



**Planning Commission Special Meeting
Minutes**

**May 20, 2025 4:00 PM
Council Chambers
400 N. Douty St.**

4:00 PM CALL TO ORDER STUDY SESSION:

Mayor Lou Martinez called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present:	Absent:
JIM NELSON GARRY CURTIS GUNTHER NORRIS RICHARD DOUGLAS DENNIS HAM	Alternate Commissioner BERNIE MAREZ

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Study Sessions are considered Special Meetings under the Brown Act. Accordingly, comments from the public are limited to items listed on the agenda (GC 54954.3a). Public Comment will be accepted during each agenda item. A maximum of three minutes is allowed for each speaker. Please begin your comments by stating your name and providing your city of residence.

None.

STUDY SESSION:

- A. Study Session for City Council and Planning Commission with Mintier Harnish to provide an overview of the Environmental Justice, Objective Design Standards, and Subdivision Ordinance Update projects, review the schedule, and gather input on expectations and priorities for the project.

Deputy City Manager Jason Waters introduced the consultants for the project, Brent and Michael Gibbons of Mintier Harnish, and noted that the project is associated with the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grant the City received. Brent presented a project overview and the project timeline: 1) Project Initiation; 2) Environmental Justice Element (new State requirement); 3) Single-Family Objective Design Standards; 4) Subdivision Regulations; 5) Environmental Review--California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This will be streamlined; 6) Public Review and Adoption (Spring 2026).

Michael presented the Environmental Justice Element Overview. He stated that there are three tasks they will be working on with City staff: Environmental Justice Element, Single-Family Objective Design Standards, and the Subdivision Ordinance. He highlighted several Environmental Justice-Related Engagement Events; Single-Family Objective Design Standards (intended to streamline the permitting process). These will also be part of engagement events. The consultants mentioned earlier that they would not be discussing the Subdivision Acts at this meeting, because it is highly technical. They invited questions from the Council members and Commissioners.

- Council Member Kairis asked if the Environmental Justice studies would include a broad range, such as water quality and air quality. Consultants replied that it includes over 170 metrics, especially those most relevant to this area.
- Council Member Howze asked about the difference between multi-family and single-family. Consultants replied that our multifamily use does not currently require discretionary review. It is already permitted by right, so this would not further streamline it. Mr. Waters added that we do have standards for multifamily development, such as setbacks and height, but this is looking at design criteria.
- Council Member Regan asked if the Objective Standards would be for existing neighborhoods or only new neighborhoods. Consultants answered that they would be only for new projects. She asked if there would be industrial uses next to residential, for example. Mr. Waters replied that projects must conform to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and the City tries to avoid those types of conflicts. She expressed concern that the farmers might be affected by Environmental Justice. Consultants replied that the intent is not to limit development near agriculture, but they try to create more education regarding pesticides and other alternatives. She also mentioned issues she has seen with some neighborhood designs. As a realtor, she recommended specific construction entrances, so other vehicles can avoid tire damage from nails and other items that get dropped during construction. She also recommended that custom home plan reviews include checking that homes do not look into the backyards of neighboring homes. Consultants added that they will also be reaching out to the development community of single-family builders, and these types of items will be discussed with developers.
- Vice Mayor Paden asked if there is any further public input after the project is adopted. He suggested they make extra effort to inform the community that they will not have input after it is approved. Consultants replied that some communities opt to adopt a plan by resolution, rather than codify it, because you can change the standards more easily. Other communities have an annual, or twice-a-year, report looking at what is working and what adjustments might need to be made.
- Commissioner Ham noted that we are seeing smaller lots (5,000) and large subdivisions; and, during the phasing, there are only one or two access points to the whole subdivision. He asked if these types of issues would be evaluated in the guidelines. The consultants stated that they could be. They listed some examples of other concerns that might be addressed. Mr. Waters mentioned that we are now seeing even smaller lots, such as 3,000 sq. ft.
- Commissioner Douglas expressed appreciation for working ahead on this.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Martinez adjourned the Study Session at 4:46 p.m.