

**MINUTES  
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD  
PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMISSION**

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2022  
TELECONFERENCE MEETING\***

**6:30 P.M. – REGULAR MEETING**

**\*IN AN EFFORT TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 (NOVEL CORONAVIRUS), AB 361 HAS AUTHORIZED PUBLIC MEETINGS TO TAKE PLACE VIA TELECONFERENCE WHEN STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE RECOMMENDING MEASURES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL DISTANCING.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Polachek called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.**

**A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Read by Chair Polachek.**

**B. ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Isaacs (she/her);  
Commissioner Karliss (he/him);  
Commissioner Larry (he/him);  
Commissioner Torres (she/her); Vice Chair  
Mason (he/him); and Chair Polachek  
(she/her).

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Solomon (he/him).

**ALSO PRESENT:** Helen Collins (she/her), Facilities and Field  
Services Division Manager; Erin Hamant  
(she/her), Senior Administrative Analyst;  
Samuel Estrada, Urban Forest &  
Landscape Maintenance Supervisor  
(he/him); Melissa Crowder, City Clerk  
(she/her); Brian League, Property  
Development Manager (he/him); Ric.  
Abramson, Urban Design and Architecture  
Studio Manager (Ric.); and Rebecca  
Ehemann, Arts Manager (she/her).

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Vice Chair Mason.**

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**ACTION:** Approve the July 13, 2022 Agenda.

**Motion by Isaacs, seconded by Karliss, and approved unanimously.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ACTION:** Approve the minutes of the prior Public Facilities Commission meeting dated June 8, 2022.

**Motion by Mason, seconded by Larry, and approved unanimously.**

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None.

5. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Isaacs shared a short update on the Kings Road Park Dog Play Area Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting. Members selected September for the public listening session and earmarked November to bring their recommendation back to the full Commission.

Commissioner Karliss thanked Chair Polachek for her term as Chair. He shared information about an upcoming pet vaccination clinic.

Commissioner Larry shared his participation in City-sponsored events since their last meeting.

Commissioner Torres thanked Chair Polachek for her term as Chair.

Vice Chair Mason shared his enthusiasm for the Aquatic and Recreation Center's opening and thanked Chair Polachek for her term as Chair.

Chair Polachek thanked her peers and staff. She toured the new Aquatic and Recreation Center and shared her pride for the City and the Commission's next leaders.

6. **CONSENT CALENDAR** – None.

7. **PUBLIC HEARINGS** – None.

8. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None.

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

**SUBJECT:** The Public Facilities Commission will nominate and elect a new Chair and Vice Chair.

1. Chair Polachek opened nominations for the position of Chair.

**Motion by Polachek to nominate Mason as Chair, seconded by Torres.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Commissioner Isaacs – Y**

**Commissioner Karliss – Y**

**Commissioner Larry – Y**  
**Commissioner Torres – Y**  
**Vice Chair Mason – Y**  
**Chair Polachek – Y**

**ACTION: Vice Chair Mason is elected as Chair to the Public Facilities Commission.**

2. Chair Polachek opened nominations for the position of Vice Chair.

**Motion by Isaacs to nominate Solomon as Vice Chair, seconded by Mason.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Commissioner Isaacs – Y**  
**Commissioner Karliss – Y**  
**Commissioner Larry – Y**  
**Commissioner Torres – Y**  
**Vice Chair Mason – Y**  
**Chair Polachek – Y**

**ACTION: Commissioner Solomon is elected as Vice Chair to the Public Facilities Commission.**

**B. URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

**SUBJECT: The Commission will consider implementing the plan for removal and replacement of trees as outlined and identified in the City’s Urban Forest Management Plan.**

Staff shared a presentation to provide the background and overview of the City’s Urban Forest Management Plan recommendations to remove and replace the diseased *Tipuana tipu* trees, the infestation by the Tipu psyllid insect, and areas of the City with the diseased trees identified for removal. The various replacement tree species will enable the City to attain age and species diversity among the public tree population. Implementation will be completed in three-phases to remove a total of 136 trees: Priority 1 trees are recommended for removal and replacement in the next 3 - 6 months; Priority 2 trees would be removed and replaced in 18 - 24 months; and Priority 3 trees would be removed and replaced within 48 months.

Chair Polachek asked the Commissioners if they had any questions for staff.

Commissioner Torres asked if staff have identified the replacement tree species and if the trees being removed may serve an alternate

purpose after being removed. Staff shared they are focusing on tree diversity and will return to the Commission at a future date with this information. The diseased trees will be destroyed after removal to eliminate risk of disease spread.

Commissioner Isaacs asked about the criteria used to identify tree removals as Priority 1, Priority 2, and Priority 3. Staff explained that a third-party certified arborist prepared the report by rating each tree's condition and rate of decline to then categorize the removal priorities.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Chair Polachek asked staff to lead public comment. Staff reported out that nine public comments were received via email prior to the meeting.

Anthony Lauer, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to approve staff's recommendation to proceed with initial implementation as outlined in the staff report and the removal and replacement of trees as outlined and identified in the City's Urban Forest Management Plan.

