



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting
November 17, 2011

West Hollywood Park Auditorium
647 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90069

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Bernstein called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:50 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Elyse Eisenberg led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Aghaei, DeLuccio, Huebner, Meister, Yeber, Vice-Chair Buckner, Chair Bernstein.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: Christopher Corrao, Assistant Planner, Michael Barney, Assistant Planner, Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, Melissa Antol, Long Range and Mobility Planning Manager, Christi Hogin, Assistant City Attorney, and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, November 17, 2011 as presented. **Moved by Vice-Chair Buckner, seconded by Commissioner DeLuccio and unanimously carried.**

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

A. October 20, 2011

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Minutes of Thursday, October 20, 2011 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Meister and unanimously carried; notating the abstentions of Commissioner Huebner and Commissioner Yeber.**

6. PUBLIC COMMENT.

GEOFFREY BUCK, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation and Total Recall captioning services.

TREVOR ORR, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on local government policies and procedures, and encouraged public involvement.

LAURA BOCCALETTI, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

CATHY BLAIVAS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

ALLEGRA ALLISON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

VIRGINIA GILLICK, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

CHLOE ROSS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on concerns regarding the upcoming Plummer Park renovation.

7. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

Commissioner Meister stated she took an on-line certification course (FPCC) regarding ethics, and stated constituents do not have to give their name and city of residency if they don't want to. She commented on consistency regarding public speakers.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

A. Zone Text Amendment (Economic Hardship Initiatives):

Christopher Corrao, Assistant Planner, provided an oral presentation as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, November 17, 2011.

He provided the history of the requested amendment to the City of West Hollywood Zoning Ordinance that will make permanent a previously approved temporary measure to allow for an increase from four (4) special events per year to a total of twelve (12) special events per business, eight (8) of which must be of Type C Special Events.

A package of measures was created through the ad-hoc committee's collaboration with City staff. City Council approved the recommendations, by way of a temporary amendment to the Zoning Ordinance known as the Economic Hardship Package. The package included various measures, including but not limited to the relaxation of real estate signage restrictions, as well as increasing the amount of special events businesses are granted each year.

The ordinance also included other temporary initiatives that are set to expire at the end of this year, and will not be made permanent. These include temporary changes to the parking code for the Avenues: Art, Design & Fashion District, which allowed retail uses to convert to gallery/showroom and back without losing its grandfathered parking for the retail use. Other incentives set to expire include relaxed sign standards for temporary and promotional signage, which temporarily allowed for an increased number of signs and an increased time period that promotional banners and signs could be displayed. All temporary regulations are set to expire on December 31, 2011.

On August 15, 2011 the City Council directed staff to make permanent the previously approved temporary provision increasing the amount of special events a business was permitted from four (4) per year to twelve (12) per year (8 of the 12 special events being Type C events - which are lower attendance events) as well as to make permanent regulations regarding real estate open house signage.

He confirmed for the record, upon closer review of the previous documents approved by Council relating to the Economic Hardship Package, staff has discovered that the changes made to allow for relaxed standards to real estate signage have already been made permanent. These changes, now reflected in the Zoning Ordinance, allow for more information to be shown on real estate open house signs, such as the agent name, and address of the property.

Staff recommends recommending approval to the City Council.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification which businesses have taken advantage of these incentives. He had concerns and questioned if any studies or analyses have been done regarding the impact to the residences located near the clubs on Santa Monica Boulevard and Sunset Boulevard.

Christopher Corrao, Assistant Planner, stated for the record, no studies or analyses have been done regarding nightclubs.

Commissioner Aghaei, requested clarification regarding Type C Special Event permits.

Vice-Chair Buckner questioned if there is any evidence proving impacts to local businesses and [supposed] increased revenues.

Commissioner DeLuccio requested clarification regarding promotional and sales signage.

Commissioner Aghaei questioned if there are any records of complaints or general impacts on the residents, as a result of having these special events.

Christopher Corrao, Assistant Planner, stated for the record, there have been no complaints in regards to approved special events.

Commissioner Huebner requested clarification regarding the parking zones.

Commissioner Meister questioned if there is a list of businesses that actually utilized the permits, and if they are categorized by type of business. She questioned what kind of economic success the people who took advantage of the signage actually had, and was there any outreach done to the neighborhood watch groups; if they noticed an increase in noise or crime over the last few years.

Chair Bernstein opened public testimony for Item 9.A.:

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, had concerns regarding this item. She stated there should not be a permanent change to Type C special event permits.

ACTION: Close public testimony for Item 9.A: **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Commissioner DeLuccio requested clarification regarding the total number of special event permits.

Commissioner Yeber stated his concerns stating this may be premature, since it doesn't appear to be fully analyzed. He questioned and would like to see a breakdown who is actually applying for these permits. He's not totally convinced that there has not been a problem associated with some of these special permits. He stated residents have come forward in the past indicating there have been impacts, and he would like to know what those potential impacts are in the neighboring areas. He had concerns the neighborhood groups were not notified. He would like to see a system that is not one size fits all. He stated we need to come up with a system that makes sense for the type of business that is applying, to maybe mitigate potential impact(s). He is not comfortable moving to a permanent status at this stage.

Commissioner Aghaei stated his apprehension making something permanent that wasn't permanent before, due to a temporary circumstance. He spoke regarding current economic conditions. He had concerns moving forward with this, not knowing what the actual (financial) impacts are.

Commissioner DeLuccio stated he is not ready to make this permanent. He stated more information is needed before he could make this a permanent ordinance.

Commissioner DeLuccio moved: 1) recommend City Council extend to December 31, 2012.

Seconded by Commissioner Yeber.

Commissioner Meister agreed to the motion. She stated this will allow sufficient time to analyze the potential impacts and the ability to reach out to the neighborhoods. She could not support a permanent ordinance at this time.

Commissioner Huebner stated his support of the motion. He would like to see more analyses. He could not support a permanent ordinance at this time.

Christi Hogin, Assistant City Attorney, reiterated the motion: *“Recommend the City Council adopt an Ordinance that would allow twelve (12) special events that would sunset on December 31, 2012 to allow the Planning Commission an opportunity to do a more in-depth study; with the possibility of making different recommendations. Eight of the twelve special event permits shall to be Type C.”*

Vice-Chair Buckner questioned the recommendation of a permanent ordinance. She commented on current economic conditions. She stated more information is needed regarding impacts.

Chair Bernstein had concerns with the sunset ending date of December 31, 2012. He would like to see it extended to December 31, 2013. More information is needed before a final recommendation.

Commissioner Meister cautioned about expanding this program without having all the facts.

Commissioner Aghaei stated he is opposed to making this permanent at this time because we don't know what the actual impacts will be on the residents, and what the benefits are for the businesses. He supports the temporary condition.

ACTION: 1) Adopt Resolution No. PC 11-994 as amended: “A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL ADOPT AN ORDINANCE EXTENDING UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 2012, THE TEMPORARY PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 19.54 (TEMPORARY USE AND SPECIAL USE PERMITS) THAT ALLOW FOR AN INCREASE IN THE ANNUAL AMOUNT OF SPECIAL EVENTS PERMITTED CITYWIDE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA’; and 2) Close Public Hearing Item 9.A. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Yeber and passes on a Roll Call Vote:**

AYES: Aghaei, DeLuccio, Meister, Huebner, Yeber, Vice-Chair
Buckner, Chair Bernstein.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None
RECUSED: None.

**THE COMMISSION TOOK A TEN (10) MINUTE RECESS AT 7:55 P.M.
AND RECONVENED AT 8:05 P.M.**

B. Zone Text Amendment (General Plan Implementation):

Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, provided an oral presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, November 17, 2011.

She stated this item is a recommendation to the City Council regarding implementing the West Hollywood General Plan 2035 by adopting the first round of amendments to the City of West Hollywood Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to reflect new commercial zoning districts, eliminate mixed-use development incentives from certain parcels on Santa Monica Boulevard, eliminate the existing density bonus for exemplary green buildings in residential zones, eliminate the public parking bonus, and prohibit residential uses in certain commercial nodes.

The Zoning Ordinance is the main implementing document for the Land Use policies in the General Plan. By law, the Zoning Ordinance must be made consistent with the newly updated General Plan within a reasonable period of time.

The Zoning Code changes included in this first set of updates represents the simplest, most straightforward changes to the Code to reflect specific land use designations and policies approved as part of the Land Use and Urban Form chapter of General Plan 2035. The topics addressed include:

- Updating the Zoning Map and Text to reflect new nomenclature for two existing commercial zoning districts and the creation of two new commercial zoning districts;
- Creating the Commercial-Only Overlay Zone to prohibit residential uses on certain parcels on Santa Monica Boulevard where they may be incompatible with existing entertainment uses;
- Eliminating mixed-use development incentives from certain parcels on Santa Monica Boulevard and creating the Mixed-Use Incentive Overlay Zone;
- Eliminating the existing density bonus for exemplary green buildings in residential zones;
- Eliminating the existing bonuses for public parking and entertainment production facilities; and

- Updating the Zoning Map to conform with the General Plan Land Use Designations Map.

Commercial Zoning Districts

The General Plan 2035 creates two new commercial zoning districts, and changes the names of two existing commercial zoning districts, as shown in the table below:

<i>Existing Zoning District Name</i>	<i>Proposed Zoning District Name (per General Plan 2035)</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Density</i>
CN	CN1	25' / 2 stories	1.0 FAR
-	CN2*	25' / 2 stories	1.0 FAR
CC	CC1	35' / 3 stories	1.5 FAR
-	CC2*	45' / 4 stories	2.0 FAR
CA	CA	60' / 5 stories	2.5 FAR
CR	CR	90' / 8 stories	3.0 FAR

* New zoning district

The existing Commercial Neighborhood (CN) zone extends along Melrose Avenue and Robertson Boulevard. Pursuant to the General Plan 2035, the existing CN zone is divided into two districts: the CN1 zone, which is identical to the former CN zone; and the CN2 zone, which allows for the same height and density as the CN1 zone, but prohibits all residential uses. Both the CN1 and CN2 zones are designed to allow for varied architecture and land uses that are small-scale and serve both local residents and the arts and design focus of this commercial area. As shown in the proposed Zoning Map, the CN1 zone extends along Robertson Boulevard south of Melrose Avenue, Melrose Avenue east of La Cienega Boulevard, and a small cluster of parcels on Doheny Drive. The CN2 zone extends along Melrose Avenue west of La Cienega Boulevard, and on Robertson Boulevard north of Melrose.

The existing Commercial Community (CC) zone is the City's primary commercial zoning district. It extends nearly the entire length of Santa Monica Boulevard, as well as Beverly Boulevard, and portions of Fairfax Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard. Pursuant to the General Plan 2035, the existing CC zone is divided into two districts: the CC1 zone, which is identical to the former CC zone; and the CC2 zone, which allows for increased height and density in key commercial nodes. Both the CC1 and CC2 zones provide for a variety of commercial uses and mixed-use development along major corridors. The CC2 zone is applied to areas where increased development is possible due to the presence of high-frequency transit service with multiple routes and bus transfer locations. The CC2 zone is intended to allow for an expansion of retail, office, and other non-residential uses while also allowing for an increase in the amount and diversity of housing in locations where housing is harmonious with surrounding land uses. Residential uses are prohibited on certain parcels on Santa Monica Boulevard as reflected through establishment of

the Commercial-Only Overlay Zone, described below.

Commercial-Only Overlay Zone

The Commercial-Only Overlay Zone prohibits new residential uses on certain CC1 and CC2-zoned parcels on Santa Monica Boulevard, and certain parcels adjacent to those fronting Santa Monica Boulevard, generally between Almont Drive and Larrabee Street, as shown on the proposed Zoning Map, where such uses may be incompatible with existing entertainment uses. This prohibition against new residential uses was incorporated in the General Plan 2035 at the direction of the City Council due to potential conflicts between residential and nightlife/entertainment uses along this western portion of Santa Monica Boulevard. General Plan policies LU-2.3 and LU-12.5 direct the City to prohibit new residential uses on the upper floors of buildings in this zone.

Incentives

Policies in the General Plan 2035 direct the City to make changes to current development incentives in order to carry out the land use vision as established in that document. The changes include limiting height and density bonuses in residential zoning districts, eliminating a commercial height bonus for providing public parking, and tailoring existing mixed-use development incentives to encourage mixed-use at key nodes along commercial corridors.

