

**CITY OF BELMONT**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SUMMARY MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2011, 7:00 PM**

Chair Reed called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. at One Twin Pines Lane, City Hall Council Chambers.

**1. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Reed, Mercer, Parsons, Mayer, Wheeler, d'Souza  
Commissioners Absent: Horton

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo (CDD), Senior Planner DiDonato (SP), Zoning Technician Gill (AP)

**2. AGENDA AMENDMENTS - None**

**3. COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments) - None**

**4. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**4A. Minutes of November 15, 2011**

**MOTION: By Vice Chair Mercer, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, to accept the Minutes of November 15, 2011 as presented.**

**Ayes: Mercer, Mayer, d'Souza, Wheeler, Reed**  
**Noes: None**  
**Abstain: Parsons**  
**Absent: Horton**

**Motion passed 5/0/1/1**

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**5A. Review of Belmont Zoning Ordinance Sections 8.1.4 and 8.3.1 (e) Parking**

Staff outlined various potential minor text edits to this section and welcomed Commission feedback on amendments as appropriate; such feedback may result in direction towards a future Zone Text Amendment. Discussion ensued.

**6. REPORTS, STUDIES AND UPDATES:**

CDD de Melo reported as follows:

**6A. North Road Right-of-Way**

No update at this time.

**6B. Ralston/US 101 Landscape Project**

The Public Works Department is are eager to assume responsibility for this project. The Commission will have an opportunity to provide input.

Commissioner Mayer asked who owns the chain link fence that separates the homes from the new bicycle path area. CDD de Melo believed it is privately owned, as it varies from property to property.

**6C. Sixth & O'Neill Reconstruction Project**

This item will soon be removed from the list. The project is essentially completed.

Commissioner Parsons raised a question regarding the new street light. He did not recall the Commission adopting a street light like the one being installed and that it should look like the lights on Ralston. CDD de Melo responded that, to his knowledge, the lights that are being installed are the same street lights that were adopted as part of the 1995 Downtown Specific Plan – the acorn design – and that the lights that are in the Safeway/Belmont Village Center parking lot is an adopted light standard for downtown. He added that the light on the corner of O'Neill and 6<sup>th</sup> is going to come down. Commissioner Parsons added that there are concrete reinforced fiberglass poles available that were discussed at a joint meeting.

Commissioner Mercer described new lights that have been installed in Columbus Square in New York City that have a beautiful LED lantern, and is entirely downward cast and very consistent. They are on a pole, not cantilevered the way our current lights are, but are much more in character and energy efficient. She offered to e-mail a picture. She noted that things have changed in the 3 or 4 years since the lights were discussed and believed that Public Works should go back to the market place and report back to the Commission.

CDD de Melo noted that one of the challenges with the 6<sup>th</sup> and O'Neill project was blending the two intersections with two different light styles and the fact that there are still some wood poles that are functioning along 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and everything east is metal. Vice Chair Mercer stated that she did not want any more money spent on the Philadelphia style and that the lanterns she saw in New York would blend in with Belmont's existing lanterns.

Commissioner d'Souza added that the location is also a problem and should be discussed. It detracts from the Emmett House when headed north on 6<sup>th</sup> since it breaks up the symmetry. He believed it should have been placed either on the end or at the beginning of the block or on the other side of the street.

**6D. High-Speed Rail (HSR)**

The City Council had reviewed the draft comment letter as it relates to the HSR business plan. He will be working with the Mayor and Vice Mayor on draft letter components to be forwarded to the HSR Authority to meet their deadline of January 16<sup>th</sup>. He again thanked Commissioner Mercer for her service in facilitating the HSR Committee for the past year; a new facilitator will be selected at the next meeting.

Commissioner Mercer added that there is declining interest in the committee because of the sense that the HSR project statewide will die a natural death. She believed Council should reopen the topic to determine what they want the citizens' group to work on and what the charter should be. She believed that Caltrain will be the upcoming issue and the City has an opportunity to give input into decisions that Caltrain is making now. She suggested that CDD de Melo bring it up to Council for re-evaluation of the whole concept.

#### **6E. Electronic Commission Packets**

CDD de Melo opened the topic for discussion, noting that there is no substitute for a large size set of plans. They could be reduced to 8½ x 11 but would be challenging to read or they could require applicants to provide half size sets of plans, or Staff Reports could be sent electronically but not the plans.

Chair Reed said that he would prefer an all-electronic packet with pdf's of building plans, noting that he could enlarge them on his 25" monitor at home and bring Staff Reports in Word to meetings on an I-pad. He understood that others might opt for a mixture and suggested that each Commissioner be allowed to choose what they would prefer. Commissioner Parsons commented that he uses a Mac and when he receives Staff Reports with attachments, the attachments are sideways and cannot be turned vertically; the City's system is not Mac friendly.

CDD de Melo noted that the internet function would have to be disabled on personal laptops during meetings so Commissioners could not communicate with each other during meetings.

Chair Reed and Commissioners d'Souza signed up for an all electronic packet and Vice Chair Mercer wanted electronic Staff Reports but plans on paper. CDD de Melo agreed to make that change in their distribution procedure. He added that he believed Mayor Warden has stated that he would like to see Council go more electronic. Chair Reed added that he believes the City needs to become more apple friendly because more and more people are using them.

#### **Other Items**

CDD de Melo asked Commissioners to reserve the next meeting for a Joint Study Session with the City Council to discuss the Introduction section of the General Plan, which is complete. Within the next day or two, Commissioners will receive an electronic copy of the draft Introduction and a calendar that lays out the specific events through December 31, 2012, with the goal of completion by that date.

Commissioner D'Souza and Vice Chair Mercer stated that they would prefer an editable document and not a scanned pdf. RS Turning stated that she has the capability of doing that and CDD de Melo concurred that that is what they will receive.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that she has a possible conflict on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **7. CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2012 – 7:30 P.M.**

Liaison: Commissioner Wheeler  
Alternate Liaison: Chair Reed

Chair Reed will be out of town and will not be able to attend but Commissioner Wheeler stated that she will be there.

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. to a Regular Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, January 17, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in Belmont City Hall.

CDD de Melo noted for the record that the January 3, 2012 Planning Commission meeting has been cancelled.

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Carlos de Melo  
Planning Commission Secretary

*CD's of Planning Commission Meetings are available in the  
Community Development Department  
Please call (650) 595-7417 to schedule an appointment.*

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