



**PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING NOTES**

---

**Wednesday, September 26, 2012  
2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**1660 Mission Street  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 2001**

---

**1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Acting Director Hui welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

**2. MISCELLANEOUS PLANNING ISSUES**

Comments were made regarding having Planning staff available on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. Planning Director John Rahaim stated there were few permits that Planning staff could sign off on due to notification requirements. The majority of customers on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor are general information inquiries. Mr. Rahaim stated that he has been in discussion with Jonas Lonin and Acting Director Hui about staffing on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. They are hoping to have two shifts where senior staff could be stationed on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. Jonas Lonin suggested the idea of having a permit only line on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Director Rahaim added that staffing on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor will require hiring staff, which is not currently in the budget.

Another issue discussed is Planning's valuation of small projects occurring within a large project. Often, Planners will base the valuation of the smaller project on the large project resulting in high Planning fees. It was suggested that Planning staff use discretion in how they assess fees. Director Rahaim stated Planning is undergoing a fee study, and they are looking their fees comprehensively, as well as this specific issue.

**a. Discussion of Possible Public Advisory Committee for Planning**

Director John Rahaim inquired about the goal of having a Public Advisory Committee for Planning. Members expressed the perception of inaccessibility to Planning staff as well as the lack of response on projects. It was suggested to have a similar forum whereby the public can give their input for ways to improve communication and operations within the Planning Department.

Members asked for a better effort from Planning to have a representative available at these types of public input meetings and be responsive to suggestions made by the public. They would like to see some type of mechanism for incorporating public input for the Planning Department.

## **b. Discussion of Criteria for Historic Preservation Review**

Attendees expressed their concern about Planning's review of projects for buildings over 50 years old. Director Rahaim stated this is more of a CEQA requirement than a Planning requirement.

Director Rahaim stated Planning is in the process of hiring 20 positions but is facing a long process with DHR. Among the positions are two Preservation staff.

With regard to long delays, it may be due a number of factors such as historical research, the residential design guideline process, and notification processes that are handled by Planning staff. There was an inquiry as to how many man hours it takes for these items for one project. It was suggested that maybe it is a training issue that Planning management may need to be aware of.

Director Rahaim reported they will have a new Director of Current Planning coming on board in a couple weeks.

As it pertains to lack of response from Planning staff, Director Rahaim will revisit this issue with his staff.

DHR has approved two positions for Planning to work on City projects.

Acting Director Hui thanked Director Rahaim for his attendance.

## **3. UPDATE ON LEGISLATION AFFECTING DBI**

William Strawn provided attendees with a list of pending legislation. Supervisor Chiu is pushing forward legislation dealing with water bottle filling stations, which is currently in discussions at the Code Advisory Committee.

A meeting was held with regard to Chapter 41A - Hotel Conversion Ordinance, in which DBI is the enforcement agency. There will be a Land Use discussion on this item next week.

## **4. UPDATE ON PERMIT & PROJECT TRACKING SYSTEM**

Acting Director Hui reported that the project is on track and on schedule.

## **5. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

Acting Director Hui reminded attendees of the off-site CALBO training during the week of October 15. Customers will experience limited service during this week.

Luke O'Brien inquired if DBI had a mechanism whereby inspectors can narrow the time of inspection. Deputy Director Dan Lowrey will ask inspectors at their next staff meeting to give contacts a call with an approximate time of arrival at the job site. Cell phone numbers are not distributed to the public.

It was reported that the 1<sup>st</sup> floor computers are not working. Acting Director Hui stated MIS staff has been notified.

Dan Lowrey brought up an issue where customers who use the automated inspection scheduling system call back to confirm their inspection had been scheduled. These calls continue to inundate

clerical staff who, on average, answer 700-900 calls per day. They are hoping to have this function available online in the future.

There was an inquiry about the turnaround time for 3R reports. Ed Sweeney reported they are currently at a 5-day turnaround.

There was an inquiry if there was a statute of limitations on old complaints, as these may affect property titles. Dan Lowrey stated there is no statute of limitations on complaints; however, staff is working diligently to clear up complaints from the last 10 years. They currently have 8,000 outstanding complaints. They are working on researching these complaints to abate or forward to Code Enforcement for further action.

## **6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No future agenda items were discussed.

Planning Director John Rahaim agreed to attend the October meeting. The October meeting will be rescheduled to Wednesday, October 24 at 2:00 pm.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.