



Community Development Department
PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DISCUSSION ITEM: Planning Commission Procedures

MEETING DATE: November 25, 2024

AGENDA ITEM: 9b

ACTION REQUESTED

That the Planning Commission, by motion, adopt the proposed updates to the Planning Commission Procedures.

BACKGROUND

The City of Burlingame Planning Commission is a Brown Act decision-making body that reviews and acts on certain land use policies and permits as defined by the City of Burlingame Municipal Code. The Planning Commission's decision-making procedures, public meeting format, and public participation process is outlined in its procedures. These procedures are mainly derived from the Brown Act, also known as the "Open Meeting Law", which is a California law that guarantees the public's right to attend and participate in meetings of local decision-making bodies, and Robert's Rules of Order which is a set of guidelines for conducting meetings that emphasizes equality and the democratic process. It includes procedures for making motions, voting, and other aspects of running a public meeting.

The City of Burlingame Municipal Code § 3.40.030 requires the Planning Commission to adopt procedures to be approved by the City Council. The current procedures were approved in 2002. Staff has drafted and is proposing updated procedures for Planning Commission's consideration and adoption.

DISCUSSION

The majority of the existing procedures (attached) remain in place with additional information/clarification added to provide further guidance to the Planning Commission, Staff, and the public. Some modifications and/or additions have been included that are briefly outlined below:

1. Action Minutes. Currently, the Planning Commission meeting minutes are a summary of each item that includes staff, applicant, and Planning Commissions discussion, public comment, Planning Commission deliberation, and the motions with votes. The minutes can be lengthy and time consuming for staff to prepare. The proposed procedural change is to transition to action minutes which will only include the final motion with the votes and the names of those who provided public comment. These types of minutes are the current standard practice in most jurisdictions since meetings are recorded and posted online for anyone to view/listen to the entirety of the discussion and deliberation. Transcribed minutes were previously more common when meetings were not recorded to be able to document into the public record the discussion that occurred leading up to the decision.
2. Written Public Comments. Currently, written public comments that are received via email after the agenda is posted but prior to the meeting are read into the record at the meeting. The proposed procedural changes will instead have written public comments that are received before 4:00 p.m.

the day of the meeting be sent to the Planning Commission in a supplemental packet and posted online for public review. They will no longer be read into the record at the meeting. This will allow the Planning Commission to read the comments themselves and have more time to digest them to respond to at the meeting, as well as create time efficiency in the meeting itself.

The City Council also discussed this change in procedure for the City Council meetings at their November 18, 2024 meeting and will also be implementing the new process.

3. Staff Recommendations. In the proposed procedures, staff recommendations are mentioned. Currently, staff recommendations are not included by Staff in staff reports, staff presentations, and staff discussion. Moving forward, staff will be providing staff recommendations as part of the process. Staff is essentially already providing a recommendation to the Planning Commission in the form of the draft resolutions, findings, and conditions of approval. The intent is to be clear about these and other recommendations moving forward. Planning Commission always has the ability to not follow staff's recommendation and/or make changes to the draft the documents before the Planning Commission for action.

Prepared by:

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Attachments:

Current Rules of Procedure of the Planning Commission of The City of Burlingame
Proposed Planning Commission Procedures