Mixed-Use Incentive Overlay Zone

The existing incentives for mixed-use development apply to all parcels in the CC, CA and CR zoning districts. Policies incorporated into the General Plan 2035 replace the existing incentives with a more tailored approach, to be implemented as the Mixed-Use Incentive Overlay Zone (MUIOZ). The MUIOZ, shown on the Proposed Zoning Map (Exhibit D) and described in section 19.10.050 of the Zoning Ordinance, more narrowly focuses development along commercial corridors by only incentivizing mixed-use development at key nodes, and therefore reduces the maximum possible height for new development outside these nodes. With implementation of the MUIOZ, mixed-use development will still be allowed in all commercial designations except CN2, but it will only be incentivized in certain areas.

Within the MUIOZ, residential mixed-use projects may receive an increase of 0.5 FAR and 10 feet in height beyond the maximum allowable height in the underlying zoning district. This height and density increase is identical to that allowed under the previous Mixed-Use bonus. As modified, section 19.10.050.A of the Zoning Ordinance further requires that development projects utilizing mixed-use incentives adjacent to residential zoning districts limit height to 35 feet within 25 feet of the zoning district, and that all of the additional area allowed by the height bonus be developed exclusively with residential units, as was required under the previous Mixed-Use bonus.

The MUIOZ is in keeping with the Guiding Principles established for the General Plan. It concentrates the mixed-use incentives in specific areas near high-frequency transit nodes, near major cross-streets, and in other areas where development is desirable. General Plan policy LU-2.6 specifically directs the creation of the MUIOZ.

Green Building Incentives

Policies in the General Plan 2035 eliminate height and density incentives in residential zones, other than those for affordable housing, in order to help maintain a compatible scale for new development. In particular, General Plan policy LU-2.12 directs that incentives for exemplary green buildings should not include increases in height. To that end, existing incentives for high-achieving Green Buildings, as defined in section 19.20.060.C, will be modified as follows: the incentive allowing for one additional residential unit in multi-family or mixed-use projects will be eliminated, and the incentive allowing for a density increase for commercial or mixed-use projects shall be expressly limited to commercially-zoned parcels. Existing Green Building incentives related to open space, setbacks, density increases, parking, and expedited permit processing are unchanged.

Public Parking Bonus and Entertainment Production Facilities Bonus

While the City's previous General Plan allowed for incentives for providing public parking and for entertainment production facilities, the General Plan 2035 no longer lists these as public benefits that should receive a height or density bonus. As such, sections 19.10.050.A and 19.10.050.C of the Zoning Ordinance will be modified to delete the existing height incentives for commercial development that provides excess public parking and existing density incentives for entertainment production facilities.

Zoning Map

As directed by General Plan implementation action LU-A.1, and required by law, ZMA-011-007 updates the Zoning Map to reflect changes to commercial zoning districts as well as re-zoning of properties to comply with the adopted General Plan 2035 Land Use Designations Map. Changes to zoning designations in this update impact less than 8% of properties citywide and are designed to maintain existing residential districts and focus future development along commercial corridors served by existing and potential future transit.

The nomenclature used to describe designations on the General Plan 2035 Land Use Designations Map was changed from the previous General Plan, so that the Land Use and Zoning Maps will now use the same terminology. This will make land use regulations easier to understand for residents, developers, and those doing business in the City.

The areas previously shown on the Zoning Map as part of the Neighborhood Conservation (NC) Overlay District have been removed from the map. This is simply a clarification – none of the areas formerly included in the NC District were ever formally adopted as such. The enabling language in the Zoning Ordinance regarding Neighborhood Conservation Overlays remains in place (19.14.060). Any neighborhood that wishes to request creation of an NC District may still do so, following the same procedure as previously allowed. The Neighborhood Conservation District is also described in the list of Zoning Districts in the General Plan 2035.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification of the adjacent zoning in the City of Los Angeles; in regards to SB 1818.

Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, stated for the record the adjacent zoning in the City of Los Angeles is four stories.

Commissioner Meister questioned why the parking incentive was taken away on the commercial zones.

Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, stated there were a variety of reasons; 1) they were not used very much; 2) there was not a real demand for it; and 3) looking at ways to reduce incentives, simplify the process; concerns with multiple bonuses being applied. It wasn't identified as a ongoing need to have a height bonus in particular.