Tara Burrows, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to approve staff's recommendation to proceed with initial implementation as outlined in the staff report and the removal and replacement of trees as outlined and identified in the City's Urban Forest Management Plan.

Delmi Gavarrete, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to remove the trees and cited costs for vehicle washings and paint damage.

Janese Miranda, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support for the Urban Forest Management Plan's recommendation to remove and replace the diseased trees and eagerness for the project to get started.

Mayra Contre, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to approve the implementation plan and cited costs for vehicle washings.

Tod Hallman, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to remove the diseased trees and plant new healthy trees and cited dog discomfort due to sap and debris on paws and sap causing sticky home floors and shoes. They also shared as Watch Captain that the WeHo East Neighborhood Watch Group supports the tree removals.

Vivienne Clerissi, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to remove the trees and plant trees that are native to California and not destructive. They noted the trees are beautiful and provide shelter and a habitat but are extremely destructive and a nuisance to personal property.

They cited the sticky sap, costs for vehicle washings and paint damage, and considerations of moving because of the trees.

Matt Tully, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to proceed with the phased removal and replacement of the trees because efforts to resolve the infestation have not worked. They cited the sticky residue on vehicles, shoes, dog paws, and home floors and costs for vehicle washings for cars parked on the public street and in private driveways.

Roxanne McBryde, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to remove the trees. They cited longtime impacted community members eager for a resolution, costs for vehicle washings and paint damage, water conservation, and the sticky sap on all surfaces including dog paws and home exteriors and interiors. They also shared, as Former Watch Captain, the WeHo East Neighborhood Watch Group has supported the tree removals for 20 years.

Stephanie Harker, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to remove the trees in phases and hope for the new trees to grow tall and strong with a preference to plant native California trees that are larger in size than smaller tree saplings.

Michael Carter, WEST HOLLYWOOD, lamented the loss of trees and would like the City to share projections about overall biomass gain and loss. They thanked the City for supporting the monarch habitat program and for reopening the Detroit St. Community Garden. They asked the City to create a monarch pavilion, launch a compost sharing program, and seeding vacant lots with wildflowers and native plants.

Victor Omelczenko, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support to remove the trees and asked staff to confirm the public process was followed correctly for the nine public comments submitted via email. They also apologized for not bringing the Tipu trees issue to the Commission as a Former Public Facilities Commissioner. Staff confirmed all applicable Brown Act requirements for public meetings, public comment, and noticing were followed.

Chair Polachek thanked members of the public for providing their public comment.

Commissioner Karliss thanked the public for their comments and supported the phased removal approach to maintain tree canopy while the new trees are planted.

Chair Polachek thanked staff for the staff report and reiterated the complexities caused by pests and disease infestations, and asked

staff to consider contract growing agreements with local tree nurseries to ensure trees are available when the City is ready to plant them. She shared support for the City's urban forest tree diversity and canopy retention goals and our collective responsibility to plan and plant new trees for future generations.

**Motion by Torres, seconded by Larry, and approved unanimously.**

**ACTION: Approve staff's recommendation to proceed with initial implementation as outlined in the staff report and to return to the Commission in the future to review the tree species replacements.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Commissioner Isaacs – Y**

**Commissioner Karliss – Y**

**Commissioner Larry – Y**

**Commissioner Torres – Y**

**Vice Chair Mason – Y**

**Chair Polachek – Y**

**C. CITY MANAGER PLAYHOUSE ADVISORY GROUP**

**SUBJECT: The Commission will appoint two (2) members to the City Manager Playhouse Advisory Group.**

Staff shared a presentation to provide an overview of the design visioning process to replace the existing playhouse structure at 8325 Santa Monica Boulevard, formerly known as the Coast Playhouse. The primary role and responsibility of the Advisory Group will be to advise staff regarding strengths and weakness of the four design visions received by the City. Staff will return to Council with recommendations to select the preferred design team and the proposed contract for the design, production drawings, and specifications for bidding the project.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Chair Polachek asked staff to lead public comment.

Stephanie Harker, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support for the project and asked staff to consider adding a theater expert on the design team to ensure all required theater components are included in the design citing two different projects in other cities where theater operations components were not included in their completed projects.

Cathy Blaivas, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support for the project and asked if drop-off parking space will be included in the design.

Chair Polachek thanked members of the public for providing their public comment.

Chair Polachek asked the Commissioners who would be interested to serve on the Advisory Group. The Commissioners stated their preference to have the option to participate virtually rather than only in-person and shared concerns for the planned meeting times and dates. Staff clarified that meetings can be changed to a virtual format.

**Motion by Mason, seconded by Karliss, and approved unanimously.**

**ACTION: Appoint Chair Polachek and Commissioner Torres to be a part of the City Manager Playhouse Advisory Group to weigh the design vision alternatives for the new city playhouse facility at 8325 Santa Monica Boulevard.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Commissioner Isaacs – Y  
Commissioner Karliss – Y  
Commissioner Larry – Y  
Commissioner Torres – Y  
Vice Chair Mason – Y  
Chair Polachek – Y**

**D. 1343 N. LAUREL AVENUE – LAUREL HOUSE & PARK PROJECT**

**SUBJECT: The Commission will receive a presentation from staff and provide feedback about the feasibility study for the 1343 N. Laurel Avenue, Laurel House & Park project.**

Staff shared a presentation to provide an overview of the feasibility study conducted by a consultant for the 1343 N. Laurel Avenue, Laurel House & Park project, and the proposed use options for the space including the recommendations by the City Council Laurel Subcommittee for staff to evaluate an Artist-in-Residence program.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Chair Polachek asked staff to lead public comment.

Cathy Blaivas, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support for the project and provided historical background with regards to community members' interest to move forward with the project.

Stephanie Harker, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared support for the project moving forward and looks forward to the community engagement process.

Chair Polachek thanked members of the public for providing their public comment.

Chair Polachek asked the Commissioners if they had any questions and comments for staff.

Commissioner Isaacs supported ideas for the project to have a gallery space for artists to exhibit their artwork and asked staff to explain how an Artist-in-Residence program would work. Staff explained that the Arts & Cultural Affairs Commission will work on this over the next year with possible examples: an artist could propose a question in the city, an artist could answer a question in the city, the program could provide an opportunity for artistic growth and experimentation, an artist could install a temporary installation, etc.

Commissioner Karliss thanked staff for sharing the feasibility study and asked staff when it was decided to program the site for use by artists. He shared his preference to program the Laurel property to be inclusive and to keep parts of the main house available for use by the public and community (workshops, classes, gallery, etc.) rather than closed off for artist-only use/housing. Additionally, he shared support for a small performance space on the property. Staff explained the site use is yet to be finalized but staff were directed by the City Council Laurel Subcommittee to evaluate an Artist-in-Residence program including input from the Public Facilities Commission and other City Commissions.

Commissioner Larry thanked staff for the presentation.

Commissioner Torres thanked staff for the presentation and concurred with Commissioner Karliss' comments.

Vice Chair Mason supported ideas for the project to have a gallery space and a mixed up space with activations for public workshops and public involvement, and the Artist-in-Residence program with a focus on artists from marginalized groups.

Chair Polachek shared support for the project moving forward and concurred with Commissioner Karliss' comments to expand use of the spaces to allow for expanded public use. She had concerns and asked if the majority of the main house should serve as housing for four artists. Chair Polachek asked staff if capital funds have been identified for project soft and hard costs. Finally, she asked if staff could share with the Commission the feedback received from other City Commissions. Staff shared that the capital funds have been identified and the projected timeline is FY23 to complete programming and FY24-25 to complete the construction. Staff met

with the Arts & Cultural Affairs Commission and feedback included: support for a shared workshop/makerspace; conversion of the garages into day-use studios for local, resident artists; keeping noise to a minimum during evening hours; support for open-studios that the public can visit and gallery hours; questions about if the City needs a fulltime caretaker to live on-site (like Hart Park); and concerns for limited parking available in the area.

**ACTION: Provide feedback about the feasibility study for the 1343 N. Laurel Avenue, Laurel House & Park project.**

10. **EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR** – None.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Cathy Blaivas, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commended departing Chair Polachek for an excellent job and thanked the entire Commission for their hard work.

Stephanie Harker, WEST HOLLYWOOD, would like to see the City sound an alarm on climate change and the California drought emergency. The agenda item heard earlier was about removing trees because of pests proliferating but also another climate problem are cars and poor air quality – all of which are complex problems created by humans and should be solved by humans.

12. **ITEMS FROM STAFF**

A. **LOOK AHEAD CALENDAR FOR AGENDA PREP & COMMISSION ITEMS TRACKER**

No updates were made to the look ahead calendar.

Staff thanked Chair Polachek for her excellent leadership and work items accomplished during her term as Chair. Staff shared information that the nomination period opened for the Disability Service Awards.

13. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS & SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

The Commissioners thanked Chair Polachek for her service and leadership and congratulated new Chair Mason and new Vice Chair Solomon.

Vice Chair Mason thanked fellow Commissioners and staff for a great and effective year and looks forward to serving as Chair this next term.

Commissioner Isaacs is excited to swim in the new pools at the Aquatic and Recreation Center.

Commissioner Torres thanked staff for providing a tour of the Aquatic and Recreation Center. She asked staff about the delays opening the playground at West Hollywood Park and the timeline for the Dog Park

Shading projects. Staff explained the playground delays and shared the anticipated opening date will be in August. Staff does not have a timeline yet for the two Dog Park Shading projects, but their capital budgets were allocated in FY22-23, the current fiscal year.

Chair Polachek thanked everyone for their kind words and thanked staff for their presentations and work.

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

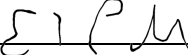
The Public Facilities Commission meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. to its next regular meeting\* which will be on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at Plummer Park Community Center, Rooms 5 and 6, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046.

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**Erin Hamant, Acting Recording Secretary**

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**Elaine Polachek, Chair**