



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego

Planning a Vibrant Downtown for All

Downtown Community Planning Council (DCPC) Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2024, 5:30 PM

**12th Floor Committee Room, City Hall,
202 C Street, San Diego, CA, 92101**

- I. **Call to Order 5:32 pm. Chair opening noted no mic'd audio in Committee Room.**
 - A. Roll Call completed, quorum established.
 - B. In attendance (11): Rodriguez (Chair), Bargmann (V. Chair), Barr, Eddy, Gu, Helmer, Hewitt, E. Schwarz, J.P. Schwarz, So, Werve.
 - C. Absent (4): Link (Scty), George, Tan, Winslow.
 - D. Vacancies: Columbia Business, Marina Business, EV North Business, EV South Business.

- II. **Consent Agenda:**
 - A. October 2024 Minutes Approval
 1. Chris Eddy requested an amendment
 2. Manny pulled this item from the Consent Agenda
 - B. Adjustment to Airport Assignment
 1. Passed Unanimously

- III. **Non-Agenda Public Comment**
 - A. East Village business owner expressed interest in filling the East Village Business seat on the Downtown Community Planning Council. He expressed awareness that elections are not being held at the moment but would like to be considered and appointed as soon as possible.
 - B. A San Diego citizen called to appeal for disenfranchised CPGs. She also expressed concern for mixed-use zoning laws and felt that there are businesses that do not belong in residential areas, such as battery energy storage. Specifically mentioned the cost of insurance and fire departments.

- IV. **Community Reports**
 - A. Emily Bonner (for CD3 Stephen Whitburn)
 1. Upcoming legislative recess - no council meetings until Dec 9th.
 2. AIDS Memorial in Bankers Hill opens on December 1st at 10am.
 3. December Nights is on Dec 6th and 7th.
 - a) Various free and paid parking options

- b) Shuttle services from parking lots
 - (1) Shuttles will be going up and down 6th Ave to avoid congestion on Park Blvd
 - c) Expanded bike valet
 - 4. JP asked Emily about the budget and enforcement for Prop 36.
 - 5. Emily suggested that this should be directed toward the District Attorney's office.
 - 6. Greg asked about the noise ordinance for pedicabs and asked when this would be enforced.
 - a) Will be enforced mid-to-late December
 - b) It had to be read twice at council and was only signed 2 weeks ago. There is a grace period, which is why this hasn't been enforced yet.
- B. Robson White (Tasha Boerner's office)
 - 1. Gov. Newsom signed three key bills from Boerner's office
 - a) Ebike safety training, establishing a pilot program for San Diego. Municipalities can opt-in to prohibit individuals under 12 from riding e-bikes.
 - b) Pelvic floor and core conditioning therapy in the 6-12 week postpartum window.
 - c) Rate of return for public utilities: effort to reduce utility costs down.
 - 2. Legislature returns Jan 2025
 - a) Focused on legislative package for next year
 - b) Looking for community feedback
 - (1) Bill suggestion form is open on Boerner's website:
a77.asmdc.org/
- C. Katelyn Cleveland (Urban Division with the City of San Diego)
 - 1. East Village Green: construction is on schedule to be finished next year
 - 2. Incentivise housing
 - 3. Downtown development toolkit reflects new
 - 4. New housing devs are completed or nearing completion
 - 5. Update of downtown development activity log
 - 6. Ike Kiosk - New Interactive Kiosks Unveiled Downtown
 - 7. Adaptive reuse office conversion site
 - 8. Brendan asked about Horton Plaza
 - a) Katelyn said no updates
 - 9. Manny requested a presentation from the Urban Division on upcoming planned parks and green spaces.
 - a) Katelyn said it was doable and will talk to the supervisor.

- D. Sophie Barnhorst (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority)
1. The new terminal is nearing completion
 - a) New terminal 1 parking is open
 2. \$12.1 million federal grant funding for new terminal project
 3. New Chase Sapphire lounge opening in Terminal West
 4. Brendan asked about SD Airport authority adding further height limitations in Little Italy and nearby neighborhoods.
 - a) Sophie states the Airport Authority needs to protect air space around the airport. Part of that plan has different requirements, which have to do with how high developers can build around the airport.
 - b) Manny stated height limits in Little Italy would be reduced by 50 feet so that SAN could accommodate larger payloads, but the Airport Authority isn't required to accommodate these increased payloads.
 - o Sophie requested a follow up.
- E. 17th & Commercial Affordable Housing Project - Studio E Architects
1. Presentation on an eight-story affordable and supportive housing project located at the intersection of 17th and Commercial streets, in the southeastern part of downtown, adjacent to the I-5 freeway. The site is approximately 12,000 square feet, with a building area of 8,000 square feet. The project is a Complete Communities Housing Solution.
 - a) Chris Eddy sought clarification about parking availability and whether or not a parking garage would be available nearby. Asked if their clients tend not to have vehicle transportation.
 - b) JP expressed concerns about workforce housing and middle-income housing for those who work Downtown. Followed by a question if there could be more developments that cater to residents who need to live and work Downtown.
 - (1) Presenters reminded the board that they cannot turn people away or prioritize tenants based on where they work.
 - c) Gabrielle expressed enthusiasm and support for these developments while offering clarification surrounding parking requirements and how they impact the feasibility of these projects. Agreed that downtown needs more middle-income housing but workforce housing is typically relegated to education and religious organizations.
 - d) Yichao inquired about climate efforts and the development's transit-oriented development.

- e) Gary Hewitt asked if, given the proximity to the interstate, if there would be proper air filtration to mitigate harm.
 - (1) Presenters confirmed that all air goes through the HVAC filter system.
- f) Manny added support for this development.

V. Subcommittee Reports

A. Public Spaces - Gary Hewitt

1. Letter to the City on Privately Managed Parks
2. Gary summarized the three themes that the letter focused on: enforcement, working with developers to improve maintenance, and going forward, considering this when working with new developments.
 - a) Chris stated his support of the letter.
 - b) Gabrielle - motion to approve, Chris Eddy 2nd. Unanimous approval.

B. Downtown Parking Management Group Report - Manny Rodriguez

1. Revenue from Parking Garages
 - a) A letter was approved to request the City return ~\$400,000 in annual parking garage revenues to the Downtown Parking District. This revenue source was removed from the District's budget for FY25 without explanation.
2. Pedicab Parking on Red Curbs
 - a) A discussion regarding allowing pedicabs to park on red curbs, not allowed because they are considered vehicles.
3. Mixed-Use Parking Zones
 - a) Gary Smith authored a report on mixed-use parking zones and shared it with the City for review.
4. Angled Parking
 - a) Members were encouraged to reach out to Manny Rodriguez if they were aware of any streets that could accommodate angled parking.
5. Meter Maintenance and Staffing Concerns
 - a) JP noted significant staffing issues in traffic enforcement: four out of eight maintenance personnel were recently laid off, reportedly to facilitate a transition to card-only meters. This has resulted in increased workloads for remaining staff and numerous broken meters, leading to lost revenue.
 - b) JP suggested the Parking Management Group investigate these issues and provide an update.

- c) Additional concerns were raised about the inherent \$1.25 minimum cost for card-only meters. Suggestions were made to reduce this base cost to improve accessibility.
- d) Manny noted he will forward concerns.
- 6. Parking Valet Concerns
 - a) Gary inquired about valet parking issues on K Street between 6th Ave and 7th Ave during the Padres games. He noted that understaffing often results in double or triple parking of cars.
 - (1) Manny Rodriguez committed to raising these issues with the Parking Management Group if their application comes up for review.

C. Balboa Park Committee Report - Chris Eddy

- 1. Personnel Update
 - a) Anthony Harrington has been appointed as the new District Manager for Facilities, Maintenance, and Recreation Programs.
- 2. Botanical Building
 - a) Phase One of the renovation is complete, with a grand opening pending announcement. A celebration was held showcasing its enhanced accessibility and impressive lighting, accommodating large gatherings. Phase Two, which is focused on landscaping and additional plantings, will continue into next year.
- 3. Morley Field Lighting
 - a) 50% of Morley Field lights have been replaced and are now operational, initiating a broader lighting improvement project across the park.
- 4. Starlight Bowl
 - a) The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Starlight Bowl was due on November 14. Updates on the proposals received are expected at the next meeting.
- 5. Village Grill
 - a) An RFP has been issued for the shuttered snack bar near Spanish Village and Junior Theater to provide a full-service food and snack option.
- 6. Facility Maintenance
 - a) The Balboa Park Activity Center and Bud Kearns Gym will close during the last two weeks of December for annual floor maintenance.
- 7. Balboa Park Events Calendar
 - a) The six-month events calendar, featuring over 100 events, is available at the City's Parks and Recreation website and updated monthly.

8. World Design Capital Pavilion
 - a) The pavilion is being disassembled, with completion expected by November 25.
9. Recent and Upcoming Events
 - a) Recent: Susan G. Komen Walk for Breast Cancer Awareness.
 - b) Upcoming: Father Joe's Villages Turkey Trot (Nov. 28)
 - c) December Nights Festival (Dec. 6-7)
10. Board member questions/comments
 - a) JP asked about the expansion of the museum and how it will impact Panama 66.
 - b) Chris confirmed that, while details remain unclear, it is anticipated that food services will still be incorporated in some form, although the museum expansion is inevitable.

VI. Discretionary Approvals

A. Nolita Hall Live Entertainment

1. Manny needed to leave the meeting early but reminded the board that, although the presenters canceled and will do more studies until they are ready to come back in the future. Manny deferred to the board for action on this item.
2. The board discussed Nolita Hall's Conditional Use Permit (CUP) request to allow live entertainment, including DJs and mariachi bands, and extend their operating hours to 12:30 AM. The proposal raised concerns about the impact on the residential character of the area.
3. Public Comments:
 - a) Chris Gomez (Little Italy Association District Manager): Expressed opposition to the request, citing a longstanding policy limiting operations to 10:00 PM on weekdays and 11:00 PM on weekends. Highlighted potential noise and disruption to nearby residents.
 - b) Gary Smith (Downtown Residents Group): Echoed opposition, emphasizing that current hours were set to protect residents.
 - c) Board Discussion
 - (1) Several board members noted concerns about noise levels and the late-night nature of the request in a residential corridor.
 - (2) Examples of approved conditional use permits, such as Fisher's Restaurant, were discussed to compare the proposed use with other dining-focused establishments.
 - (3) Members suggested that Nolita Hall consider revising its application to align with community standards, including earlier cutoff times for live entertainment.

4. Gabrielle motioned to deny the CUP request based on the information provided, while leaving the option open for Nolita Hall to return with a revised proposal, potentially including a noise study and adjusted hours of operation, Chris Eddy 2nd. Unanimously approved.

VII. Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda

A. October Meeting Minutes Amendment

1. The proposed children's park was discussed in October, with a mix-up regarding its location on the East Mesa versus the West Mesa. To clarify, the park will be located on the west mesa.
 - a) Brendan - motion to approve the amendment, Gabrielle 2nd. Unanimous approval.

VIII. Remainder Non-Agenda Public Comments (None)

A. None

IX. Adjournment: 6:25pm