

PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA  
July 29, 2020  
Council Chamber, City Hall  
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California

Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20, by Governor Newsom, this meeting was conducted by teleconference and there was no in-person public access to the meeting location.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Weremiuk called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Ervin, Hirschbein, Song, Vice Chair Moruzzi, Chair Weremiuk

Excused: Donenfeld, Lewin

Staff Present: Planning Director Fagg, AICP, Principal Planner Newell, AICP

**REPORT OF POSTING OF AGENDA:** The Agenda was available for public access at the City Hall exterior bulletin board (west side of Council Chamber) and the Planning Services counter by 4:00 pm on Thursday, July 23, 2020.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:** The Agenda was accepted, as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

1. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** None.

2. **NEW BUSINESS:**

2A. **2007 GENERAL PLAN LIMITED UPDATE – REVIEW GENERAL PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO THE GENERAL PLAN VISION STATEMENT AND PRIORITIES.**

Principal Planner Newell provided a presentation on the public input workshops, and the work of the General Plan Steering Committee on revisions to the vision statement and priorities.

Vice Chair Moruzzi asked Chair Weremiuk as to the reasons behind the changes to the vision statement; Chair Weremiuk responded that the steering committee attempted to incorporate the recommendations from the public input sessions, and address current priorities. The Planning Commission members discussed the following issues and made the following statements related to the vision statement:

- The vision statement should balance between commercial interests and the priorities of full-time residents;
- Statements about services and amenities should be geared to families;
- There is a need to balance economic growth with the needs of residents and a sustainable environment;
- The statement should include the enhancement and preservation of natural, cultural and historic resources; and
- The steering committee has done a good job in making the language more inclusive.

The Commissioners concluded that an additional edit was necessary to the vision statement as follows: “The City values its historical, cultural and natural resources and balances resident priorities with economic and sustainable growth.”

The Planning Commission then discussed the proposed changes to Priority 1. The commission members generally agreed with the changes drafted by the General Plan Steering Committee, and did not propose changes. Commissioner Hirschbein reiterated that it should be clear that full-time residents are a priority. Vice Chair Moruzzi stated it should be clear in the General Plan document that the priorities are equal and are not listed or ranked in any particular order.

The Commissioners discussed the modifications to Priority 2. Commissioner Hirschbein questioned the use of the term “livability,” and suggested that verbiage be added to note the need to mitigate issues associated with climate change and delete the second sentence of the priority. Commissioner Song noted that the term “livability” addresses that human factor and should be kept, but supported deletion of the second sentence. Vice Chair Moruzzi concurred that the first sentence of the priority was adequate, and the second sentence was unnecessary. Chair Weremiuk recommended adding the phrase “to mitigate issues arising from climate change” to the first sentence, and deleting the second sentence. The commissioners supported the amendment as recommended by Chair Weremiuk.

In discussing the changes to Priority 3, Commissioner Song concurred with the inclusion of education and employment issues in the statement, but questioned if the City had jurisdiction over education issues. Vice Chair Moruzzi questioned the term “economic foundations,” and suggested that using the term “City’s economy” would be adequate; Commissioner Hirschbein agreed with the substitution. Chair Weremiuk suggested that the first line might be revised to state “Develop and encourage new businesses, employment, and education opportunities...”

Relative to Priority 4, the commission opted to make no changes.

For Priority 5, Vice Chair Moruzzi requested that the term “styles” be replaced, and Commissioner Hirschbein suggested that the statement should be revised to read as follows: “Encourage development of housing units at a variety of densities for all life stages and all economic levels.”

In discussing Priority 6, the Commission debated whether the term “family friendly” should be included in the statement, and suggested the following rewording: “Create, maintain and enhance unique places and facilities that foster interaction and engagement.”

Regarding Priority 7, the Commissioners discussed the inclusion of reducing vehicle usage; Commissioner Song stated that Palm Springs is a city of villages, but we need them to be more walkable. Vice Chair Moruzzi offered that the opening statement should be reworded to simply state “...promote vibrant and walkable neighborhoods and commercial areas.”

The Commissioners discussed modifications to Priority 8, noting issues of historic architectural character and the design of new neighborhoods. Commissioner Song suggested that the statement should be revised to read “Preserve and uphold the distinct architecture and unique visual and aesthetic form in buildings...”

A brief recess was taken at 7:01 pm. The meeting resumed at 7:05 pm.

In evaluating the wording of Priority 9, the Commissioners discussed issues of mass transit, parking, intrusion of commercial vehicles into residential neighborhoods, and general flow of traffic. Commissioner Hirschbein suggested that the first sentence should be modified to include a reference to transit, and the second sentence should be modified to add language about adequate parking. Commissioner Song asked that the first sentence be revised to include “...protecting residential neighborhoods from commercial traffic to the extent possible.”

The Commissioners discussed potential changes to Priority 10, including the importance of conserving the natural beauty of the land, the preservation of open space, and the designation of open space as parks. Commissioner Hirschbein stated that open space is an important aspect of the enjoyment of the community, and that the issue of open space deserves a separate vision. The commission ultimately concluded to keep Priority 10 as written by the General Plan Steering Committee, and that Mr. Hirschbein’s comments about open space should be Priority 2.

The Commission continued their discussion on general topics related to the vision and priorities; Commissioner Ervin stated that there wasn’t any language about families in the priorities. Chair Weremiuk suggested that a statement could be added to Priority 6 regarding services and amenities for families. Commissioner Song stated that Priority 3 should include a provision for opportunities for higher education to support the city’s economic growth.

No action was taken on the agenda item; staff indicated that they would incorporate the suggested revisions and present the final version of the vision statement and priorities at the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

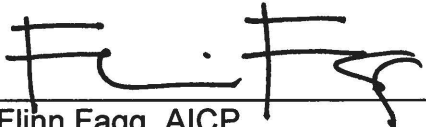
Mr. Newell completed the presentation by reviewing the schedule of activities for the General Plan update.

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS, REQUESTS AND COMMENTS:**

- Chair Weremiuk noted that the discussion regarding families might also be incorporated as part of the update to the Housing Element, in that there should be goals that address housing that is large enough for families with children.
- Commissioner Song discussed the public comment that was received about the General Plan/zoning map conflict with property in the I-10 corridor.

**PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 7:38 pm to a regularly scheduled meeting to occur at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, September 9, 2020.



---

Flinn Fagg, AICP  
Director of Development Services