



TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2023
701 East Carson Street, Carson, CA 90745
City Hall, Helen Kawagoe Council Chambers
6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Members:	Vice Chair: Chris Palmer	Louie Diaz	Frederick Docdocil
	Carlos Guerra	Del Huff	Jaime Monteclaro
	Karimu Rashad	Dianne Thomas	Richard Hernandez
Alternates:	Vacant	DeQuita Mfume	Leticia Wilson
Staff:	Planning Manager:	(Vacant)	
	Planning Secretary:	Gonzalez	
	Assistant City Attorney:	Jones	

"In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, if you require a disability related modification or accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call the Planning Department at 310-952-1761 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting." (Government Code Section 54954.2)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Diaz called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Planning Commissioners Present: Diaz, Docdocil, Hernandez, Guerra, Thomas, Rashad, Mfume, Wilson, Thomas (L), Palmer (L), Huff (L)

Planning Commissioners Absent: Monteclaro (Excused)

Planning Staff Present: Community Development Director Naaseh, Assistant City Attorney Jones, Planning Secretary Gonzalez

3. ORAL COMMUNICATION FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The public may at this time address the members of the Planning Commission on any matters within the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission. No action may be taken on non-agendized items except as authorized by law. Speakers are requested to limit their comments to no more than three minutes each, speaking once. *(see below)

None.

4. EMERGENCY ITEM

- A) Assistant City Attorney Jones stated that there was a need to add an emergency item to the agenda to appoint a chairperson since Vice Chair Palmer was not present and the absence of a chairperson due to vacancy. Staff was not aware of Vice Chair Palmer's absence before the agenda was posted. A 2/3 vote was required to add the item.**

Planning Commission Decision:

Commissioner Diaz moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to add an agenda item to consider naming a chairperson only for this meeting. Motion carried, 7-0. (Vice-Chair Palmer and Commissioner Thomas were not present)

- B) Selection of an acting chair**

Planning Commission Decision:

Commissioner Guerra moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to appoint Commissioner Diaz as Acting Chair for this meeting. Motion carries, 7-0. Commissioner Diaz accepts appointment. (Vice-Chair Palmer and Commissioner Thomas were not present)

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A) Minutes Approval: December 13, 2022**

Acting Chair Diaz moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Hernandez. Motion passed, 7-0. (Vice-Chair Palmer and Commissioner Thomas were not present)

- B) Projects considered by the Planning Commission in 2022**

Acting Chair Diaz move, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to accept projects considered in 2022 by the Planning Commission, seconded by Commissioner Wilson. Motion carried, 7-0. (Vice-Chair Palmer and Commissioner Thomas were not present)

6. PUBLIC HEARING

- A) Carson 2040 General Plan Update, General Plan Amendment No. 115-23**

Request:

To consider a Comprehensive General Plan Update, the Associated Final Environmental Impact Report, and provide a recommendation to the City Council.

Staff Report and Recommendation:

Community Development Director Naaseh presented the staff report and the recommendation to ADOPT Resolution No. 23-2847, entitled "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON RECOMMENDING THAT THE CARSON CITY COUNCIL APPROVE AND CERTIFY THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, ADOPT THE MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM, ADOPT THE CEQA FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS, AND ADOPT GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 115-23, THE CITY OF CARSON 2040 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE."

Director Saied Naaseh – It's very exciting to have the 2040 General Plan Update in the agenda. Staff has been working on this update for years. Presenting this to the Planning Commission and to the public is a very important step in the process.

Mayu Tanaka from Dyett & Bhatia provided a presentation with an overview of the General Plan Update.

Paul Stephenson from ESA provided a presentation with a brief overview of the CEQA process as it pertained to the General Plan update and provided a summary of the impact findings.

Acting Chair Diaz – Let the record reflect that Vice Chair Palmer, Commissioner Thomas, and Commissioner Huff arrived during Mr. Stephenson's presentation.

Assistance City Attorney Jones – We now have ten commissioners present and we can only have nine members actively participating and voting at any one time. If all three commissioners that just arrived wish to actively participate and vote it would bump the lowest ranking alternate from the acting participation status. Commissioner Wilson, who is the last Alternate, can remain, listen, and observe but would not be voting or participating. We also have the issue of who is the Chair for the night. I think we should stick with the designation for tonight as acting Chair, which would be Commissioner Diaz.

Director Naaseh – I am going over several letters that I received.

(Email) Mr. Arnold Ng is referring to an area around Anelo Avenue, which is around Figueroa, the 405, and the 110. The designation for this area has been changed from Light Industrial to Mixed Use Residential. Mr. Ng wants to know that on what basis can the local government or the city change the zoning of this area. He further states that these lots are next to power lines and the freeway, and that they are not appropriate for residential.