Chair Bernstein opened public testimony for Item 9.B.:

TREVOR ORR, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff recommendation to recommend City Council approval.

ELYSE EISENBERG, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke and questioned the changes to the Sunset Specific Plan and had concerns regarding additional heights along Santa Monica Boulevard.

ALLEGRA ALLISON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff recommendation to recommend City Council approval.

VIRGINIA GILLICK, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke on traffic issues on the East side.

VICTOR OMELSZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff recommendation to recommend City Council approval.

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke on SB 1818, additional bonuses and traffic impacts.

STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding additional heights and the commercial zoning of the Sal Guarriello Memorial Fountain.

CATHY BLAIVAS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding public transportation, increased density and over development.

ACTION: Close public testimony for Item 9.B: **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, addressed the issues brought forward during public comment.

Commissioner Meister questioned and requested clarification regarding the parcel zoned CR (Commercial Regional Center) behind Movietown Plaza.

Chair Bernstein stated the General Plan has already been adopted by the City Council in September, 2011. This is largely a procedural matter, and not an opportunity to revisit the General Plan. He had concerns with the additional heights. He would support this item, but suggest that City Council really look at the visuals of how high things are being allowed and examine the question of affordable bonuses, and really try to figure out how we can limit the impact of SB 1818, so that we don't see these additional heights coming into effect.

Discussion and clarification was held regarding height and density bonuses.

Commissioner Aghaei stated the commission in actuality has to effectuate this plan. He wouldn't mind adding comments to the City Council, but reiterated this is a strictly procedural at this time.

Commissioner Meister questioned if the commission has the opportunity to add to the ordinance how many incentives a specific zoning zone can be allowed.

Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, stated for the record this would need to be looked into further for a specific answer.

Chair Bernstein moved: 1) recommendation to City Council approval with the following suggestion: a) look to clarify the language on bonuses with the ideal of reducing the height that is achieved by some of the duplicative bonuses.

Seconded by Commissioner Aghaei.

Commissioner Meister questioned what happened to the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone(s).

Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, stated, even though they were illustrated on the zoning map, those zones were never formally adopted. However, the possibility to formally adopt those zones in the future still exist.

ACTION: 1) Adopt Resolution No. PC 11-993 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF ZONE TEXT AMENDMENT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICTS AND DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES, AND ZONE MAP AMENDMENT UPDATING THE ZONING MAP, TO CONFORM WITH THE WEST HOLLYWOOD GENERAL PLAN 2035; and 2) Close Public Hearing Item 9.B. **Moved by Chair Bernstein, seconded by Commissioner Aghaei and passes on a Roll Call Vote:**

AYES: Aghaei, DeLuccio, Huebner, Yeber, Vice-Chair Buckner, Chair Bernstein.

NOES: Meister.

ABSENT: None

RECUSED: None.

10. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Bicycle Task Force Update.

Michael Barney, Assistant Planner provided an oral presentation as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, November 17, 2011.

He stated City Council in November 2010 created the West Hollywood Bicycle Task Force (BTF). The West Hollywood BTF is composed of 18 citizens, business owners and four liaisons from Transportation, Planning, Public Facilities and Safety commissions.

The BTF met once a month for the past year to discuss and learn in a public forum the current state of bicycling in the City of West Hollywood. The BTF was organized into three subcommittees; Infrastructure, Safety & Education and Programs/Implementation & Funding.

The BTF was charged with preparing a range of recommendations to improve bicycle transportation opportunities in the City, as well as develop recommendations for community education regarding bicycle safety, and further enhance the efforts of the City's Public Safety and Transportation divisions.

Some of the goals given by the City Council included: recommendation of best practices from cities that have had successful bicycle programs; identification of local routes for a variety of types of bicycle lanes; expansion and modification of existing routes; formation of citizen education programs focused on street and sidewalk safety, particularly addressing the sharing of roads and sidewalks among drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians, and identification of incentive programs.

The BTF hosted leaders from the bicycle community at each task force meeting to share information and educate them on topics ranging from innovations in bicycle infrastructure improvements, funding, safety information, local and regional bicycle developments, non-profit ventures, and examples of what is succeeding, and the drawbacks of other programs. This provided valuable hands-on knowledge in which the subcommittees could intelligently and thoughtfully base their recommendations.

