

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2020 BEGINNING AT  
7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD,  
LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

**Please Note: Per California Executive Order N-29-20, the Commissions will meet via teleconference only. Members of the Public may call (773) 231-9226 to participate in the conference call (Meeting ID: 148 825 5243) Members of the Public may only comment during times allotted for public comments. Public testimony will be taken at the direction of the Commission Chair and members of the public may only comment during times allotted for public comments. Members of the public are also encouraged to submit written testimony prior to the meeting at [PlanningCommission@losaltosca.gov](mailto:PlanningCommission@losaltosca.gov) or [Planning@losaltosca.gov](mailto:Planning@losaltosca.gov). Emails received prior to the meeting will be included in the public record.**

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Chair Ahi, Commissioners Bressack, Lee, Marek and Meadows

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Bodner and Commissioner Samek

STAFF: Community Development Director Biggs, Planning Services Manager Persicone and City Attorney Houston

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**1. Planning Commission Minutes**

Approve minutes of the regular meeting of April 16, 2020.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Bressack, seconded by Commissioner Meadows, the Commission approved the minutes from the April 16, 2020 Regular Meeting.

The motion was approved (4-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Ahi, Bressack, Lee and Meadows

NOES: None

ABSENT: Bodner and Samek

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**2. Zoning Text Amendment- ZTA 20-0001 (Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance)**

Zoning Text Amendments (ZTA 20-0001) to Chapter 14.14 (Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance) of the Los Altos Municipal Code pursuant to recent modifications to state law.

This item was continued from the May 7, 2020 PC meeting.

*Project Manager: Guido F. Persicone, Planning Services Manager*

Staff requested a continuance of the ADU Ordinance due to last-minute correspondence received from Matthew Gelfand of Californians for Homeownership.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Meadows, seconded by Commissioner Bressack, the Commission continued the Zoning Text Amendment and ADU Ordinance to the June 4, 2020 Planning Commission meeting to address concerns raised in the letter that was received.

The motion was approved (4-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Ahi, Bressack, Lee and Meadows

NOES: None

ABSENT: Bodner and Samek

## INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

### 3. A presentation regarding implementation of Senate Bill 743 and a new vehicle miles traveled policy (VMT) in Los Altos.

*Project Manager, Guido F. Persicone, Planning Services Manager, Michelle Hunt, Project Consultant*

Planning Services Manager Persicone gave a brief introduction of the item explaining that the City has to change how they assess and review traffic through the environmental review process.

Project consultant Michelle Hunt from Hexagon Transportation Consultants gave a presentation on the background of a vehicle miles traveled policy (VMT). She explained why the City needs to make this change, how it relates to the City's and State's environmental plans and policies, the recommended framework for the policy, and what happens to the City's existing level of service policy (LOS).

The Commission then discussed the proposed VMT Policy.

Commissioner Meadows:

- Agreed, projects less than 110 trips can be screened out.
- 50,000 square feet is a fine to use as a base rate for retailers such as Lucky's or Whole Foods.
- Noted it was tough to do away with LOS standards because they are useful for the evaluation of local impacts to circulation and networks and recommended that LOS review still be required for projects.

Commissioner Lee:

- The 110 daily trip count is a fine threshold.
- For retail, we could potentially go lower than 50,000 square feet because there are fewer large retailers in Los Altos and none, to the best of his knowledge are being contemplated.
- A threshold set 15 percent below the standard is okay to use because there is no other data to support a different number.
- Yes, maintain our current Level of Services (LOS) policy because it is important to monitor circulation in the downtown.

Commissioner Bressack:

- Agreed with Commissioners Lee and Meadows.
- Raised a question regarding the subtle difference that Commissioner Meadows brought up because Rancho Shopping Center is a compilation of many small businesses vs. one or two large ones and this is a nuance that is not captured well by the VMT approach.
- Suggested that the LOS standards not be maintained because applying both would be very confusing.

- Asked if a trip lever could be implemented that, for example, if the LOS at an intersection drops a significant amount will require an analysis other than VMT?

Commissioner Marek:

- Agreed with the other Commissioner comments, except for retention of the LOS Analysis.
- Agrees with Commissioner Bressack on not keeping the LOS.

Chair Ahi:

- Is okay with the 110 trips being screened out.
- Lowering the 50,000 square feet is wise, because there are so many retailers right below that threshold.
- 15 percent lower threshold sounds right.
- LOS may need to be implemented in some cases, such as in downtown, but not across the board.
- Time will tell and we will need to see how this works for the first few projects where it applies.

4. **2020 State Housing Law Update: Receive a presentation from the City Attorney's Office and Community Development Department on new State Housing Laws that took effect at the start of 2020.**

*City Attorney, Jolie Houston.*

Community Development Director Biggs introduced the item.

City Attorney Houston presented a general overview and update on the recently enacted California Housing Laws for 2020. She stated the most substantial changes were SB 330, ADU legislation changes to those that deal with surplus government properties. She said the state is mandating an increase in the supply of housing and as they do that, it reduces the City's discretion for housing projects.

In regards to SB 330, she stated that the key to an SB 330 project is that City requirements must be objective and transparent; a preliminary application freezes fees and standards; a maximum of five public hearings are allowed (study sessions and appeals count towards this), explained some exceptions to the five public hearings; limits City's ability to request more information; and shortened deadlines under the Permit Streamlining Act.

Planning Services Manager Persicone briefly mentioned SB 1385 which is still in its preliminary stage that would unblock existing land meant for commercial office and retail for potential residential development by making housing an eligible use on those sites.

Following her presentation, the City Attorney made herself available to answer Commissioner questions.

Commissioner Bressack asked about recourse for circulation safety at the exterior side yard given that now an ADU be only four feet from the property line.

Planning Services Manager Persicone responded that HCD said no, we could only require a four-foot side yard setback on a corner lot even for health and safety reasons.

Commissioner Meadows asked if some of these new laws/bills would layer over some of the others? City Attorney Houston replied yes, except for SB 330, which has its own process rules.

5. **A presentation by the Planning Services Manager regarding Senate Bill 330 and it's impacts on the operations of the Planning Division.**

*Planning Services Manager, Guido F. Persicone*

Planning Services Manager Persicone presented SB 330 and gave an update on the checklist.

Planning Services Manager Persicone and City Attorney Houston answered questions of the Commission.

Commissioner Meadows noted that this will require staff to carefully evaluate SB 330 projects so no issues would arise.

Commissioner Lee asked when SB 330 goes into effect? City Attorney Houston replied it is in effect now.

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Community Development Director Biggs reported on the May 12, 2020 City Council meeting regarding the small business relief fund program that City Council approved.

**POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Community Development Director Biggs provided an overview of upcoming projects on the Commission's future meeting agendas.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Ahi adjourned the meeting at 9:29 P.M.

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Jon Biggs  
Community Development Director