



PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING NOTES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013
2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

1660 Mission Street
2nd Floor, Room 2001

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

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

2. MISCELLANEOUS PLANNING ISSUES

- a. General Discussion of Planning/DBI Demolition Codes & Policies

Drake Gardner asked for clarification around demolition code and policies of Planning and DBI as the city is becoming full of energy inefficient buildings and space for new commercial and housing will be in demand. However with buildings that are 50 years or older there is potential to be a historic building and when wanting to save a certain portion of the building, the process is very confusing. Jeff Joslin stated this was a typical situation and brought Scott Sanchez, Zoning Administrator, to help with clarification. Scott stated there is more than one definition of demolition under Planning Code. The first definition, Article 10.11 deals with historic properties and the process subject to historic preservation under provisions. The second definition is Section 317, enacted by the Board of Supervisors, for preservation of relatively affordable housing. Scott stated this process can be very confusing. The appeal for 125 Crown Terrace illustrated this. Acting Director Tom Hui defined DBI's demolition policy as submitting Form 6 total demolition or percentage of what is being demolished and trying to look if building will need seismic upgrade.

3. UPDATE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO MAHER TOXICS ORDINANCE

Bill Strawn reported on the Maher Toxics Ordinance in which DPH and Planning are involved and will be providing more detailed information about how the process is going to work. A concern of the legislation is testing originally was for a limited area with larger projects and now it will expand citywide with smaller projects. DPH has 0.5 FTE staff looking at cases. Bill stated the way the legislation is set up, DBI cannot issue a building permit until DPH clears and certifies that soil toxicity does not exceed limits. Ground water testing may be required as well. The legislation will be coming to BIC next month and move to Land Use after.

More concerns were raised in regards to specific procedures of the legislation. BIC President Angus McCarthy stated the map is not clear if an area is in Maher zone. Jeff Joslin stated Planning will know if a site is in Maher zone. Hema Nekkanti is also talking to Planning to incorporate into DBI's system

the ability to 'flag' sites. Other concerns that were mentioned were remediation plans, when a site is contaminated, how would this delay projects? Does the project continue if DPH is still reviewing? How does DBI enforce the 50 cubic yards? How does DBI respond to specific questions? President McCarthy expressed concern on how DPH will deal with case increase. Bill stated DPH and Planning do not anticipate dramatic increase in cases; so far 67 cases are being worked on.

Acting Director Hui suggested all customers check with Planning and DPH if 50 cubic yards are disturbed and to test before applying for building permit to avoid delays. Acting Director Hui added he hopes DPH will have person on 5th floor counter to answer questions. President McCarthy invited PAC members to send questions or comments to Bill Strawn. Bill concluded that there are a lot of unknowns in regards to the legislation other than the overall objective. DPH's perspective is trying to make sure people aren't developing areas that will cause long term health problems.

4. UPDATE ON LEGISLATION AFFECTING DBI

Bill Strawn reported the month of May is Fee Waiver Month, courtesy of Supervisor Tang, for small business owners getting awning replacement permits. MIS has a record of 1-2 requests so far. Last year there were about 10 requests.

Bill stated there have been 16-20 requests for the Grab Bar legislation to date. Permit applicants have until June 14 to apply for permit waivers, and then normal fees will apply.

5. UPDATE ON PERMIT & PROJECT TRACKING SYSTEM

Hema Nekkanti reported PPTS is being tested and has been receiving good feedback from test users. Next round of testing will be more complex. Bill Strawn added Channel 7 aired a story saluting DBI and Planning for PPTS and being able to follow projects with greater detail. This positions both departments in leading the way of applying good use of technology.

6. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Pamela Levin reported the Fee Deferral Program is ending July 1st. Notification to 6,800 people was mailed last week. The same notification has been posted around DBI and the website, trying to make people aware of steps to take if a project wants to get into this program before it expires. Those interested must have submitted a building or site permit, as well as fill out and submit a Fee Deferral Request Form. The Planning Commission will be meeting on this item on June 13.

There was an inquiry of permit valuations. A \$10,000 Demo Permit was pulled but a plan checker was not willing to remove values. Acting Deputy Director Ed Sweeney will assist with this.

An issue was brought up that more people are coming to 5th floor not prepared and it backs up intake. Customers should begin the process on the 1st floor. Acting Deputy Director Ed Sweeney will check with staff on this.

Acting Deputy Director Dan Lowrey stated inspections are busy in the downtown districts. He advised customers to book their inspections 4 days to a week in advance. If there are issues, senior inspectors should be contacted.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

No future agenda items were discussed.

Acting Director Hui said future agenda items should be brought to Carolyn Jayin's (Carolyn.Jayin@sfgov.org) attention for the next meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:04pm