



Planning & Zoning Board Work Session Minutes

July 28, 2026 at 12:00 PM

Chapman Room
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Alex Stringfellow, Bill Segal, Michael Dick, Vashon Sarkisian, Samuel King

Absent

Jason Johnson, Charles Steinberg

Staff Present

Director of Planning & Zoning Allison McGillis, Planner II Nicholas Lewis, Planner I Corinna Lundgren, Administrative Coordinator Mary Jean

1. Meeting Called to Order

Mrs. McGillis called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

2. Discussion Item (s)

a.

- Board Orientation Video
- Review the Chair's opening statement for work sessions
- Upcoming agenda items

Mrs. McGillis presented the city's Board Orientation video on Sunshine Law for the Board to view. A brief discussion ensued about Board members participating in hearing item discussions after declaring a conflict with the hearing item.

The discussion then shifted to reviewing the Chair's opening statement for work sessions. The discussion reinforced the purpose of the Planning and Zoning Board work sessions as fact-finding meetings rather than forums for expressing opinions on pending quasi-judicial applications. It was agreed that Board members should avoid signaling how they intend to vote before public hearings and instead reserve judgment until all evidence, staff presentations, applicant presentations, and public comments have been heard. The Board was in accord with a new opening statement clarifying that work sessions are open to the public for observation only, that public comment will not be accepted, and that Board members will not take positions on applications during these sessions. It was asked that staff note in their staff reports that work session discussions are part of the public record and available online.

Mrs. McGillis then reported that the restaurant at the Hub building on Orange Avenue

was approved by the City Commission with 21 conditions, expanding upon the Planning and Zoning Board's recommended 11 conditions. A brief discussion then ensued about placing certain hearing items on the consent agenda. Mrs. McGillis proposed streamlining presentations for routine lakefront applications by using concise summaries that highlight compliance with lakefront review criteria, stormwater management, tree impacts, and neighborhood feedback, while still preparing complete materials in case an application requires more detailed discussion. The Board generally supported this approach. Mrs. McGillis then moved on to the review of upcoming agenda items, including a small annexation related to a citywide billboard reduction agreement. The annexation would facilitate the removal of multiple existing billboards in exchange for allowing a single billboard along Interstate 4, with the property receiving equivalent commercial zoning upon annexation. She also provided an update on the El Cortez townhomes and synagogue project at 210 E. Morse Boulevard. Board member, Alex Stringfellow, disclosed a planned recusal due to prior involvement with the project. Mrs. McGillis reminded him to complete the required recusal paperwork. During the discussion, suggestions were made for comparing the synagogue's design with nearby religious and civic buildings to evaluate compatibility, considering whether a design balancing traditional and contemporary architectural styles might be appropriate, and including contextual images of surrounding buildings in the hearing presentation.

Mr. Lewis and Ms. Lundgren then reviewed six upcoming lakefront applications. Setback requests, preservation or removal of trees, stormwater management, retaining walls, lake view impacts, and compatibility with neighboring properties were discussed. The city's process for addressing unauthorized filling or grading of lakefront property was also discussed, with staff explaining that such work requires permits and enforcement would occur through code compliance if violations are identified. It was noted that most of the lakefront applications had received little or no neighborhood opposition and that the public hearing presentations on the applications would include more detailed maps and supporting materials.

3. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

ATTEST:

/s/ Mary Jean, Board Administrator