Director Naaseh - It's basically covered on the city's police powers that through the General Plan and through zone changes or Specific Plans we can change the zoning or the land use designation of properties. The business residential Mixed Use provides a variety of uses including residential, commercial, and some light industrial uses as well.

(Email) Mr. Malcolm Orland is wondering what the land use designation would be for El Cordova Apartments east of the South Bay Pavilion and if there's an environmental clearance for future development on the Shell Oil site. He also inquired on the potential Specific Plan area on the General Plan for the South Bay Pavilion.

Director Naaseh - The land use designation is changing from High Density, which allows 25 units per acre to Downtown Mixed Use, which allows up to 65 units per acre. If community benefits are provided, it could go up to 91 units per acre. There's a proposed 18-acre park in the Shell Oil site for future development. An environmental analysis will be done when a proposal is presented before the city to ensure that building the park is appropriate and can be mitigated appropriately. The South Bay Pavilion has a Downtown-Mixed-Use designation, which allows residential, and a Specific Plan would be required on future residential developments. All malls around southern California are evolving into higher density residential uses. This would bring more people that would help the retail and restaurants in the mall. It would make it a healthier place.

(Letter) Shell states that their land is contaminated, and it will not be suitable by 2040 for residential development. They added that the tanks to the west of their property are remaining, and the General Plan reflects that the land use designation for that area would be Light Industrial.

Director Naaseh - Residential is not the only use that is permitted there, they can also have Light Industrial and Commercial Uses. We will look at all the possibilities once they are ready to develop the site and basically make a recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council.

(Email) Mr. Mario Anderson writes on behalf of his 84-year-old grandmother. He provides pros and cons of the General Plan. They like the idea of High-Density development along the corridors, adding more flexibility to industrial areas, and moving away from heavy industrial industry and trucking. They also like the city-wide plan for walking and biking, the consideration of parking needs based on actual demand rather than mandates, and the preservation of single-family neighborhoods. They believe that FAR 1.0 for commercial development is more appropriate. They expressed that the High-Density areas are ignored. They strongly suggest reconsidering affordable housing requirements citywide and expressed some concern about the safety of bike lanes. They commented on the transit corridor and how the city is going to utilize the Silver Line on the west side on Carson Street and the Blue Line on the east side along Del Amo.

Director Naaseh - The FAR .5 as stated in the General Plan is appropriate as it allows room for parking. FAR 1.0 is more appropriate for commercial and urban areas that have a Mixed Use. Affordable housing is part of the Housing Element already approved by the Planning Commission. We will come back at a later time to propose inclusionary zoning requirements on future residential developments. We are in the process of implementing our bike master plan. It's a general plan to identify the corridors that we would like to have bike lanes and how those corridors would connect to each other. After the adoption of the master plan the next step is to design the bike lanes and make sure they are safe. We have gone through the process with engineering department, our consultants, and we have identified the improvements that are necessary to make our future bike lane network safe. However, there's a price to pay when you want to make these bike lanes safe. We need additional right-of-way and that is not always available. When it's available it's very costly. We considered the blue line and the Silver Line the most important transit destinations for the community to go to Long Beach or Downtown. We contracted with Long Beach transit, and they know that those are the destinations and to design their system to feed into those areas either now or in the future.

(Email) Mr. Virgil Cicoria points out a mapping error for his property on Anelo. He refers to the general area and states that it is not appropriate to change the General Plan designation from Light Industrial to Residential Mixed Use. He mentions that it's not appropriate to have residential in that area because it does not have a sewer.

Director Naaseh - The General Plan shows his property as Open Space and Park. The designation for his property should be Business Residential Mixed Use, we will correct the mapping error.

Assistant City Attorney Jones – It would be good if staff's recommendation could be deemed to incorporate the change to correct the mapping error as part of staff's recommendation so we know that a motion to approve staff's recommendation would include that correction.

(Email) Ellis Raskin refers to the uses in the Flex District, they are asking to include "but not limited to" for the uses mentioned in the general plan. They are requesting not to allow residential at the property northwest of University and Wilmington Avenue because the area it's mainly industrial. They are proposing some changes in the logistics uses in the Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial land use designation. They made a reference to the truck routes in the Heavy Corridor. They mentioned discouraging uses that do not provide certain benefits to the community. They added that outdoor storage to be screened from public view should not apply to master-planned uses.

Director Naaseh - Staff is okay adding the phrase "but not limited to" to the uses in the General Plan. Staff does not agree in removing residential from the Flex District, there are ways that residential could be successful there. We have included in the General Plan that truck yards, container yards, container parking, storage yards, truck terminals, storage uses, and similar uses should not be allowed because it's not appropriate for the Flex District. We don't recommend any changes. The commentor makes the same comment in the Light Industrial Land Use and the Heavy Industrial Land Use designation. I want to clarify that primary uses in the Light Industrial Land Use that involve truck yards, container yard, container parking, storage yards, truck terminals, and similar uses would not be permitted. If these uses are ancillary to a permitted use like a warehouse building, then it would be permitted because it would be part of the business. We did not make any changes to the truck routes. That is one of the studies that we have to do after the adoption of the General Plan. The Heavy Corridor is not designated on the truck route map, as part of our motion, we would like to amend the truck route that's in the General Plan to add the Heavy Corridor as well. Staff agrees with deletion of the language in Land Use Guiding Policy 15 which states "Discourage uses that do not support these objectives, including limiting industrial uses with heavy truck traffic." It's not fair to single out uses and say that we discourage uses that don't generate jobs, generate sales tax, or provide other benefits to the community. The General Plan it's going to dictate where these uses are going to go. I agree to the language deletion in Land Use Implementing Policy 19 which states that "Logistics and other heavy trucking uses shall be limited to industrial areas that provide direct access to freeways and the Alameda corridor. I don't recommend any changes to Land Use Implementing Policy 21.

Acting Chair Diaz opened the public hearing.

Loren Miles from Trustee HEG Trust (speaker) – Section 15151 of the SEQA Guideline states

that the following standards from which compliance is judged, adequacy, completeness, good faith effort, and full disclosure. HEG Trust has identified numerous, material environmentally related issues that fail to meet the above referenced standards, should a legal challenge ensue.

Todd Burnight (speaker) – We appreciate you taking the time to go through that and acknowledge some of the changes. Please revisit the designation of the Flex District. There are other locations where housing can be provided where you are not putting it next to industrial.

Arnold Ng (speaker) – I oppose the zone change from ML zoning to Business Residential on behalf of my client who is the owner of Southwest Trials at 18925 South Anelo. If you ever go out to Anelo, you will acknowledge that there is no visibility on that street for potential commercial uses. The ingress and egress are only one way, and it would be very difficult to attract the kind of commercial and retail uses that you would hope for, even with the proposed zoning changes. Speaking with residential developers, having units developed there would involve a difficult process for them to even anticipate given that there's no sewer connections, that they are close to power lines, and that there are environmental issues in that general area. The complexity of achieving what the city is hoping to achieve would be very difficult to do. The heavy industrial uses are currently in an area where it would not attract residential, commercial development, or Mixed Use. There's also no foot traffic in that area.

Director Naaseh – One of the reasons why we changed that area, particularly the one between Main and Broadway is because you have residential on the other side of Main. Currently, there are Heavy Industrial uses there. One of the things that we would like to do through the General Plan is to buffer those residential uses.

Lee Aceves (speaker) – My client's property on Anelo has had numerous environmental issues. There's a lot of heavy traffic. The LA river flood control channel runs parallel to Anelo Avenue. There are 20,000-volt power lines running across our client's property. Anelo Avenue is a dead-end street. It is not a candidate for residential use.

Assistant City Attorney Jones – In response to the Hanson Bridgett letter from Watson Land Company, we would like the changes Director Naaseh agrees with to be incorporated in staff's recommendation. Staff's recommendation is to approve the General Plan with those changes.

Planning Manager Palmer – In Land Use Policy 14, instead of must you agree with should ideally. How is that going to translate when talking about objective standards? What would the threshold be for should and ideally? That is the only thing I disagree with.

Director Naaseh – Now that I look at it again, it could go either way because the next sentence says when feasible truck routes should be designated to prevent trucks passing next to residential areas. They are talking about easy access to freeways and Alameda corridor and the other is passing through residential areas. Either way it's fine with me.

Commissioner Thomas – We have been looking at the General Plan for several years. We have had different phases and you heard information relative to how the outreach happened to the residents and businesses of Carson. The General Plan will hopefully be approved, but it does not mean that it cannot be amended. The General Plan is subject to amendments, upgrades, changes, etc.

Assistant City Attorney Jones – The General Plan can be amended generally by the same process which is adopted.

Acting Chair Diaz closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Decision:

Acting Chair Diaz moved, seconded by Vice Chair Palmer, to recommend the consideration of the Comprehensive General Plan Update and approve the General Plan with staff's recommendations as agreed to. Motion carried, 9-0.

7. MANAGER'S REPORT

Community Development Director Saied – It was an interesting meeting for all of us, it's our first meeting back in person. Thanks to our staff, Laura, Maria, and IT staff. Everybody worked hard to make sure everything goes smoothly. We included the projects that the commission approved last year, it's a big accomplishment. We'll make a presentation to City Council as well.

8. COMMISSIONERS ORAL COMMUNICATION

Commissioner Diaz – I would like to recognize Commissioner Wilson who was not a voting body this evening but was here prompt, is always attentive, and has always participated in previous meetings whether she was a voting party or not.

Commissioner Wilson – It's really nice to meeting everyone in person. The General Plan was very impressive, very comprehensive. I'm very excited about all the great things that are happening in the City of Carson. We have considered lots of great projects during my time here on the commission and I look forward to continuing to be here.

Commissioner Mfume – The General Plan was very comprehensive. I want to thank my fellow commissioners, city staff, and all of you for coming out. We are going to continue do our best.

Commissioner Huff – I enjoy working on the commission. It is so wonderful to be a part of the changes and to familiarize myself from the ground up as to what's happening in Carson. I commend everyone for coming out to voice and to see what is going on in our city firsthand. To my fellow commissioners, it's wonderful to see everyone's smiling faces. It is my honor to serve with this distinguished commission.

Commissioner Thomas – It's always a pleasure having been on this commission for two years. It's a challenge. I like to visit the sites when there's a project, I like to know where it is, who is around it. I like my decision to be very well informed. I would like to commend staff for their hard work over the past two year. I would like to thank Saied for the report of the accomplishments that this planning commission has had since January 2021 through December 2022. It is extremely impressive. We have seen a lot of projects come into this city. I expect that in 2023 we will do even more. The largest project in this city is the 157-acres, that project has been approved. I would like to commend Saied for his leadership, Assistant City Attorney Jones for your guidance, and staff, I can't complement you enough. On January 13th, we will be celebrating Martin L. King's birthday with a program. The

Human Services Department will be putting on a program at the Community Center at 6:00 pm.

Commissioner Rashad – It's good to see everyone back. I'm grateful for what we have been able to accomplish.

Commissioner Docdocil - I echo all my fellow commissioners. I would like to commend our community members as well as our staff. I appreciate all the commissioners for all their hard work.

Commissioner Hernandez – The 157-acres is something you should look into. This is really going to put us in the map.

Commissioner Guerra – Thank you for being here and participating. I echo the sentiment of our commissioners. Staff has done an amazing job. I am amazed at all the accomplishments.

Commissioner Diaz – Vice Chair Palmer has done an outstanding job to keep us all moving forward on the right path with staff's recommendation, staff's preparation for the planning commissioners, as well as to have an open-door policy. Staff has stepped up to the plate, helps facilitate this commission, helps by bringing back to full circle, and making sure we have the necessary tools to make prudent decisions.

Vice Chair Parmer – I appreciate the commission's support over the years. It's good to be back in person. For the next agenda, I would like to see the opportunity to vote for a Chair and a Vice Chair.

Attorney Jones – The planning commission should appoint a Chair and a Vice Chair in January or as soon practicable thereafter. We haven't placed an item on the agenda for permanent appointment of a new Chair and a Vice Chair yet because normally it's best practices to wait until most of the new appointments have been made so that the new board is appointing their new Chair and Vice Chair. We did hold off for the time being knowing that the remaining appointments are going to be made soon and then we add an item at that time. However, if you want to add an item for the next meeting to appoint a Chair pending that time until the majority appointments are made, we could do that.

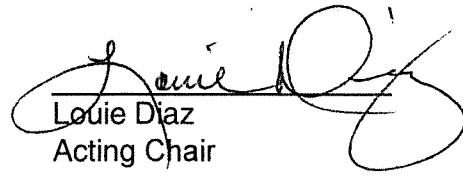
Commissioner Diaz – I would like to put on the agenda the projects approved by the planning commission and a presentation to the city council to demonstrate the hard work done through the collaboration of staff and the planning commission.

Director Naaseh - The mayor has already requested a presentation for council. As much as I would like to take credit for everything that comes before you, I have an excellent team behind me, and I could not function by myself. I have thanked Laura and Maria; I would like to thank Sylvia Rubio. I would be lost without her. She manages my calendar, which is a full-time job. I would also like to thank the planners. Without my staff, we would not look as organized as we are.

9. ADJOURNMENT


The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Planning Commission Minutes
January 10, 2023



Louie Diaz
Acting Chair

Attest By:



Laura Gonzalez
Secretary