

MINUTES OF THE REORGANIZATION MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS

MEETING OF MARCH 17, 2025

The reorganization meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room, 3rd Floor, 2100 East Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Thousand Oaks, California, with Commissioners Buss, Farris, and McMahon, and Chair Lanson. Commissioner Tyler Ketelhut was absent.

Also present were Staff Members: City Clerk Maguire, Chief Assistant City Attorney Hehir, Deputy Community Development Director Zelaya Melicher, Senior Recording Secretary Goor, and Senior Administrative Specialist Mary Kate Stein, and participating via Zoom was Community Development Office Supervisor Luxenberger.

WRITTEN COMMENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET / CONTINUANCES:

Supplemental packet material – None.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

- A. Commendation for Outgoing Commissioner Justin Link was presented by Chair Lanson, along with an engraved memento, and was read by Senior Recording Secretary Goor.

Chair Lanson thanked Outgoing Commissioner Link for his detailed preparation for meetings, his expertise in traffic and parking, his humor, and his way of making sure the public understood the issues.

Commissioner Farris commended Outgoing Commissioner Link for his service over the past four years and thanked him for the opportunity to work with such a discerning professional with so much experience, which resulted in extremely well-rounded, thoughtful discussions.

Commissioner McMahon thanked Outgoing Commissioner Link for his expertise in traffic and in imparting knowledge on how cities run from the other side of the dais. She added that it has been a joy working with Justin, noting he exudes happiness and made their job much more fun.

Deputy Community Development Director Zelaya Melicher thanked Outgoing Commissioner Link on behalf of staff for his commitment, effort, years of service, and thoughtful decision-making. She encouraged him to stay connected and invited him to participate in the zoning code update, where his knowledge and expertise would be a great asset.

Outgoing Planning Commissioner Link thanked Councilmember McNamee for taking a chance on someone who is usually on the other side of the dais. He thanked Public Works, Community Development, and City Attorney staff, individually and collectively, for their detailed informational discussions and how professional and well-prepared staff and managers are. He thanked Former Planning Commissioners who were in attendance: David Newman for ensuring everyone's voice was represented and Nelson Buss for his historical knowledge. Mr. Link also thanked current Planning Commissioners: Sharon McMahan for always looking out for transportation, especially bicycles, her experience, and institutional knowledge; Mic Farris for his depth of knowledge on Measure E; and Don Lanson for keeping applicants honest. Lastly, he thanked his family for allowing him to give so much time to the City.

Speaker: Mayor David Newman, Thousand Oaks, thanked Outgoing Planning Commissioner Link for the time they spent together on the Planning Commission, working through COVID, and being an ardent advocate for property rights balanced with the best interests of the community, his attention to detail on every facet of every project and land use policy, as well as for his humor. He stated those attributes made all the Commissioners and the City better, and on behalf of the City government, he thanked Outgoing Commissioner Link.

NEW BUSINESS: Planning Commission Reorganization

- A. City Clerk Maguire Administered Oath of Office to Incoming Planning Commissioner Kara Buss and Re-appointed Commissioner Don Lanson.
- B. New Commissioner Kara Buss was introduced by Chair Lanson who noted she is a Registered Investment Advisor with a degree from UC San Diego, an MBA from Pepperdine Graziadio Business School, and has two decades of experience in finance. She also serves on the Board of Senior Concerns, and is a supporter of TOArts and other non-profit organizations.

Commissioner Buss introduced herself noting she is looking forward to serving the community and working with the Commission for the next four years. The Commission welcomed Commissioner Buss.

- C. Nominations for and Election of Chair were opened by Deputy Community Development Director/Planning Commission Secretary Zelaya Melicher.

Commissioner McMahon nominated Commissioner Farris as Chair of the Planning Commission.

Hearing no further nominations, Planning Commission Secretary Zelaya Melicher closed the nominations.

Motion by Commissioner McMahon to approve the nomination of Commissioner Farris as Chair of the Planning Commission, carried 4-0 by the following vote: Ayes – Buss, Farris, McMahon and Chair Lanson; Noes – None; Absent – Tyler Ketelhut; Abstain – None.

Commissioner Farris thanked the Commission for their support.

- D. Nominations for and Election of Vice-Chair were opened by Chair Farris.

Commissioner Lanson nominated Commissioner Tyler Ketelhut as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission.

Hearing no further nominations, Chair Farris closed the nominations.

Motion by Commissioner Lanson to approve the nomination of Commissioner Tyler Ketelhut as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission, carried 4-0 by the following vote: Ayes – Buss, Lanson, McMahon, and Chair Farris; Noes – None; Absent – Tyler Ketelhut; Abstain – None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Councilmember Connie ‘Tie’ Gutierrez, Thousand Oaks, stated she is honored to welcome her appointee, Planning Commissioner Kara Buss, and thanked her for accepting the position, noting the great deal of time involved in working toward the benefit of the community along with all the Planning Commissioners.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

- A. Minutes of Planning Commission Regular Meeting of January 27, 2025.

Senior Recording Secretary Goor noted the numerical votes on page 3 are correct at 5-0, but the phrase ‘Absent: Farris and Tyler Ketelhut’ shall be removed.

Commissioner Buss abstained as she was not yet a Planning Commissioner on January 27, 2025.

Motion by Commissioner Lanson to approve Consent Calendar item 8.A. Minutes of January 27, 2025 with the change noted by staff; carried 3-0 by the following vote: Ayes – Lanson, McMahon, and Chair Farris; Noes – None; Absent – Tyler Ketelhut; Abstain – Buss.

PUBLIC HEARING: None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS: None.

COMMISSION COMMENTS AND AB 1234 REPORTS: None.

STAFF UPDATE:

- A. Follow-up items, announcements, and upcoming issues. Deputy Community Development Director Zelaya Melicher stated City Council meets for their Goal Setting Session tomorrow evening, March 18th. On March 25th, City Council will have a Department Report on the 2024 General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Report, and on the Consent Calendar will be two CEQA Consultant Contracts – one for the Downtown Master Plan, and one for a Mixed-Use Project at 195 East Hillcrest Drive, along with the second reading of the ADU Ordinance Update to address new State laws that they heard on February 25th.
- B. Upcoming Planning Commission Meetings. Deputy Community Development Director Zelaya Melicher stated there are no items scheduled for March 24th. On April 7th there will be a Department Report on the Capital Improvement Program General Plan Consistency Determination. On April 28th there will be a Public Hearing for 15 industrial buildings at the intersection of Conejo Center Drive and Rancho Conejo Boulevard, and a Department Report on the General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Report.

ADJOURNMENT: The Planning Commission adjourned at 6:31 p.m. to the next meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 24, 2025.

Mic Farris, Chair
Planning Commission

Date Approved