

MINUTES

Meeting Place: In-person: 320 W. Temple St, Rm 150, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Virtual (Online): <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85860326429> Webinar ID: 858 6032 6429 Or call by phone: (669) 900-6833 or (346) 248-7799.

Meeting Date: June 14, 2023 - Wednesday Time: 9:00 a.m.

Present: Commissioners Duarte-White, Louie, O'Connor, Moon, Hastings

Ex Officio Members:

Director of Public Works: Mr. Jose Suarez, Senior Civil Engineer

County Counsel: Ms. Lisa Jacobs, Deputy County Counsel

Planning Director: Ms. Connie Chung, Deputy Director, Advance Planning Division

Forester and Fire Warden: Mr. Juan Padilla, Supervising Fire Prevention Engineer

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT

1. The Land Acknowledgment Statement was led by Commissioner Duarte-White representing the First Supervisorial District.

The County of Los Angeles recognizes that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples. We honor and pay respect to their elders and descendants -- past, present, and emerging -- as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We acknowledge that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multigenerational trauma. This acknowledgment demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these ancestral lands. We are dedicated to growing and sustaining relationships with Native peoples and local tribal governments, including (in no particular order) the: Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, San Fernando Band of Mission Indians. To learn more about the First Peoples of Los Angeles County, please visit the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission website at Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission – government organization (lacounty.gov).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner O'Connor representing the Third Supervisorial District.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. Motion/seconded by Commissioners Moon/O'Connor – That the agenda for June 14, 2023 be approved.

At the direction of the Chair, the agenda was approved unanimously.

COUNTY COUNSEL REPORT

4. County Counsel stated for the record that while this is an online meeting, it is a public meeting the same as if it were held in person in the Commission's hearing room and rules that allow for an orderly meeting shall apply. As such, when speaking on an agenda item, comments should address the item on the agenda and no other issues.

Similarly, if speaking during public comment, comments should be limited to issues related to the business of the Regional Planning Commission.

If speakers do not remain on topic, they may be reminded by the Chair or myself to do so. Failure to discuss issues not related to the agenda item, may result in the loss of the right to speak on the item or other items, if directed by the Chair. In addition, speakers should refrain from conduct that is disruptive of the meeting. Doing so also could result in the loss of the right to speak on the agenda item or any other items.

Disruptive conduct can include, but is not limited to, threats made against other speakers, the Commission or its members, or any others participating in the meeting, profane comments not related to the agenda item, or disorderly or contemptuous behavior leading to a disruption of the orderly progression and holding of the meeting.

In such cases, the Chair will advise that the behavior is disruptive and direct that the speaker's microphone be disabled. That person may, however, continue to observe the meeting. Further, disruptive behavior communicated to the panelists of the meeting, which include the Commission and County staff, may result in the removal of that person from the meeting by disconnecting them from the online connection.

DIRECTOR/DEPUTY DIRECTOR

5. The Director of Planning reported that during the Board of Supervisors public hearing, a read-in-motion with Supervisor Solis was made to instruct the Fire Chief and County Counsel, along with the Los Angeles County Certified Unified Program Agency, the Directors of Public Health, Public Works and Regional Planning to report back to the Board in writing on how local permitting processes can be strengthened to address environmental injustices and incorporate any best practices from other municipalities.

DIRECTOR/DEPUTY DIRECTOR (Cont.)

The Director also reported that Ms. Lisa Jacobs of County Counsel will be leaving County service and has accepted a position in the office of the General Counsel for the State Bar Association for the State of California. She has been instrumental in helping us craft ordinances, in particular the Oil Ordinance and has taken on a wide range of issues for the Department. This will be a great loss to the Department, but we are incredibly happy to see Lisa recognized for her talents. On behalf of Regional Planning, congratulations, Lisa Jacobs.

Ms. Jacobs thanked everyone and stated that she enjoyed working with Regional Planning Staff who are all dedicated and hardworking individuals with so much knowledge.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

6. Motion/seconded by Commissioners Moon/O'Connor – That the minutes for May 10, 2023 be approved.

At the direction of the Chair, the minutes were approved unanimously.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Staff announced if you are joining us via telephone and want to provide comment on any of the agenda items, please send an email to comment@planning.lacounty.gov and provide the agenda item number, your first name, your last name, your email address, your phone number, and indicate if you are the applicant or not the applicant.

All participants' microphones will be muted during the meeting unless you have signed up to provide comment. If you have signed up to provide comment, your microphone will be unmuted when it is time for you to speak, and staff will call your name.

PUBLIC HEARINGSNorth County Development ServicesProject Approved

7. **(Continued from 03/01/23) Project No. PRJ2020-002395-(1-5) Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2020007456 Community Wildfire Protection Ordinance Countywide. Planner: Cameron Robertson. To consider the Community Wildfire Protection Ordinance, which amends Title 21 (Subdivisions) and Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the Los Angeles County Code to strengthen standards for development located within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Hillside Management Areas to reduce risks to life and property from wildfires and other disasters. This project is categorically exempt (Class 7 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources, and Class 8 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of the Environment) pursuant to CEQA reporting requirements.**

PUBLIC HEARINGS (Cont.)

Mr. Robertson presented the Community Wildfire Protection (CWP) Ordinance that proposes amendments to Title 21 Subdivision code and Title 22 Planning and Zoning. The CWP Ordinance was developed in response to the February 11, 2022, motion by the County Board of Supervisors (Board) to prepare and submit amendments to Title 21 and 22 to strengthen standards for development located within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) and Hillside Management Areas (HMA) to reduce risks to life and property from wildfires and other disasters. The Board motion and County's efforts emerged in response to the escalating threats of wildfire in Los Angeles County as well as the disaster events throughout the state have further underscored the risks facing our communities.

Staff stated that in response to these disasters, the State passed legislations requiring local jurisdictions to plan for and implement fire hazard planning. To implement these State requirements and meet the intent of the Board motion, the Ordinance relied on multiple sources to develop land-use strategies that strengthen existing subdivision and development standards to protect existing and future communities. The Ordinance also relied on information from the Woolsey Fire After Action Report, particularly for improved evacuation requirements which also implements the General Plan Safety Element policies for improved safety measures.

Staff worked closely with Fire and Public Works to ensure that the Ordinance addressed wildfire risks as they pertain to land use issues, and that the Ordinance met the needs of the County and State fire standards. Staff also met with town councils, community organizations, and industry groups to present the proposed standards, answer questions, and solicit feedback. Staff conducted several rounds of public engagement between to help direct and inform the ordinance as well as public outreach events in communities located in fire zones. Staff received numerous comments and constructive feedback and significant changes were made in the proposed ordinance based on community input.

The Ordinance will apply to new development in the unincorporated county located within the VHFHSZ and to areas within the existing HMA, where terrain is 25% slope or steeper. The Ordinance will apply to applications that are submitted or deemed complete after the effective date of the Ordinance.

The Ordinance proposes to amend Title 21 to increase requirements for public safety for new subdivisions. Proposed amendments to Title 21 include development standards that 1) Reduce the number of parcels that can be created through subdivision in the VHFHSZ with only a single means of access; 2) Strengthen road access requirements for emergency egress; and 3) Require that a Fuel Modification Plan and Evacuation Route analysis be submitted as part of the tentative map application.

In addition, subdivision standards include:

- Two or more access ways must be provided at the time of development to be eligible for maximum amount of units.
- Streets shall be ungated, unless required for public safety.
- New mobilehome subdivisions are prohibited in VHFHSZ.
- These requirements are solely for new subdivision projects, and individual homeowners, existing development, and subdivisions who have a vested map are not subject to these requirements.

PUBLIC HEARINGS (Cont.)

Designed for Title 22, the Ordinance amends the existing HMA Ordinance, which applies to terrain with 25% slope and steeper. The proposed Ordinance modifies and adds to the existing HMA standards because the current mapped HMA directly corresponds to the high fire hazard severity zones, and development located on steep hillsides are at the greatest danger of loss due to fire rate of spread in steep locations, and the added risk of runoff, destabilized soil and landslides which can occur after fire. Structures located on steep mid-slope terrain are also the most difficult and dangerous to protect.

Staff stated that due to these reasons, the Ordinance proposes that a Conditional Use Permit be required for new primary use development on slopes 50% or greater. The Ordinance also provides additional design guidelines for site planning, road circulation, building design, and landscaping.

Through these proposed amendments to Title 21 Subdivisions code, Title 22 and the existing HMA Ordinance, the Community Wildfire Protection Ordinance responds to the Board motion to reduce damage to life and property from wildfire. Furthermore, the Ordinance:

- Implements State law and the County's General Plan Safety Element to improve land use strategies that prevent or minimizes personal injury, loss of life, and property damage due to fire hazards.
- Increases emergency egress and access standards for new subdivisions.
- Limits development intensification in the Wildland urban interface and Very high fire hazard severity zone.
- Improves standards for public safety in hazard areas.
- The Ordinance proposes standards that will help protect existing and future communities from wildfire and other disasters by ensuring that new development considers and provides the resources necessary for residents to quickly and safely evacuate in the event of an emergency.

The Commission opened the public hearing and took testimony from 14 community members, one opposed, one with concerns, and 12 in favor of the project. There was further discussion by the Commissioners and staff regarding the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Hillside Management Areas maps, community engagement, and staff addressed the Commissioners questions.

For further action and discussion visit:

http://lacdrp.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=1

Motion/seconded by Commissioners Duarte-White/Moon – That the Regional Planning Commission close the public hearing and find that the project is categorically exempt pursuant to state and local CEQA guidelines.

Motion/seconded by Commissioners Duarte-White/Moon – That the Regional Planning Commission Adopt the attached resolution recommending approval of the Community Wildfire Protection Ordinance, Project Number Prj2020-002395, Advance Plan No. RPPL2020007456 to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors.

PUBLIC HEARINGS (Cont.)

At the direction of the Chair, the item passed with Commissioners Duarte-White, Moon, Louie, and O'Connor in favor and Commissioner Hastings being recorded as No.

PUBLIC COMMENT

10. Public comment pursuant to Section 54954.3 of the Government Code.

There were no requests by members of the public to address the Commission.

CONTINUATION OF REPORTS

11. Possible Call for Review of Decisions by Hearing Officer, pursuant to Section 22.240.010.B of the Los Angeles County Code.

There were no items Called up for Review by the Commission.

12. Commission/Counsel/Director Reports

There were no reports given by Commission/Counsel/Director.

ADJOURNMENT

A recording of the testimony received and the discussions held at this meeting and a copy of all findings and resolutions acted upon by the Commission are on file in the Department of Regional Planning.

The Commission adjourned at 10:30 a.m. to Wednesday, June 21, 2023.



Elida Luna, Commission Secretary

ATTEST



Michael R. Hastings, Chair

APPROVE



Connie Chung, Deputy Director
Advance Planning Division