



# Housing Commission Minutes [SUBJECT TO APPROVAL]

**November 18, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.**

*This meeting was conducted in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-20-20 and N-35-20 and COVID-19 pandemic protocols*

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Galvin called a teleconference meeting of the Housing Commission to order at 7:01 p.m.

### Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

## **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Karline Fischer, Neil Kripalani, Vivek Mohan, Tony Soby, and Chairperson Jay Galvin

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Kate Duggan

Staff Present: Steve Hernandez, Housing Manager; Brian Dolan, Assistant City Manager; Ellen Clark, Director of Community Development; Jennifer Hagen, Associate Planner; Shweta Bonn, Senior Planner; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary

## **AGENDA AMENDMENTS**

None.

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2021**

Motion made by Commissioner Soby, seconded by Commissioner Fischer, to approve the September 16, 2021 meeting minutes. **The motion approved unanimously.**

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

None.

## **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

### **2. Introductions / Awards / Recognitions**

Ms. Hernandez introduced Vivek Mohan as the new Alternate Commissioner to the Housing Commission and advised that Neil Kripalani has been moved to the status of Regular member of the commission.

### **3. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda**

None.

### **4. Review a list of potential sites under consideration for future rezoning for residential development and inclusion in the environmental analysis as part of the Sites Inventory for the 2023-2031 (6<sup>th</sup> Cycle) Housing Element Update**

Mr. Hernandez introduced Ms. Clark and Ms. Shweta and advised they would be reviewing with the commission the potential sites under consideration for future rezoning for residential development and inclusion in the environmental analysis as part of the Sites Inventory for the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update.

Ms. Clark informed commissioners she would be providing a PowerPoint presentation explaining the draft sites inventory and the meeting objectives that would include: 1) Analysis of Existing Zoning Capacity and evaluation of RHNA gap, and 2) an introduction of a preliminary sites list, assumptions, sites ranking and scoring. After providing this information she indicated she would like to receive input from the Housing Commission pertaining to the sites, density assumptions, and guidance for refining the sites list.

The PowerPoint presentation provided information regarding:

- Draft RHNA allocation categories that totaled 5,965 units.
- Zoning capacities that included existing carry-over sites from the current Housing Element, Pipeline projects, and ADU production.
- Identification of new sites to meet a shortfall of 3,143 units across all income categories.

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Clark that inventory for the final Housing Element will be brought about through a multi-step process that includes identification of sites, a CEQA analysis, a HCD review of the draft sites inventory, and refinement and review of the final sites list. The public, commissions, and council will also review all these steps.

Ms. Clark informed the commission that staff was recommending that the initial inventory site list include a capacity “buffer” of approximately 50 percent more units that the gap is identifying. She reviewed inventory considerations that included information about capacity and density assumptions, default densities for lower- and moderate-income housing, housing types, and identification of initial sites.

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Clark that twenty-eight sites have been identified for all density ranges that will accommodate all density ranges, a range of unit types, and affordability. A list of the twenty-eight preliminary sites was reviewed indicating the buildable acres, density range, and the affordability level. Maps identifying the locations of these sites was also reviewed with commissioners.

Ms. Clark commented on the preliminary sites inventory and the estimated capacities for each of the affordability levels. She noted that if all the twenty-eight sites that have been identified were to be retained with conservative capacity assumptions the total estimated zoning capacity would be for 6,177 units which would exceed the projected shortfall/gap. It was noted that some moderate- and above-moderate units should be accommodated on high-density sites and a mix of densities is recommended.

It was noted by Ms. Clark that sites analysis included the following seven topic areas: 1) sites size/infill criteria; 2) proximity of sites to transit; 3) proximity to amenities and services; 4) environmental impacts and hazards; 5) sensitive resource impacts; 6) height and mass compatibility; and 7) interest in the site; and scoring of the sites could produce a maximum score of 36 points. A scoring and ranking of the sites were reviewed with information pertaining to their locations was provided.

Ms. Clark advised the commission that ranking of the initial sites helps provide a starting point and other factors and policy considerations will be added during the process when considering a sites desirability. Commissioners were also informed that staff was recommending four sites (#12, #20, #26, and #28) be removed from the initial list of twenty-eight suggested potential sites.

Finally, Ms. Clark reviewed with commissioners the recommendations made by the Planning Commission after receiving this same presentation. She advised that these recommendations included:

- Using a 50% buffer in initial inventory.
- Density ranges were appropriate; blend of densities should be considered I inventory, but greatest focus should be on higher density than can produce more affordability.
- Consideration should be given to increasing densities on some high-density sites:
  - Consider increasing densities (30 du/ac to 40 du/ac and 60 du/ac to 75 du/ac); with a minimum of 45 du/ac on some sites.
- Sites #20 and #28 should remain on the initial list.
- Sites #12, #17 and #26 should be removed from the initial list.
- Site #18 should be deprioritized.

Ms. Clark asked the commission to discuss: 1) the density ranges and indicate if they supported having higher density ranges included or if other density ranges or designations should be adjusted; 2) if they supported the staff recommendation to remove the four sites, or agreed with the Planning Commissions recommendation for three sites; 3) does the Housing Commission think any other sites should be removed or given a lower priority; and 4) what other considerations does the commission feel should be made to refine and prioritize the initial sites list.

Commissioner Kripalani asked about the letter received from SteelWave and whether it was something the commission needed to discuss.

Chairperson Galvin discussed slide 43 of the PowerPoint presentation with Ms. Clark and questioned if including some sites would be removing commercial businesses that provide sales tax revenue for the city. Ms. Clark commented on trade-offs that will take place when changing commercial sites to residential and this is something the commission needed to consider. She noted that regarding the Kohl's shopping center that discussions have been held with the owner about refiguration of this site to add some residential.

Chairperson Galvin discussed the possibility of having commercial businesses on the ground floor of buildings in some of the recommended sites with residential units on levels above. He also commented on city-owned properties not being included in any of the discussions. Ms. Clark indicated that the inclusion of first floor commercial business could be a required component of a project. She also added that the inclusion of city-owned sites would require a vote of the people to move forward and given other sites now available for moving forward was a more realistic effort in meeting what is required.

Chairperson Galvin commented on the recent property acquisition by Amazon and the possible extension of the El Charro Road that would allow for some sites to become closer to a freeway. He also commented on property owners who own Prop.13 properties. Ms. Clark indicated this was something that would be considered within the East Pleasanton Specific Plan.

Commissioner Fischer asked about the square footage of units considered to be high density. Ms. Clark indicated they would likely be studio units of about 500 square feet to other units of about 1,000 to 1,200 square feet. Commissioner Fischer commented on smaller units not being suitable for families, the income level requirements, and priority being given for moving ahead with units that are considered high priority. Ms. Clark commented on encouragement that can be given for lower-income units, but consideration would need to be given about subsidies.

Commissioner Fischer asked about the school district properties that have been identified on the list of potential housing sites. Ms. Clark advised that staff has had discussions with school district personnel who have indicated they are looking for a different school site, but it is understood there will be some lag time before the school district site(s) will be available.

Commissioner Mohan commented on the cost per square foot for building lower-income housing. Ms. Clark indicated staff has determined this to be between \$500-600/sq.ft. to build and requirements for subsidy and funding would need to be determined. Chairperson Galvin suggested obtaining information from the City of Livermore on this and Ms. Clark noted that Mr. Hernandez would be able to provide information on numbers for the recent Sunflower Hill project. Commissioner Mohan commented on acquaintances he knows in Oakland who are targeting low-income and are working with the city. Ms. Clark stated it was not always possible to target that way and Pleasanton will connect housing with jobs.

Commissioner Mohan commented on state laws that are taking away powers from the city. Ms. Clark commented on information that had been recently provided to City Council and felt commissioners could also provide council with any information they may have.

Commissioner Kripalani commented on a proposal for targeting of low-income units in some sites. Ms. Clark indicated something could be done but discussed traffic issues that would make it undesirable.

Commissioner Soby felt the Nexus Study could answer some questions raised but felt the study had not been used for this. Ms. Clark indicated the Nexus Study could have been used but had been felt to be outdated.

Commissioner Soby indicated he would be surprised if the numbers indicated in the report would be successful and felt it would be helpful to provide more educated information about numbers from developers. He also felt the East Pleasanton site should be included. Ms. Clark indicated that there were two properties in East Pleasanton that the commission could discuss. Commissioner Soby felt these should be considered in this round of looking at sites and questioned if the city should be reporting larger numbers or just the number that is important. Ms. Clark felt the city should show the ability to meet RHNA requirements and the challenge is “no net loss” which means having a little excess in capacity.

Commissioner Soby discussed with Ms. Clark the next steps should be with carrying the East Pleasanton site forward and not over-zoning.

### **Chairperson Galvin opened the meeting for public comment.**

Steve Dunn, SteelWave – indicated that Steel Wave has been working actively with the City of Pleasanton for a number of years and has conducted a lot of analysis on the East Pleasanton project and urged the commission to include this project in the equation. He noted that this project will be an expansion of Pleasanton and will provide for adding all density levels, parks, retail, infrastructure that will include streets and traffic. Mr. Dunn noted that when the site is approved SteelWave will improve it and they support having it included in the potential sites for this Housing Element. He noted that if building on this site for this Housing Element cycle it could then be moved to the next cycle.

Chairperson Galvin questioned Ms. Clark on whether the letter members of the Housing Commission had received from Steel Wave had also been considered by Planning Commission members when they completed their review of potential sites for this Housing Element Update. She advised it was received after the Planning Commission meeting but has been forwarded to members of that commission.

Commissioner Soby discussed with Mr. Dunn the time that would be required to include units on the East Pleasanton site. Mr. Dunn indicated that SteelWave would need to have different type units

included because of the costs involved. He noted that the Planning Commission had recommended keeping this project as a potential site.

Commissioner Kripalani indicated he had read the letter from SteelWave and also the recommendation made by the Planning Commission to include the East Pleasanton site and wondered why staff had not recommended keeping it on the list. Ms. Clark advised that this is a large, complicated site and when it was brought to City Council, they requested that it go through the right process and not be accelerated just to be put forward for this Housing Element Update.

Chairperson Galvin questioned if City Council had put in place a Task Force to look at this. Ms. Clark indicated this had been started but then COVID happened, and work was paused, and this is an important process that cannot be completed by 2022. Chairperson Galvin discussed with Ms. Clark reasons why this project should be precluded from site decisions and Ms. Clark noted that ultimate decisions would be made by City Council and agreed with Chairperson Galvin that keeping it on the list would mean asking City Council to make a hurried decision, but it is certainly something the Housing Commission can recommend.

Commissioner Kripalani confirmed with Ms. Clark that if this commission makes a recommendation, it could be removed once new parameters are brought forward.

Commissioner Mohan felt that the East Pleasanton site should remain on the list and be a part of the mix that is to be considered. Chairperson Galvin thought it could remain a cycle or two before any recommendation was made to remove it.

Mr. Dunn noted that if this site were included on the potential site list by City Council the city would have 2-3 years for it to be zoned and qualified. Ms. Clark confirmed this comment and provided additional information regarding enacting on zoning within the Housing Element.

In further discussion Ms. Clark asked the commission to consider: 1) density ranges, 2) removal of the four sites being recommended by staff, 3) what other sites does the commission believe should be removed or given a lower priority, and 4) what other factors or principles should be considered.

Commissioner Soby asked for clarification on the Planning Commission's reference to "certain sites." Ms. Clark indicated those certain sites were Stoneridge Mall and Hacienda that would require looking at traffic impacts. Commissioner Soby discussed with Ms. Clark the number of residents allowed dependent on the size of a unit.

Commissioner Soby noted that Pleasanton currently has no units with a ratio greater than 30/acre. Ms. Clark commented on a survey of neighboring cities to be conducted that have higher densities and higher storied buildings.

Commissioner Kripalani asked about the vision for the East Pleasanton site, and Ms. Clark provided details from the East Pleasanton Specific Plan, noting that there currently is no approved plan for the site.

Commissioner Mohan commented on lower- and moderate-income units and whether there is a sense that these be based on the neighborhood for the units.

Chairperson Galvin commented on the Stoneridge and Hacienda sites, and Commissioner Soby felt the commission was making the same recommendations that had been made by the Planning Commission.

In discussing site suitability, Chairperson Galvin indicated that he would not be opposed to rezoning the Mission Plaza site as a mixed-use site, and other commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Kripalani stated that he agreed with staff's recommendation for not including Steel Wave in the analysis, and Chairperson Galvin indicated he would like for it to remain since City Council would ultimately make the final call on this.

Commissioner Fischer felt the Stoneridge Shopping Center should be prioritized as a top priority site. Commissioner Kripalani agreed.

Commissioner Soby felt that if the feasibility of a site could be included it would help in the evaluation process. Chairperson Galvin noted that Ms. Clark had indicated staff would obtain some numbers from developers for the NEXUS. Ms. Clark advised that staff was not going to do a proforma for every site but would be providing a qualitative assessment of the sites and provide owner interest for being included in the list. Chairperson Galvin felt including anchor point comparisons would also be helpful, and Ms. Clark commented on construction information and return of investment. Commissioner Mohan suggested cost to build per square foot and unit size could also be included and would be happy to put staff in touch with people who would be able to assist.

In conclusion, Ms. Clark provided information about the next steps noting a Zoom Community meeting was scheduled for December 1 at 6:00 p.m. followed by a Special Planning Commission meeting on December 15 at which a recommendation to City Council will be made. She also advised that the presentation from this meeting will be posted on the city's webpage.

#### **MATTERS INITIATED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION**

New Commissioner Mohan thanked staff for bringing him up to speed.

#### **COMMISSION REPORTS**

None.

#### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Hernandez advised that the next Housing Commission meeting will be on December 16, 2021 at which the Ridgeview Operating Budget will be presented for review and approval by the commission.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m. by unanimous consent.