

PLANNING COMMISSION RETREAT  
MAY 29, 2015  
9 AM to Noon

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Welcome/Goals for the Retreat..... Planning Commissioners
2. Roundtable: Planning Challenges .....Planning Commission and Staff
3. How the Planning Commission Conducts Its Business .... Planning Commissioners
4. Staff Proposal for Earlier and Broader Engagement with  
Commissioners on Planning Projects\* .....Planning Commission and Staff
5. Role of Planning Commission in Architecture\* .....Planning Commission and Staff
6. City Hall Renovation\* .....Staff
7. Review of Planning Issues the Commission Would Like to Address  
in the Upcoming Year ..... Planning Commission  
  
*Planning Commissioners will review the list of issues, identify those of particular  
interest, provide guidance to staff on aspects they would like to see addressed, etc.*
8. Wrap-up ..... All

*\*Short staff presentation*

## Topics Planning Commissioners Have Identified for Discussion

- How the Planning Commission Conducts Its Business: *order of items on the docket, scheduling of policy discussions or worksessions, mechanisms to reduce time spent on smaller cases to allow more time on larger cases and policy issues, suggested changes to staff reports or presentations, appropriate level of formality, guidelines for when Planning Commissioners appear before Council, etc.*
- Planning Commission Role in Proposed Projects: *Earlier notice of new planning proposals, opportunity for greater involvement in planning projects prior to hearings. Staff has a specific proposal on this topic, which is attached. Staff proposes to present this concept at the retreat.*
- Planning Commission role in Architecture: *What decisions about architecture are typically within the Planning Commission's purview? How is architecture handled in the review process?*
- City Hall Renovation Project: *Understanding this project, what can be learned from it, and how the Planning Commission could contribute to the discussion.*
- ARHA Redevelopment Projects: *briefing and discussion of project to-date; regular updates as the projects move forward; potential for Planning Commission involvement.*
- Special Use Permit Enforcement: *how staff enforces SUP conditions; how successful is enforcement; what are the challenges to enforcement; policy on enforcement while SUP amendments are pending.*
- Floor Area Ratio: *review of how it is calculated and regulated; possible changes to infill regulations regarding counting of basements; implications of the 7'6" dimension in the zoning code.*
- Planning Commission policies: *adopt a policy or provide guidance to staff on topics such as connecting new streets where possible and open space (optimal amount, counting rooftop and deck space, extent to which open space is accessible to the public).*
- Parking, including parking management: *parking districts, discouraging car ownership, role of parking meters, etc.*
- Community Input on Development and Special Use Permit Cases: *Applicants are encouraged to present proposed projects to relevant community groups, which can result in informal negotiations between developers and a subset of the community. Should we consider alternative models for civic engagement on regulatory cases? What should staff's role in these negotiations be?*
- Roundtable: Planning Challenges: *Planning Commissioners and staff will discuss the issues and opportunities they see coming for the City, Commission and Department in the future.*

## CONCEPT FOR EARLIER AND BROADER ENGAGEMENT ON ISSUES COMING TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Several Commissioners have requested that they be provided with earlier notice of proposed projects as they come in, and to have opportunities for engaging in those projects during their review. Staff prepared this proposed process for accomplishing that as a starting point for Planning Commission discussion at the retreat.

### Goals:

- Provide earlier information to Planning Commission and the public about cases that will be coming to the Planning Commission
- Provide earlier indications of staff-identified issues on proposed projects
- Make it easier for Planning Commissioners to identify projects they would like to track or with which they would like to be engaged
- Increased transparency on regulatory cases

### Elements:

- ***Continuous: Material available on the web:*** Generally, post applications when they are submitted and staff comment letters when they are sent to the applicant, so that the community has an earlier idea of what exactly is being proposed and staff's general response to it. For DSUPs, it may be at the Concept II stage, which is prior to the actual submittal of a preliminary plan, but there is information about the amount and type of development, a site plan, and sometimes architecture. Staff comment letters on Concept II submissions would be posted when they are sent to the applicant. When the project moves to the preliminary plan stage, again both the submittal and staff comments would be posted. For SUPs, it would be the application as soon as received (typically SUPs do not involve formal comments from staff prior to the staff report for the hearing).
- ***Weekly: Emailed summary for the Planning Commission:*** weekly email for Planning Commissioners with updates on recent planning projects and upcoming meetings.
- ***Monthly:*** standing director's report at Planning Commission hearings to review new projects or status of current projects and hear from Commissioner's about their interest.