



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 7, 2016

TO: Chair Haase and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Elyse Lowe, Deputy Director, Development Services Department

SUBJECT: Item No. 10 - Discussion of The Permanent Rules of the Planning Commission and Staff Procedures Regarding Planning Commission-Related Matters

The Permanent Rules of the Planning Commission were adopted by the Planning Commission on January 29, 2015. The Rules are intended to inform and assist the Planning Commission regarding procedural matters that have frequently generated questions during hearings, and to improve the management and efficiency of the meetings. The Planning Commission has expressed interest in amending the Rules.

Feedback provided by Commissioners includes the topics listed. The following is information for the Planning Commission's consideration and discussion on these topics. It is anticipated that following discussion by the Commission, staff will research the topics, and bring back amendments to the Rules based upon the Commission's motion(s).

Possible topics for discussion for changes to the Permanent Rules of the PC or staff's procedures regarding Planning Commission-related matters:

1. Consent Agenda

One or more Commissioners may be interested in a procedure to allow the Planning Commission Secretary to prepare items for a Consent Agenda.

City Staff will return with a recommendation based on the Planning Commissioners' feedback.

2. Site Visits

One or more Commissioners desire to discuss the issue of site visits. Site visits are currently not allowed. However, one or more Commissioners may wish to have the ability to view the community context of a project in person. The ability to view project sites using Google or

Google Street View has also been suggested. Commissioners have stated that having on the aerial images and the plan sets are not adequate to fully understand the issues of a site. One Commissioner specifically requested guided walking and/or driving tour site visits for Community Plan Updates.

Commissioners noted the Historical Resources Board requires site visits as a best practice for increasing knowledge and understanding of the resource in its physical setting. The HRB procedures require that only an HRB member who has visited the site be allowed to vote on a property considered for historic designation. A site specific waiver provision is included, and must be voted on by a majority of the Board.

In comparison to the Planning Commission, the Historic Resources Board only meets monthly, and the meeting schedule provides increased opportunity for the Board members to meet the site visit requirement.

Any practices that may allow site visits would require review by the City Attorney's Office, for the purpose of determining whether such practices could be created in a manner that complies with applicable law.

City staff will consult with the City Attorney's Office and return with a recommendation based on the Planning Commissioners' feedback.

3. Land Development Code Referrals

One or more Commissioners expressed the desire to amend the Rules to include a provision that the Planning Commission, by a majority vote, may refer a specific policy issue for inclusion in updates to the Land Development Code.

City Staff will return with a recommendation based on the Planning Commissioners' feedback.

4. Recommendation to the City Council

One or more Commissioners suggested adding language to the Permanent Rules to formalize a procedure for designating a representative to represent the Planning Commission before the City Council.

City staff will return with a recommendation based on the Planning Commissioners' feedback.

5. Informal Community Workshops

One or more Commissioners expressed a desire to hold Planning Commission workshops

associated with Community Plan Updates in the community, and not solely at City Hall. A specific request for was made for a community workshop format to allow stakeholders, community group members, etc. to participate in a charrette format with the Commissioners. It was suggested that having an offsite community meeting recognizes the large area San Diego covers and that some community members may have difficulty getting to downtown San Diego for the hearing.

Lastly, a Commissioner stated a desire for informal community workshops to provide feedback after the existing conditions, identification of key issues and challenges, were identified but prior to a written draft plan; and a workshop (after the initial draft plan) prior to Planning Commission hearing the Plan Update.

City staff is open to discussion on this item, but feels it is important to point out the extensive outreach process that is conducted for Community Plan Updates. An example of the Mission Valley Community Plan update process (in progress) is attached to provide perspective on the community outreach associated with a Plan update.

City staff will return with a recommendation based on the Planning Commissioners' feedback.

Staff Recommendation

It is the recommendation of City staff to have the Commission engage in discussion of the Rules, and to direct staff to research the suggested changes and work with the City Attorney's Office as appropriate to come back with an analysis and draft language for future discussion and adoption.

Attachments:

1. The Permanent Rules of the Planning Commission
2. Historical Resources Board Procedures
3. Mission Valley Community Plan Update Community Engagement Schedule