From the deliberations of three subcommittees of the BTF, the following key recommendations were made:

The Infrastructure Subcommittee

Proposes infrastructure modifications to the streets of West Hollywood by creating new bike lanes on:

- Fountain Avenue
- San Vicente Boulevard
- Santa Monica Boulevard
- Fairfax Avenue
- Vista & Gardner Streets

Additional recommendations include: upgrade existing bicycle markings, signage and other graphics; expand bicycle parking options; install bicycle boxes at intersections; employ reverse angle parking, and create bicycle friendly channels at existing traffic barriers.

The Safety & Education Subcommittee

Non-infrastructure recommendations are all based on Chapter 6 of the 2003 West Hollywood Bicycle & Pedestrian Mobility Plan. Chapter 6 provides numerous opportunities for public awareness, education and promotion of bicycle safety and ridership. Continued implementation of the document is recommended.

Additional key recommendations from this subcommittee include:

- Inclusion of bicycles in all City events as an alternative form of transportation

- Encourage bicycle commuting among City of West Hollywood employees by creating incentives and providing adequate bicycle storage
- Attract new riders by sponsoring first time rider events, or night or weekend rides
- Add bicycle education as a condition of approval for all Conditional Use Permits

The Programs/Implementation & Funding Subcommittee

Recommends pursuit of state and federal grant opportunities for bicycle related infrastructure and non-infrastructure bicycle projects, and pedestrian and bicycle safety projects. The subcommittee provides a list of criteria for ranking bicycle projects and strategies to help implement the recommendations.

The BTF Report recommendations have been prioritized and listed in a table as short, medium, long and on-going actions. Short-term actions are from six months to one year, medium-term actions are from one to three years, long-term actions are from three to five years. On-going actions are recommendations that are already in process, or that it would be a continuous activity, without a start/stop date.

Staff is scheduled to present the BTF Report and recommendations to the City Council on December 5, 2011.

To implement the infrastructure priorities it is important that the 2003 Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan be current and updated to reflect the recently adopted changes to General Plan policies, and in order to maintain funding eligibility with Metro. Once amended and re-adopted the next step would be to undertake a more comprehensive update to the 2003 Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan that will integrate the recommendations of the BTF, and integrates new information with respect to bicycle planning best practices.

To capitalize on the BTF Report momentum staff will return to the City Council within six months to gain approval for implementation of several bicycle improvement projects.

As a recognized pedestrian-friendly city, West Hollywood has a unique opportunity to build upon what has been accomplished in that area and now become a recognized regional model for bicycle planning.

Commissioner Meister questioned if the Bicycle Task Force had looked into the city of Washington, DC and their bicycle program.

Commissioner Yeber questioned if this information is available on the City of West Hollywood's website. He suggested the Bicycle Task Force look into the city of Berlin, [Germany] bicycle infrastructure.

Commissioner Aghaei stated he attended the Bicycle Task Force meetings and affirmed how impressed he was with the work staff and task force has done.

Chair Bernstein opened public comment for Item 10.A.:

RYAN LEADERMAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, supports the report regarding the Bicycle Task Force.

DAVID GLOSHINSKI, WEST HOLLYWOOD, supports the report regarding the Bicycle Task Force.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, supports the report regarding the Bicycle Task Force.

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

Commissioner Huebner applauded staff for the work done and commented on the future of bicycle commuting options in West Hollywood.

Commissioner Meister expressed her interest in bicycling options and questioned staff about the possibility of having a bike lane on San Vicente Boulevard.

Commissioner DeLuccio thanked staff for bringing this forward. He commented on the City of Santa Barbara's bicycling infrastructure.

Chair Bernstein thanked staff and the Bicycle Task Force for their work on this program. He stated from a planning perspective this could be a broader and more exciting conversation.

Vice-Chair Buckner had concerns regarding the impacts of reducing traffic lanes for bike lanes. She thanked staff for the work.

Commissioner Yeber commented on Fountain Avenue and the current infrastructure. He stated we can only go forward at this point with a stronger bicycle plan. He thanked staff for the work.

ACTION: Receive and file. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

B. Condominium Conversion Policy.

Bianca Siegl, Senior Planner, summarized, stating direction was given to investigate condominium conversions and possible changes to that ordinance. The Planning Commission decided to refer the issue to the Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee for further discussion.

The Subcommittee discussed the matter on Thursday, November 3, 2011, which included policies from other jurisdictions, policies which are in the recently adopted General Plan and Housing Element, and asked staff to compile some of the key points from that discussion for commission discussion and deliberation whether to make a recommendation to City Council to modify staff's current work plan.

Chair Bernstein opened public comment for Item 10.B.:

GRAFTON TANQUARY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He suggested this should be looked at as a renter purchase program; rather than a condominium conversion program. He spoke on the past program in the City of Santa Monica, historical properties and viability concerns.

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding CC&R's, historical buildings, parking issues, and amenities.

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

Chair Bernstein recapped the Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee meeting. He stated the conversation turned to the vast number of buildings within the City of West Hollywood that are aging and do not appear to have sufficient funds to maintain them properly. He stated he would like to see this item go before the City Council to see if they share the commission's concern for the rapidly aging buildings and housing stock. He stated we should look aggressively at all the things that could maintain and preserve these buildings, especially the historic buildings that really need to be preserved.

Vice-Chair Buckner stated her concerns regarding the older properties; regarding the electrical, plumbing, overall maintenance, and seismic upgrades. She stated the idea was to come up with some creative way to either incentivize the landlords' to make the needed improvements, either by low cost loans or other things the city could do to assist the owners of the building to improve the properties. One idea was some type of conversion and ownership. She stated they would like to see other commissions involved to help them look at this.

Commissioner Yeber commented on the upkeep and infrastructure of older historical buildings. He stated most owners of these buildings are frustrated with making these substantial rehabilitative upgrades. This is something that needs to be looked into now. The older the buildings get, the harder it is for them to be insured. It will get to a point where these buildings will become uninsurable. He hopes City Council takes this issue seriously.

Commissioner Aghaei stated landlords have no way to make these massive capital expenditures, with no way of amortizing them. We do need to find some type of solution to incentivize landlords to update their housing stock.

Commissioner Huebner commented on the infrastructure in the older buildings that needs to be upgraded. He spoke of the overwhelming costs associated with these buildings and there should be some sort of incentives for landlords that give's tenants the opportunity to participate in ownership.

Commissioner Meister agreed and support's this. She agreed that it should be taken to the City Council to see if they want to pursue it.

Commissioner DeLuccio stated his support of recommending this to City Council.

Chair Bernstein would like to amend the discussion item to read as "Rapidly Aging Housing Stock and Exploring the Possibility of a Renters Purchase Program.

Chair Bernstein moved to: 1) request City Council to consider the establishment of a interdisciplinary task force to be created to study these issues; such a task force may include members of the Planning Commission, Rent Stabilization Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, City Council, property owners and relevant staff.

Seconded by Vice-Chair Buckner.

ACTION: 1) Forward to City Council a request to consider the establishment of a interdisciplinary task force to be created to study these issues; such a task force may include members of the Planning Commission, Rent Stabilization Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, City Council, property owners and relevant staff. **Moved by Chair Bernstein, seconded by Vice-Chair Buckner and passes on a Roll Call Vote:**

AYES: Aghaei, DeLuccio, Huebner, Meister, Yeber, Vice-Chair
Buckner, Chair Bernstein.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None
RECUSED: None.

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** None.
12. **EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR.** None.
13. **ITEMS FROM STAFF.**

A. Planning Manager's Update. None.

14. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** None.

15. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**

Commissioner Yeber wished everyone a safe holiday.

Vice-Chair Buckner wished everyone happy holidays.

Commissioner Meister stated if any members of the Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee are unable to participate, she would be willing to fill in. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Commissioner Huebner wished everyone a safe holiday.

Chair Bernstein reminded everyone this is the last Planning Commission meeting in this venue. The next meeting will take place in Council Chambers at the West Hollywood Library.

16. **ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 9:45 P.M. to the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be on Thursday, December 1, 2011 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.**

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THIS 1ST DAY OF
DECEMBER, 2011.



ALAN BERNSTEIN, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY