

**CITY OF PALM SPRINGS**  
**Planning Commission Study Session Minutes**  
**April 26, 2017**  
**City Hall, Large Conference Room**  
**3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way**  
**Palm Springs, CA 92262**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Calerdine called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present This Meeting:** Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Hirschbein, Commissioner Hudson, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Vice-Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

**Absent This Meeting:** None.

**Staff Present:** Planning Director Fagg, Deputy City Attorney Daudt

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Chair Calerdine opened the public comment portion of the agenda. The following individuals provided comment:

ROBERT STONE noted that the Planned Development process is a valuable tool, but for over 10 years it has been a blank check for developers. He said it has upended the General Plan, planned developments are not a particular zone, and there are post-entitlement issues.

JUDY DEERTRACK commented that People for Proper Planning has done years of research on the issue of planned developments; the City does not have a tracking system, the planned development process results in customized zoning; developers get more benefits from the process than citizens; Palm Springs threw out its General Plan during the recession, and expressed dissatisfaction with the limited time for public comment.

FRANK TYSON commented on the lack of proper setbacks for planned development projects and clarified the definition and use of the term "density". He noted that lot coverage under planned development projects has increased, and action is needed now to save the town.

MARVIN ROOS stated that he disagreed with Ms. Deertrack's findings; the only thing being modified through the planned development process is the zoning. He noted that there are misconceptions about the use of planned developments. The planned development process is discretionary, and presented street grid maps showing the continuity of the grid in Palm Springs versus other Coachella Valley communities.

Chair Calerdine noted that because no other speakers had come forward to offer public comment, he would give an additional three minutes for Ms. Deertrack to speak.

JUDY DEERTRACK noted that her recommendation on the process is to follow the General Plan, the General Plan cannot be waived by the planned development process, and the planned development application is a rezoning.

Chair Calerdine closed the public comment portion of the agenda.

Planning Director Fagg gave a brief staff summary of the settlement agreement that was the basis for the formation of the Ad Hoc PDD Committee, and the task of the Planning Commission in review the recommendations of the committee and forwarding the recommendations to the City Council. He then proceeded to review the recommendations of the committee with the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission provided the following comments under the following topic areas:

*Suggested Changes to the PDD Ordinance:*

- The Commission noted issues with Recommendation #19 relative to the street grid, and suggested the removal of the phrase "unless contextually appropriate."
- Under Recommendation #23, the Commission requested clarification of the intent of the condition, and suggested it that would be more appropriate under the "General Requirements" section.
- The Commission suggested moving Recommendation #25 to the "Purpose" section, and noted that the use of the planned development ordinance for hillside areas should only be used to the extent that it was not covered by other ordinances.

*Suggested Changes to the Processing of PDD Applications:*

- The Commission suggested that Recommendation #8 and #9 should be combined.
- Regarding the timeframe for approvals, the Commission determined that the recommendation should not be forwarded to the City Council, and that the timeframe for planned development districts should align with the proposed Extension of Time ordinance (Case 5.1405 ZTA).
- The Commission discussed Recommendation #12 relative to sending applications to the Planning Commission before the AAC, and recommended that applications go first to Planning Commission for approval of development

standards and conceptual architecture and that the AAC should then review the architecture and return their recommendations to the Planning Commission.

Suggested Changes to the General Plan:

- The Commission objected to Recommendation #7, which states that gating of developments could be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Commissioners noted that the presumption was against gates unless there was a compelling argument.

Suggested Changes to the Zoning Ordinance:

- The Commission requested clarification on Recommendation #1a, and noted support for the recommendation upon maintaining a minimum lot size while also allowing for common open space.
- Regarding standards for hillside parcels, the Commission recommended the elimination of the term "significant" when referring to the percentage of slope, and suggested additional standards be developed for hillside sites.
- The Commission suggested that Recommendation #14 be included with the recommendations under "Suggested Changes to the PDD Ordinance."

The Planning Commissioners commended the work accomplished by the Ad Hoc Committee, and discussed the process for moving the recommendations forward to the City Council. The Planning Commission directed staff to continue the discussion to the next regularly-scheduled Planning Commission meeting so that final action could be taken on the recommendations.

There being no further discussion, the study session was adjourned at 11:50 a.m. to their regular meeting at 1:30 pm, Wednesday, April 26, 2017, City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way.

  
Flinn Fagg, AICP  
Director of Planning Services