is now one vacant seat on the Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee. All subcommittee seats for temporary appointment will take place at the next regularly scheduled Planning Committee meeting.

Jennifer Alkire, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager provided an update of tentative items scheduled for Design Review Subcommittee, Sunset Arts and Advertising Subcommittee and Long-Range Planning Projects Subcommittee meetings.

The following item was moved and heard out of order as part of the amended agenda.

16. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

A. Commissioner Comments.

Commissioner Edwards questioned if staff could bring forth a presentation clarifying the history and responsibilities of the City of West Hollywood's Urban Design and Architectures Studios.

Commissioner Jones confirmed her upcoming leave of absence from the Planning Commission due to her pregnancy, anticipating her last meeting will be Thursday, March 7, 2024, for approximately six weeks, with the possibility of attending some meetings remotely if warranted. She thanked Commissioner Copeland for her service and contributions. She had concerns regarding the noticing of neighborhood meetings and subcommittee meetings. She would like to see a discussion, whether with staff or the full commission, on how to address this issue.

Commissioner Gregoire thanked Commissioner Copeland for her service and contributions.

Vice Chair Lombardi thanked Commissioner Copeland for her service and contributions.

Chair Carvalheiro thanked Commissioner Copeland for her service and contributions.

Commissioner Edwards thanked Commissioner Copeland for her service and contributions.

**9. PUBLIC HEARINGS SECTION I:
PROJECTS SUBJECT TO THE HOUSING ACCOUNTABILTY ACT. None.**

A. None.

**10. PUBLIC HEARINGS, SECTION II:
OTHER ITEMS THAT REQUIRE A PUBLIC HEARING UNDER THE LAW.**

A. 8920 SUNSET BOULEVARD:

Doug Vu, Senior Planner provided a verbal presentation and background information, as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, February 15, 2024.

He provided background information and stated the current proposal is a request to extend the permit expiration date for the approved entitlements associated with a new nine-story and approximately 116,801-square-foot

commercial development containing a private membership club (with lounges, dining rooms, outdoor terraces, and a rooftop deck), creative office, retail, and restaurant with outdoor dining uses over a subterranean garage with 279 parking spaces through April 1, 2024, and an Ordinance that provides a six-month extension of time limits for discretionary permits and entitlements that seek development agreements to further extend the permit expiration date for this development through October 1, 2024.

The request to extend the permit expiration date through April 1, 2024, and an Ordinance that provides a further six-month extension of time limits through October 1, 2024, for the commercial addresses the challenges attributed to the pandemic that continue to impact the engineering and construction industry and provides the necessary time to execute a new development agreement for implementation of this landmark Project that will be beneficial to the City.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the extension request and ordinance for extension of time limits.

Vice Chair Lombardi disclosed for the record he spoke to the applicant's representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner Jones disclosed for the record she spoke to the applicant's representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner Edwards disclosed for the record he spoke to the applicant's representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Chair Cavalheiro disclosed for the record he spoke to the applicant's representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Chair Carvalho opened public comments for Item 10.A.

D.J. MOORE, LOS ANGELES, Latham & Watkins, presented the applicants' report. He presented a brief history of the previously approved entitlements and spoke regarding the hardships that are requiring them to seek another extension, as well as other amendments to the development agreement. He requested approval of the extension.

GENEVIEVE MORRILL, President and CEO, West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce commended and thanked Commissioner Copeland for her service. She spoke in support of the staff's recommendation of approval of the extension request.

ACTION: Close public comment portion of the public hearing for Item 10.A.
Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.

The commission commented on the effects of the pandemic and the financial situations that have impacted the construction industry. They spoke in support of the new development agreement and the requested extension.

Commissioner Edwards moved to: 1) approve staff's recommendation of approval.

Seconded by Commissioner Jones.

ACTION: 1) Approve staff's recommendation of approval; 2) **Adopt Resolution No. PC 23-1541 as presented:** "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD APPROVING AN EXTENSION OF PERMIT EXPIRATION DATE FOR THE PROJECT LOCATED AT 8920 SUNSET BOULEVARD AND RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL EXTENSIONS OF TIME TO THE PERMIT TIME LIMITS SET FORTH FOR DISCRETIONARY PERMITS OR ENTITLEMENTS SEEKING DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS AND FINDING THE ACTIONS EXEMPT FROM CEQA;" and 3) Close the Public Hearing for Item 10.A. **Moved by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Jones and passes, noting Commissioner Matos absent.**

Commissioner Carvalho recused himself from the dais and left the meeting, stating a conflict with the Sunset Arts and Advertising Program.

Vice Chair Lombardi officially assumed the role of Acting Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

B. 8501 SUNSET BOULEVARD:

Jennifer Davis, Senior Contract Planner provided a verbal presentation and background information, as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, February 15, 2024.

She provided background information and stated this proposal is for construction of a new two-sided full motion digital billboard, replacing an existing one-sided billboard, on the rooftop of 8501 Sunset (The Sterling Building) and for the improvement of both the interior and exterior of the building to accommodate an art gallery/community space or similar civic use that will be leased to the City for the term of the development agreement. Site improvements will also be made to accommodate this new use.

This project has two components. One is the new two-sided, full motion, internally lit billboard on the rooftop of the building replacing an existing one-sided traditional billboard of 954 square feet. The two new billboard faces will each measure 1,000 sf.

The second component is updating and remodeling this building to improve the facades and to reconfigure the interior space to provide an art and community space or similar civic use to be used and programmed by the City of West Hollywood under a long-term lease.

Ric Abramson, Urban Design and Architecture Studio Manager, presented the Sunset Arts and Advertising subcommittee report. He spoke regarding the design and architectural goals, and detailed pedestrian engagement, design enhancements, the illuminated curtain, backlighting, and rear of the building façade and landscaping.

Jennifer Davis, Senior Contract Planner continued staff's presentation and detailed the lighting aspects of the project. She stated no light falls from the billboard faces onto Sunset Boulevard, rather it is captured on the roof of the building. The light from the mesh would fall onto Sunset Boulevard but this is minimal (about 1.0 footcandle). The study determined that the maximum light level and spillage of both the billboard faces and the mesh structure together, onto Sunset Boulevard, would be 1.5 footcandles.

Roger Rath, Associate Planner, continued staff's presentation. He spoke and detailed the interior floor plans, stating the building will be re-graded and reconfigured as a two-tiered open gallery space. The building entry will be moved to the westerly portion of the building. One enters at the ground floor into a smaller gallery space ("lower gallery"), measuring 1,041 square feet.

The lower level also contains a kitchen, art storage, restrooms and are fronted by trash and mechanical rooms facing the sidewalk. The utility rooms will be accessed by conventional swinging doors on the western part of the façade. To the east, accessed both by stairs and a ramp, is a large, elongated open gallery space ("upper gallery") of approximately 1,614 square feet. This is the main gallery space and can also be accessed through two large overhead doors along Sunset so that there is a flow and connection between the interior and the exterior spaces.

This expanded wider access will allow for the installation of larger art pieces. These doors are proposed as vertical lift-up doors that open overhead. They would be above head height when fully open. There are also two conventional swinging doors to access the building along this same façade.

The second, upper, level of the building contains smaller private spaces to be used for City Arts Programming. The eastern portion of the building on this level is open, as the main gallery space below is two stories high. There is a small overlook from this level to view art from an elevated position if needed. This second floor also contains storage, a restroom, and stairs. The new design will replace the current inoperable windows with operable windows to provide natural ventilation and day lighting in accordance with the city's sustainability and climate goals.

Ric Abramson, Urban Design and Architecture Studio Manager, detailed the security concerns regarding the open space onto the public sidewalk. The materials used will clearly demarcate what is sidewalk and what is private property, and he spoke regarding additional roof screening.

Jennifer Davis, Senior Contract Planner continued staff's presentation. She spoke regarding partial and minimal obstructions of other billboards within the vicinity.

Roger Rath, Associate Planner, continued staff's presentation. He stated the proposed billboard exceeds the height of the existing billboard by 18 feet and the proposed billboard contains 2,000 square-feet of full motion digital which is 1,000 square-feet above the Policy Standard. However, the policy allows for an approach for alternative standards for billboards to allow for creativity and flexibility.

A negative declaration was prepared for the Sunset Boulevard Off-Site Signage Policy for new billboards along Sunset Boulevard. In January 2024, the city prepared an addendum that was project-specific, addressing the entire proposal and found that no new environmental impacts would occur, nor that new mitigations are required.

Staff recommend the following amendments to draft Resolution No. PC 24-1540:

Amend: 3.11) The luminance of the proposed billboard may not exceed 300 candelas per meter squared in the evening; evening time is defined by Policy. ~~At a minimum of six months after the Permitted Sign Payment Commencement Date (at the required 6-month light monitoring test), applicant may request that the City conduct an independent light study to measure illuminance of Constructed Sign. If the Constructed Sign measures no more than 1.4 foot candles at sensitive uses in the vicinity, the Development Director, at their discretion may approve an increase to the maximum nighttime luminance of constructed sign so long as the increase does not surpass illuminance of 1.4 foot candles at sensitive uses.~~

Change 2.2) to 2.1)

Add: 2.2) This approval is for new off-site advertising billboard as shown on those plans which were reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission at its meeting of February 15, 2024. A copy of said plans shall be maintained in the files of the City Planning Division. The project shall be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with said plans, except as otherwise specified in these conditions of approval.

Staff believes the proposed billboard and corresponding approvals will provide a substantial and on-going public benefit to the City by furthering the goals of the Sunset Specific Plan, implementing the vision of the new billboard policy, permitting innovative new billboards on the iconic Sunset Strip, contributing to its unique character and vibrancy, regenerating a previously vacant and underused site for a community space, and by providing public benefits as outlined in the draft development agreement.

Staff recommends approval of the proposed requests.

Commissioner Jones disclosed for the record she spoke to the applicant's representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Acting Chair Lombardi disclosed for the record he spoke to the applicant's representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

The Commission asked for clarification regarding parking, cumulative impacts of additional new billboard lighting, and questioned the added language in Condition 3.3.

Acting Chair Lombardi opened public comments for Item 10.B.

JEFFREY A. SEYMORE, WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Seymour Consulting Group, presented the applicant's report. He briefly introduced the project and his team.

BENJAMIN ANDERSON, STUDIO CITY, architect, continued the applicant's presentation. He provided a history of the building and spoke and detailed the urban and open space, gallery space, billboard integration and design, billboard lighting, architectural illumination, façade renovation, operable windows, screening of billboard elements, fencing,

BRADLEY BERKLEY, DALLAS, TX, Big Outdoor, spoke regarding the partnership with the city and requested approval.

MAURICE GUY MAISNIK, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He commented on cumulative effects on parking, traffic signals, pedestrian traffic, public safety, and high lumens.

AARON KAMIN, LOS ANGELES, Doheny Sunset Plaza Neighborhood Association has concerns regarding this item. He commented on noticing of neighborhood and subcommittee meetings, nonexistence of archived meeting materials on-line, and public records requests.

ELLEN EVANS, LOS ANGELES, Sunset Plaza Neighborhood Association has concerns regarding this item. She commented on cumulative impacts of distractions, parking, lighting, and the east facing component.

SPENCER KALLICK, LOS ANGELES, presented the applicant's rebuttal. He clarified the parking concerns and reiterated there is no intensification of use, and spoke regarding pedestrian activity, potential hazards, and public safety concerns.

ACTION: Close public comment portion of the public hearing for Item 10.B.
Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.

The commission questioned the process of making static billboards to full animation billboards. They requested clarification regarding public safety concerns and inquired if public safety measures and traffic signage could appropriately be solicited to city council for review. They questioned staff about previous lighting standards.

Staff confirmed public safety and pedestrian safety measures are being corroborated on a project case basis.

The commission questioned the applicant regarding paving materials, facade materials, operator logo, and illumination and distribution of lighting.

The commission discussed public safety, traffic, parking concerns, public benefits, cumulative impact of billboard lighting, gallery space, design components, and mesh material.

