



MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE

February 10, 2025

6:09 PM

In accordance with City policy, all Planning Commission meetings are recorded on audio and video in their entirety and are available for review in the Community Development Department (CDD). These minutes are a summary of the action taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Ed Acosta, Vice-Chair Peter Radin, and Commissioners Daniel Dodge, Lowell Hurst, Lucy Rojas, and Jennifer Veitch-Olson were present. Commissioner Brando Sencion was absent.

A. MOTION TO EXCUSE ABSENT PLANNING COMMISSIONERS (IF ANY)

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Hurst, seconded by Commissioner Veitch-Olson, and carried by the following vote to excuse Commissioner Sencion:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Dodge, Hurst, Veitch-Olson
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	Sencion
ABSTAIN:	COMMISSIONERS:	Acosta, Radin, Rojas

Staff members present were Interim Community Development Director Justin Meek, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Matt Orbach, Assistant City Attorney Denise Bazzano, Administrative Analyst Elena Ortiz, Permit Technician Rob Manansala, and City Interpreter Carlos Landaverry.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Dodge led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PRESENTATIONS & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

City Clerk Irwin Ortiz shared that an ethics training will be taking place at the next City Council meeting on February 25, 2025. City Clerk added the City Charter has been revised and is accepting applications for different boards and commissions.

B. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Hurst introduced himself to the Commissioners and public.

Commissioner Dodge welcomed Hurst and shared a supporting comment regarding Watsonville being a Sanctuary City.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. MOTION APPROVING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 3, 2024, REGULAR MEETING

PUBLIC INPUT

None

MOTION: It was moved by Vice-Chair Radin, seconded by Commissioner Rojas, and carried by the following vote to approve the Consent Agenda:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Hurst, Radin, Rojas,
Veitch-Olson

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Sencion

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. CONSIDERATION OF A ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 14-41 (DRIVE-THROUGH FACILITY RESTRICTIONS) OF THE WATSONVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE TO REMOVE THE 150-FOOT RESIDENTIAL SETBACK REQUIREMENT FROM THE THOROUGHFARE COMMERCIAL (CT), NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTER (CNS), AND VISITOR COMMERCIAL (CV) ZONING DISTRICTS

1) Staff Report

Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach gave the presentation.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Hurst asked for a relative example of what 150-foot-distance looks like. In answering, the Interim Community Development Director Meek explained it's the depth of a standard residential lot and simplified it to fifty yards.

Commissioner Dodge inquired where the 150-foot setback mark starts. In answering, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach clarified it starts at the boundary of the adjacent residentially zoned parcel.

Commissioner Dodge inquired how the recommendation fit into the City's General Plan Update. In answering, Interim Community Development Director Meek shared the different zoning districts and explained the corridors this recommendation will apply to for further infill and growth.

Commissioner Dodge further inquired if the recommendation has any effect on the Caltrans projects. In answering, Interim Assistant Community Development Director explained that the Caltrans projects such as auto-oriented uses, arterials and commercial thoroughfares, and other uses have been taken into consideration.

Commissioner Rojas asked for if there is another Municipal Code that indicates an existing minimum range of setback around residential areas. In answering, Interim Assistant Community Development Director explained there are setback requirements for development of structures on property. The difference is the current setback holds restrictions on drive-through lane, menu board, and pick-up windows.

Commissioner Rojas asked for clarification on the outcome of the Commission's decision. In answering, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach explained the Planning Commission is making a recommendation to Council to make the change for a consideration of a first and a second reading.

Interim Community Development Director Meek added further information regarding setback requirements.

Commissioner Dodge shared an example of streets with no setbacks and inquired if the zoning regulations would allow structures to be developed in the same way. In answer to Commissioner Dodge's inquiry, Interim Community Development Director Meek shared the setbacks requirements for new development, with a minimum setback of 15 feet.

Commissioner Hurst shared a comment regarding the 150-foot setback and asked to reference what the findings were that established the length of setback as part of the Chapter. Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach explained the analysis in the staff report identified the desire to reduce negative impacts of automobile use around residential areas that create nuisance complaints.

Commissioner Veitch-Olson shared a comment referencing a project that requested and exemption for a drive-through setback and was considered by the Planning Commission. She reminded Commissioners that there has been existing public input that do not support more drive-throughs.

Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach shared all Interested Parties were informed via Public Hearing Notice of the Zoning Code Text Amendment.

Vice Chair Radin shared a comment regarding the order of events that involve Planning Commission and City Council decisions pertaining to this item and asked if he was correct. Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach clarified there are two tracks and further explained the timeline of events.

Vice Chair Radin inquired if the current Ordinance had been adopted since 2001, and Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach clarified it was adopted in year 2000. Vice Chair Radin further shared a comment regarding the nature of the town changing.

Commissioner Rojas asked for clarification regarding a related project to this item that was pulled from the meeting. Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach answered this is the first time the Drive-through Ordinance is being presented to the Planning Commission. The project being inquired will be the following item in the Agenda, item 5.B.

Commissioner Dodge further explained that the current item is deciding on the 150-foot setback.

Commissioner Rojas shared a comment explaining the current Drive-Through Ordinance is relative to the project that had been presented. In clarifying, Assistant City Attorney Bazzano confirmed this is a legislative action and it is a separate track distinct from the project that Planning Commission previously considered.

In further answering Commissioner Rojas, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach shared the Zoning Map that described the zones related to the removal of the setback requirements.

Commissioner Hurst inquired if Pharmacy's are considered drive-throughs, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach confirmed that is correct.

3) Public Hearing

Chair Acosta opened the public hearing.

William Hansen shared a comment regarding Neighborhood Commercial (CN), Zoning recommendation, and Drive-Through Ordinance recommendations.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Acosta closed the public hearing.

4) Appropriate Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Vice Chair Radin, seconded by Commissioner Dodge, and carried by the following vote to approve the following recommendation:

RESOLUTION NO. 02-25 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 14-41 (DRIVE-THROUGH FACILITY RESTRICTIONS) OF THE WATSONVILLE MUNICIPAL

CODE TO REMOVE THE 150-FOOT RESIDENTIAL SETBACK REQUIREMENT FROM THE THOROUGHFARE COMMERCIAL (CT), NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTER (CNS), AND VISITOR COMMERCIAL (CV) ZONING DISTRICTS

5) Deliberation

Commissioner Dodge shared a comment in support of the project.

Commissioner Hurst shared a comment regarding the drive-throughs and expressed his concern regarding the removal of 150-foot setback buffer.

Vice Chair Radin shared a comment in support of the item and acknowledged the involvement of the community.

6) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Dodge, Radin, Rojas, Acosta
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Hurst, Veitch-Olson
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	Sencion

B. RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT (PP2025-8346) CHANGING THE ZONING MAP DESIGNATION FROM NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTER TO THOROUGHFARE COMMERCIAL FOR A 1.18± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 632 EAST LAKE AVENUE (APN: 017-321-02), FILED BY VANCE SHANNON, APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF BILL HANSEN, PROPERTY OWNER

1) Staff Report

Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach gave the presentation.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Dodge inquired if the project is consistent with the existing land use. Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach confirmed that is correct.

Commissioner Hurst asked if Caltrans has been consulted in the state highway network. In answering, Assistant Community Development Director Meek clarified Caltrans will be consulted for development projects concerning the state highway system, but not for Zoning changes.

3) Applicant Presentation

William Hansen with Pacific Coast Development gave the presentation.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

None

5) Public Hearing

Chair Acosta opened the public hearing.

Hearing no comments, Chair Acosta closed the public hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Hurst, seconded by Commissioner Radin, and carried by the following vote to approve the following recommendation:

RESOLUTION NO. 03-25 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT TO CHANGE THE ZONING DESIGNATION OF THE SUBJECT PARCEL LOCATED AT 632 EAST LAKE AVENUE (APN: 017-321-02) FROM NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTER (CNS) TO THOROUGHFARE COMMERCIAL (CT), FILED BY VANCE SHANNON, APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF BILL HANSEN, PROPERTY OWNER; AND FINDING THE ZONING MAP AMENDMENT EXEMPT FROM REVIEW UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES § 15061(B)(3)

7) Deliberation

None

8) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Dodge, Hurst, Radin, Rojas, Veitch-Olson, Acosta
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	Sencion

Assistant City Attorney Bazzano read the appeal language.

6. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Interim Community Development Director Meek shared that the City will provide a joint ethics training on February 25, 2025. Interim Director Meek also reported that the Notice of Preparation for the General Plan EIR went out for a second time to Commissioners and Interested Parties and a second Scoping Meeting will happen on February 18, at 1:00 PM, via zoom meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Acosta adjourned the meeting at 7:21 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

Justin Meek, Secretary
Planning Commission

Ed Acosta, Chair
Planning Commission

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