



# CITY OF MILPITAS

## Planning Commission

### MEETING MINUTES

7:00pm

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS,

455 E CALAVERAS BLVD, MILPITAS, CA

and

via TELECONFERENCE (Zoom Webinar)

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gupta called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Galang led the pledge of allegiance.

#### ROLL CALL

Recording Secretary Medina called the roll.

**PRESENT:** Chair Gupta, Vice Chair Caulkins, Galang, Albana, Medina-Ashby and Kong.

**ABSENT:** Awasthi

**STAFF:** Jay Lee, Christopher Creech, Lillian VanHua, Chris Sensenig (Raimi+ Associates), and Elizabeth Medina

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST/CAMPAIN CONTRIBUTION DECLARATION

Assistant City Attorney Christopher Creech asked if any member of the commission had any personal or financial conflict of interest related to any of the items on the agenda, and there were none.

#### APPROVAL OF THE MEETING AGENDA

By motion, approve the meeting agenda for February 26, 2025.

Motion/Second Albana/Galang

Motion carried by a vote of AYES: 6 NOES: 0

#### APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

By motion, approve the meeting minutes for February 12, 2025.

Motion/Second Kong/Caulkins

Motion carried by a vote of AYES: 4 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 2 (Albana, Galang)

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Planning Director Lee shared that the March 12 meeting will be cancelled. He also mentioned comment period for Comprehensive Zoning Update was open.

#### PUBLIC FORUM

Chair Gupta invited members of the public to address the commission, and there were none.

#### PUBLIC HEARING

**IX-1 Housing Opportunity Districts (HODs) - P-GP24-0001, P-ZA24-0001:** Addendum to the Milpitas General Plan 2040 EIR, General Plan Text Amendment, and Zoning Text and Map Amendments: Review and discuss the Final Housing Opportunity Districts (HODs) and Addendum to the Milpitas General Plan 2040 EIR (SCH#: 2020070348) and provide a recommendation for approval to the Milpitas City Council. The HODs project scope includes: 1) a General Plan Map and Text amendment (GP24-0001) to update the Town Center (TWC) and Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use (NCMU) descriptions and amend the land use designation for certain parcels; and 2) a Zoning Map and Text amendment (ZA24-0001) to establish

the Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use (NCMU-1,2,3) districts and subdistricts, and update the existing Town Center (TC) districts to establish the subdistricts (TC-1,2,3). CEQA: An Addendum to the Milpitas General Plan Update Final EIR (FEIR) (March 2021, SCH #2020070348) has been prepared pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164 to evaluate whether the Project's environmental impacts are covered by and within the scope of the Milpitas General Plan Update Final EIR (FEIR).

(47:26) Project Planner Lillian VanHua and Chris Sensenig from Raimi+ Associates addressed commissioners' clarifying questions on various topics related to:

#### **1. Project Extension and Legal Considerations**

- The project deadline has passed, but an extension was granted by the California Housing and Community Development Department.
- The extension allows the city to finalize zoning regulations to qualify for reimbursement.
- Delay in project completion could risk funding being withheld.

#### **2. Impact on Housing Element Certification**

- Failure to adopt the project could lead to the state decertifying the city's housing element.
- Clarification requested on specific timelines for compliance and associated risks.

#### **3. Housing Site Inventory and Program Compliance**

- Housing sites identified in the element update justify meeting regional housing allocations.
- The city has a three-year window for rezoning identified sites.
- Program 15, which calls for 200 affordable housing units, lacks a specific timeline but must be adopted to maintain compliance.

#### **4. Projected Housing Build-Out**

- Discussion on expected development rates and potential reductions in total housing units.
- Assumptions made based on economic conditions and development trends.

#### **5. Hotel Zoning and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Regulations**

- No maximum FAR applies to hotels to allow for feasible development.
- Maximum height restrictions still apply.
- Hotels are a conditional use in the CMU zone and a permitted use in the town center but require site development permits.

#### **6. Parking Regulations and Exemptions**

- Some parcels fall under AB 2097, eliminating minimum parking requirements in high-transit areas.
- Market demand will primarily determine parking needs.
- Reduced parking minimums aim to encourage housing development by lowering construction costs.

#### **7. Affordable Housing Development Requirements**

- The city must foster, but not mandate, the development of 200 affordable housing units.
- Zoning changes are the city's main tool to facilitate this goal.
- Market conditions will influence actual development.

#### **8. Project Extension & Legal Implications:**

- Confirmation that an extension has been granted by the California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD).
- Discussion on legal deadlines for project completion and potential funding risks.
- Clarification that delays could lead to funding being withheld and potential decertification of the Housing Element.

#### **9. Housing Element Compliance & Timeline:**

- Inquiry on specific deadlines for project approval and the risk of decertification if not met.
- Explanation of zoning changes needed to maintain compliance.
- Three-year extension granted for rezoning efforts due to prior compliance.

#### **10. Projected Housing Development & Market Conditions:**

- Discussion on the requirement to foster, not mandate, the development of 200 affordable housing units.
- Analysis of economic factors affecting redevelopment likelihood.
- Identification of key sites that may be redeveloped within the current housing cycle (until 2031).

#### **11. Impact of Existing and Planned Housing Projects:**

- Clarification that recently approved projects (e.g., California Circle) contribute to the city's total housing allocation.
- Differentiation between citywide Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 6,713 units and the 200 affordable units goal within the CMU.

#### **12. Hotel Development & Zoning Regulations:**

- Inquiry regarding floor area ratio (FAR) exemptions for hotels.
- Confirmation that hotels must adhere to maximum height regulations despite no FAR restrictions.
- Explanation of permitted and conditional use zones for hotels.

#### **13. Parking Regulations & Transit Proximity:**

- Discussion on reduced parking requirements, particularly in transit-adjacent areas.
- Explanation of legislative constraints (AB 2097) prohibiting parking minimums in designated high-transit areas.
- Stakeholder concerns on parking costs and market-driven parking demand.

#### **14. RHNA Allocation Methodology:**

- Explanation of how regional agencies determine housing growth projections.
- Overview of factors considered, including land availability, equity, amenities, and regional development priorities.

- Confirmation of city advocacy in determining a fair RHNA allocation.

## 15. Traffic Impact and Mitigation Measures

- Acknowledgment of significant community feedback regarding traffic concerns.
- Request for clarification on whether traffic mitigation was specifically addressed in the presentation.
- Inquiry about whether the city's traffic engineer has been consulted to assess the impact of the proposed project.
- Confirmation that a representative from the traffic engineering department is available to provide insight on project-specific and citywide traffic analysis.

Chair Gupta invited members of the public to address the commission and there were several speakers most :

- Shankar J
- Johnny Reed
- Amit Banjara
- Vidya Ullal
- Rigo Gallardo
- Vikas Gulati
- Irshad Rasheed
- Ken Kecskes
- Shalvi Varma
- Padma Subbaraya
- Nikunj Valdya
- Vishal Gandhi
- Eileen Fears
- Manali Desai
- Nithya P.
- Vaibhav Shah
- Albert Zamora

These community members shared their concerns on the following topics:

- **Opposition to the Project and Environmental Concerns**

A community member expressed strong disapproval, calling the project "atrocious" and questioning its environmental study approval.

Concerns were raised about the impact on traffic congestion, particularly on Dixon Landing Road, and the lack of proper engagement with the public.

The legitimacy of public notices was questioned, with one member highlighting missing links to essential documents.

- **Community Engagement & Decision-Making Transparency**

Several members emphasized that a small turnout (45 people at the meeting) does not equate to broad community engagement.

Concerns were raised about whether decisions were being made based on limited participation and inadequate outreach.

- **Impact on Quality of Life**

A resident living near the project site worried about losing sunlight due to building height, although they appreciated that the building height had been reduced from six to five stories.

Additional concerns included inadequate parking, increased traffic congestion, and the shrinking availability of open spaces.

Questions were raised about how previous housing developments have impacted traffic, schools, and infrastructure.

- **Request for More Time and Discussion**

A request was made to delay voting and allow residents more time to review the new proposals and changes.

The need for additional public dialogue was emphasized to ensure that residents' concerns are addressed before approval.

- **Labor Standards and Local Employment**

A representative from the Nor-Cal Carpenters Union urged the commission to prioritize hiring local workers and ensuring strong labor standards.

Advocacy for apprenticeship programs to create career pathways for local high school graduates was highlighted.

- **Transparency and Ethical Concerns**

A community member mentioned receiving an alleged financial offer to withdraw opposition, raising concerns about the integrity of the process.

Calls were made for transparency and ethical governance in project approvals.

Motion to close the Public Forum.

Motion/Second Caulkins/Medina-Ashby

*\*Request to postpone the vote on the motion*

Amendment to keep public forum open.

Motion/Second Kong/Medina-Ashby

Motion to close the Public Forum.

Motion/Second Kong/Medina-Ashby

Motion carried by a vote of AYES: 6 NOES: 0

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission open and close the public hearing and adopt Resolution No. 25-004, recommending that the City Council: 1) approve General Plan Map and Text Amendment No. GP24-0001 to change the descriptions of the Town Center (TWC) and Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use (NCMU) and change the land use designation of certain parcels; 2) approve Zoning Map and Text Amendment No. ZA24-0001 to establish the Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use (NCMU-1,2,3) districts and subdistricts, and update the existing Town Center (TC) districts to establish the subdistricts (TC-1,2,3); and 3) adopt the Housing Opportunity Districts Addendum to the Milpitas General Plan 2040 FEIR (SCH #2020070348) and the Supplemental Letter to the Addendum \*with a suggestion to amend the parking regulations to be consistent with the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update and amend section four of the resolution.

Motion/Second Caulkins/Gupta

Motion carried by a vote of AYES: 4 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 2 (Kong, Galang)

## **NEW BUSINESS**

(2:31:00) Commissioner Kong prompted discussion on Traffic Management Task Force. The Planning Commission discussed a proposal to recommend the formation of a traffic management task force to the City Council, emphasizing community involvement in addressing congestion concerns. Commissioners strongly supported the idea, noting that traffic and parking issues have been major points of feedback from the public. The discussion expanded to include broader concerns such as school impact, health services, parks, and overall infrastructure, particularly in relation to the large-scale NCMU housing development. Staff clarified that while the commission could not take formal action, they could submit a consensus statement to the City Council. Ultimately, the commission unanimously agreed to recommend the creation of a task force, including community representatives, to study the impacts of the NCMU housing development on traffic, parking, schools, health services, parks, and overall quality of life. Staff will convey this recommendation to the City Council for consideration.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Gupta adjourned the meeting at 9:33 pm  
Motion/Second Medina-Ashby/Albana  
Motion carried by a vote of AYES: 6 NOES: 0

Meeting Minutes submitted by  
Planning Commission Secretary Elizabeth Medina