Jennifer Alkire, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, read into the record additional language regarding intersection safety: "Adopt staff recommendation with a recommendation that the City Council consider appropriate signage and public safety concerns at the impacted intersection including as the council considers the proposed comprehensive streetscape project."

Commissioner Gregoire moved to: 1) approve staff's recommendation of approval to the City Council with amendments as read into the record.

Seconded by Commissioner Jones.

ACTION: 1) Approve staff's recommendation of approval; 2) **Adopt Resolution No. PC 23-15386 as presented:** "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NEW OFF-SITE ADVERTISING BILLBOARD AND BUILDING REMODEL AT 8501 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" 3) **Adopt Resolution No. PC 24-2539 as presented:** "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NEW OFF-SITE ADVERTISING BILLBOARD AND BUILDING REMODEL AT 8501 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" 4) **Adopt Resolution No. PC 24-1540 as amended:** "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF AN ADDENDUM TO A NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND APPROVAL OF A SIGN PERMIT AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERMIT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NEW OFF-SITE ADVERTISING BILLBOARD AND BUILDING REMODEL AT 8501 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA." a) Renumber Condition 2.2) to Condition 2.1); b) Add Condition: 2.2) This approval is for new off-site advertising billboard as shown on those plans which were reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission at its meeting of February 15, 2024. A copy of said plans shall be maintained in the files of the City Planning Division. The project shall be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with said plans, except as otherwise specified in these conditions of approval. c) Amend Condition 3.11) ~~The luminance of the proposed billboard may not exceed 300 candelas per meter squared in the evening; evening time is defined by Policy. At a minimum of six months after the Permitted Sign Payment Commencement Date (at the required 6-month light monitoring test), applicant may request that the City conduct an independent light study to measure illuminance of Constructed Sign. If the Constructed Sign measures no more than 1.4 foot candles at sensitive uses in the vicinity, the Development Director, at their discretion may approve an increase to the maximum nighttime luminance of constructed sign so long as the increase does not surpass illuminance of 1.4 foot candles at sensitive uses.~~ 5) "Adopt staff recommendation with a recommendation that the City Council consider appropriate signage and public safety concerns at the impacted intersection including as the council considers the proposed comprehensive streetscape project." and 6) Close the Public Hearing for Item 10.B. **Moved by Commissioner Gregoire, seconded by Commissioner Jones and passes, noting Chair Carvalho recused and Commissioner Matos absent.**

11. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Planning Commission Subcommittee Appointments:

The Planning Commission Chair will appoint a one member to the Design Review Subcommittee, Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee and the Sunset Arts and Advertising for the remainder of the terms ending June 30, 2024.

The Design Review Subcommittee and Sunset Arts and Advertising Subcommittee appointment will fill Commissioner Jones seat while she is on a leave of absence.

The Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee appointment will replace Commissioner Copeland.

ACTION: 1) Tabled to Thursday, March 7, 2024.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS. None.

13. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

14. ITEMS FROM STAFF.

The following items were moved and heard out order after agenda Item 8. - Excluded Consent Calendar as part of the amended agenda.

A. Planning Manager's Update.

B. Subcommittee Management.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT. None.

16. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

This item was moved and heard out order after agenda Item 8.- Excluded Consent Calendar as part of the amended agenda.

ADJOURNMENT. The Planning Commission adjourned at 8:55 p.m. to a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 7, 2024, beginning at 6:30 p.m. until completion at West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers, 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

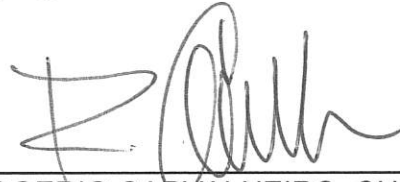
PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of West Hollywood at a regular meeting held this 7th day of March, 2024 by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioner: Edwards, Gregoire, Jones, Matos, Vice Chair Lombardi, Chair Carvalho.

NOES: Commissioner: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner: Hoopingarner.



ROGERIO CARVALHEIRO, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY