



**PLANNING COMMISSION
SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
Regular Teleconference Meeting
November 18, 2021**

West Hollywood, California

THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD HAS ADOPTED BRIEF SUMMARY AND ACTION MEETING MINUTES, WHICH PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND POINTS OF DISCUSSION ONLY. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR DISCUSSION REGARDING ANY ITEM SUMMARIZED IN THESE MINUTES MAY BE OBTAINED BY VIEWING THE ARCHIVED VIDEOS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS AT www.weho.org/weho-tv/other-city-meetings

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Acting Chair Jones called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Carvalheiro led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Carvalheiro, Dutta, Lombardi, Thomas, Vinson, Acting Chair Jones.

Commissioners Absent: Hoopingarner.

Staff Present: Laurie Yelton, Associate Planner, Jennifer Alkire, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, Lauren Langer, City Attorney and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

Acting Chair Jones requested the meeting be adjourned in memory of Chair Hoopingarner's father Dr. Roger Allen Hoopingarner, and Jake Steven's mother Kathleen Stevens.

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission agenda of Thursday, November 18, 2021, as presented. **Moved by Vice-Chair Jones, seconded by Commissioner Carvalheiro and passes, noting Chair Hoopingarner absent.**

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

A. **October 21, 2021**

ACTION: Approve the minutes of Thursday, October 21, 2021 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner Vinson, seconded by Commissioner Dutta and passes, noting Chair Hoopingarner absent.**

B. **November 4, 2021**

ACTION: Continue to Thursday, December 2, 2021. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

6. PUBLIC COMMENT.

ROBERT OLIVER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, representing the Public Safety Commission. He introduced himself as the Public Safety Commission liaison to the Planning Commission. He commented on affordable housing.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

John Keho, Director, Planning and Development Services Department stated the following items will be heard at the next City Council meeting on December 6, 2021. 1) Appeal of the Planning Commission's decision of approval for the property located at 1301-1307 N. Fairfax Avenue, and 2) a proposed billboard project located at 9165-9169 Sunset Boulevard.

Other items of interest will be robot delivery, a presentation on the public benefit process, post pandemic land use action plan, and housing capacity studies.

He clarified the new SB9 state law which allows single-family lots to be subdivided into two lots and allow the construction of two units on each lot; for a total of four units. He stated this item will be brought forward at the beginning of next year to bring this item up to code in West Hollywood.

He expressed his condolences to Chair Hoopingarner and Jake Stevens for their recent losses.

8. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

Commissioner Vinson announced she will be stepping down from the Planning Commission after tonight's meeting. She stated it has been a privilege and honor to serve with this commission and thanked Councilmember Shyne for this opportunity.

Commissioner Lombardi expressed his condolences to Chair Hoopingarner and Jake Stevens for their recent losses. He thanked Commissioner Vinson for her service. He encouraged the community to get the Covid booster shot.

9. CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS. None.

11. NEW BUSINESS.

**A. 8555 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD
RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT:**

Lauri Yelton, Associate Planner provided a verbal presentation and background information, as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, November 18, 2021.

She stated the purpose of this item is to receive information pertaining to the recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed mixed-use development project and provide comments on the adequacy of the environmental document.

The original DEIR was prepared for a previous version of this project and was circulated for a 45-day public review period. That EIR was not certified, and no official decision was made.

After the public comment period, the project site was further expanded to include an additional residential lot and other modifications. The recirculated DEIR has analyzed environmental impacts of the proposed project based on changes made to the project as well as regulatory changes after its original circulation in 2017.

She clarified, since the time of circulation, the project site has been expanded to include an adjacent single-family residential property at 8552 West Knoll Drive, adjacent to the existing project site. In addition, Senate Bill (SB) 743 eliminated level of service (LOS) as a basis for determining significant transportation impacts, effective July 2020, and in November 2020 the City adopted new Guidelines to measure transportation impacts under CEQA based on the vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The City has determined that the changes to the project and the new VMT guidelines constitute significant new information such that recirculation of the DEIR is required.

One of two unavoidable impacts studied in the originally circulated DEIR included traffic (LOS-based analysis). Because the City Council adopted VMT Guidelines, which include VMT Thresholds in 2020 to measure transportation impacts of proposed projects under CEQA, the VMT Guidelines supersede and replace the existing LOS thresholds that were adopted in 2009, which was the methodology studied in the originally circulated DEIR. Therefore, LOS-based analyses are not included in this DEIR and the VMT-based analysis was studied and updated in this DEIR.

The proposed project was analyzed under the VMT screening criteria and was evaluated based on the five exclusion criteria to determine whether a quantitative VMT analysis was needed. The proposed project would not meet any of the exclusion criteria and therefore was presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact. Therefore, traffic impacts would be less than significant without mitigation related to VMT, which would not result in a considerable contribution to a cumulative VMT impact.

Based on the analysis contained in the recirculated DEIR, the proposed project's impact to noise was determined to be significant and unavoidable with mitigation measures incorporated, which will reduce construction and operational noise impacts of the project at nearby noise-sensitive receptors.

This includes nearby residences and the Ramada Plaza Hotel to a less than significant level, based on the noise thresholds established by the West Hollywood General Plan 2035 and its Environmental Impact Report.

All written correspondence received during the 45-day DEIR comment period ending on Monday, November 29, 2021, will be responded to, and included in the Final Environmental Impact Report. This also includes comments, questions, and concerns raised at the Transportation Commission meeting and the Planning Commission.

She reiterated the discussion for the Planning Commission during this public comment period will be limited to the review of the DEIR only, and the Commission will not be deliberating the merits of the proposal or deciding to support or oppose the project at this time. In the coming weeks, staff will gather all comments on the draft EIR and work with the environmental consultant to respond to each item of correspondence received during the comment period. This process usually takes a few months from the end of the comment period.

Karly Kaufman, Rincon Consultants continued staff's presentation and detailed the environmental review process.

The DEIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA and its implementing guidelines. Based on the analysis contained in the DEIR, the proposed project's impacts to the following categories were determined to be less than significant with no mitigation required: Aesthetics, Agriculture Resources, Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation and Circulation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire.

Based on the analysis contained in the recirculated DEIR, the proposed project's impacts to the following categories were determined to be less than significant with mitigation measures incorporated:

Biological Resources – Mitigation measures are recommended to reduce potential impacts to nesting birds during construction-related activities to a less than significant level.

Cultural Resources – Mitigation measures are recommended to reduce potential impacts to unanticipated discoveries of archaeological resources and human remains during construction-related activities to a less than significant level.

Tribal Cultural Resources – Mitigation measures are recommended to reduce potential impacts to unanticipated discoveries of archaeological resources and human remains during construction-related activities to a less than significant level.

Geology and Hydrology – Mitigation measures are recommended to reduce seismic-related soil hazard impacts, slope failure, and groundwater dewatering during construction to a less than significant level.

Based on the analysis contained in the recirculated DEIR, the proposed project's impact to the following category was determined to be significant and unavoidable with mitigation measures incorporated:

Noise – Mitigation measures are recommended to reduce construction and operational noise impacts of the project at nearby noise-sensitive receptors including nearby residences and the Ramada Plaza Hotel to a less than significant level, based on the quantitative noise thresholds established by the West Hollywood General Plan 2035 and its Environmental Impact Report.

Though impacts related to operational noise would be less than significant, an acoustical enclosure is to be installed around the rooftop generator to include noise reduction and/or rooftop screening to ensure the generator noise meets the City's noise standards.

The proposed project would generate temporary noise during construction resulting in a significant and unavoidable short-term noise impact that exceeds the established thresholds. Mitigation measures including on-site signage for 24 hour noise complaints, noise measurements retained by a noise consultant for verifiable noise complaints, the use of electrically-powered tools and facilities, construction notices mailed out prior to the start of demolition/construction, prohibition of idling equipment when not in use, controlled workers' radios, and mobile construction equipment using smart back-up alarms that automatically adjust the sound level of the alarm in response to ambient noise levels have been recommended, but would not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

Therefore, short-term construction noise impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

Acting Chair Jones opened public comments for Item 11.A.

MARK HUGHES, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on global warming, climate change, urban sprawl, increased traffic, parking, and affordable housing.

KYLE PATTERSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on job climates action plan, climate mitigation efforts, public transportation, and stated the city should request the developer to use local and skilled trained work force.

KAREN O'KEEFE, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of the proposed project. She commented on higher density, additional housing, parking requirements, and greenhouse gas emissions.

JUSTIN, WEST HOLLWOOD commented on neighborhood compatibility, and massing.

BINNUR KARAEVLI, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on affordable housing, height and massing, construction, loss of green space, current water table and geotechnical analyses.

MICHAEL O'REILLY, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of the proposed project. He commented on construction issues, liquefaction zone, high water table, height and massing, green space, shadow analyses, and aesthetics.

ACTION: Close public comment for Item 11.A. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

The commission commented on the project height and building envelope, natural grade versus actual grade, residential and primary access, vehicular daily trips, traffic stacking, proposed parking, pedestrian mitigation, hydrology analyses appears to be insufficient, ground water mitigation, engineering approach regarding the retaining wall, outdated images should be updated, utilities, natural gas confirmation, height clarification, construction mitigation, mass transportation and transit overlay region, base zoning should be used for consistency, number of requested concessions, loading and unloading, grading, shoring and construction timelines, movement of construction vehicles, shared parking credits, live work units, current sun and shade impacts, setbacks, site lines, massing, air circulation, noise mitigation, sound barriers, traffic queuing, sheriff's resources and increased density, and an archeological resources assessment.

Miguel Nunez, Fehr & Peers addressed and clarified the transit overlay zone. He confirmed this is a high priority transit area corridor.

The commission asked staff if they could return with an update regarding City Council's directive regarding the local hire work force. They also would have liked to have seen the alternative showing the no subterranean parking proposal.

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** None.
12. **EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR.** None.

13. ITEMS FROM STAFF.

A. Planning Manager's Update.

Jennifer Alkire, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manger provided an update of tentative items scheduled for upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

She expressed her condolences to Chair Hoopingarner and Jake Stevens for their recent losses, and thanked Commissioner Vinson for her service.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT. None.

15. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

A. Commissioner Comments.

Commissioner Carvalheiro expressed his condolences to Chair Hoopingarner and Jake Stevens for their recent losses, and thanked Commissioner Vinson for her service and time.

Commissioner Thomas expressed her condolences to Chair Hoopingarner and Jake Stevens for their recent losses, and thanked Commissioner Vinson for her service and time. She announced this is Transgender Awareness Week and on Saturday, November 20, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. will be a Transgender Day of Remembrance. She stated the year 2021 has marked the deadliest year for transgender people. More information is available at weho.org/lgbtq

Commissioner Dutta expressed his condolences to Chair Hoopingarner and Jake Stevens for their recent losses, and thanked Commissioner Vinson for her service and time.

Commissioner Vinson expressed her condolences to Chair Hoopingarner and Jake Stevens for their recent losses. She encouraged everyone to get the Covid booster shot and thanked everyone for their kind words.

Commissioner Lombardi asked staff if they could look into the constant water pumping out of the Melrose Triangle Project.

Acting Chair Jones thanked Commissioner Vinson for her service and time.

B. Subcommittee Management.

Jennifer Alkire, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manger provided an update of tentative items scheduled for Design Review Subcommittee, Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee, and Sunset Arts and Advertising Subcommittee meetings.

She stated there will be a request at the next Planning Commission meeting to schedule a special meeting of the Design Review Subcommittee on Thursday, December 16, 2021.

The Sunset Arts and Advertising Subcommittee has no further meetings scheduled for this year. An item will be brought forward at the next Planning Commission meeting to address additional meetings of this subcommittee for next year.

ADJOURNMENT. The Planning Commission adjourned in memory of Dr. Roger Allen Hoopingarner and Kathleen Stevens at 8:05 p.m. to a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, December 2, 2021, beginning at 6:30 p.m. This meeting will be a teleconferenced meeting (with detailed instructions for participation included on the posted agenda). **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of West Hollywood at a regular meeting held this 2nd day of December, 2021 by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioner: Carvalheiro, Dutta, Lombardi, Thomas, Vice-Chair Jones.

NOES: Commissioner: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner: Hoopingarner.


LYNN M. HOOPINGARNER, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:


DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY