



PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES

MEETINGS ARE CABLECAST LIVE ON GOVERNMENT ACCESS CHANNEL 26

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Wednesday, July 27, 2005
REGULAR MEETING at 7:00 PM
Council Chambers
Civic Center, 1st Floor
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94301

ROLL CALL: 7:00 PM

Commissioners:

Phyllis Cassel – Chair
Bonnie Packer – V-Chair
Lee I. Lippert
Karen Holman
Patrick Burt
Michael Griffin
Annette Bialson

Staff:

Steve Emslie, Planning Director
Don Larkin, Senior Deputy City Attorney
Joseph Kott; Chief Transportation Official
Melissa Tronquet, Deputy City Attorney
David Stillman, Transportation Engineer
Zariah Betten, Executive Secretary

AGENDIZED ITEMS:

1. Public hearing to review findings and recommendations regarding evaluation of performance of the new traffic signal on Middlefield at the Midtown commercial center, the existing pedestrian-actuated signal on Middlefield at Midtown, the feasibility of additional provisions for bicycle and pedestrian travel along and across Middlefield at Midtown, and the desirability of further review of transportation/planning issues associated with the Midtown area
2. Revised Bylaws and Procedural Rules
3. Discussion of Topics for the Joint Study Session with City Council

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 8 and 29, 2005

Chair Cassel: I would like to call the meeting of July 27, 2005 to order for the Planning and Transportation Commission. Will the Secretary please take the roll? Thank you.

The first item of business is Oral Communications. I have one card for Teresa Roland. Would you please come up, state your name and the city you are from?

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS. Members of the public may speak to any item not on the agenda with a limitation of three (3) minutes per speaker. Those who desire to speak must complete a speaker request card available from the secretary of the Commission. The Planning and

1 Transportation Commission reserves the right to limit the oral communications period to 15
2 minutes.

3
4 Ms. Teresa Roland, Palo Alto: I am just going to read from the sheet I wrote. Good evening.
5 The City should consider opening up on-street non-restricted parking on the east side of Ramona
6 Street beginning at Channing and moving north towards Downtown. Currently the east side of
7 these blocks along Ramona are designated no parking. If the City were to allow unrestricted
8 parking on these blocks it would alleviate the parking pressure on the more southern blocks,
9 those blocks from Channing moving south towards Lincoln and Kingsley, where residents can
10 rarely find parking in front of their own homes let alone on their own block. For these residents
11 it is a daily dilemma. To allow unrestricted parking on Ramona from Channing and north
12 towards Downtown would not create a negative impact on the Summerhill residents as they have
13 underground parking available to them. Thank you.

14
15 Chair Cassel: Thank you very much, appreciate that. The next item on our agenda is the
16 Consent Calendar and we have none.

17
18 **CONSENT CALENDAR.** Items will be voted on in one motion unless removed from the
19 calendar by a Commission Member.

20
21 Chair Cassel: The next item on the agenda is Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions.

22
23 **AGENDA CHANGES, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS.** The agenda may have additional
24 items added to it up until 72 hours prior to meeting time.

25
26 Chair Cassel: I would like a motion to change the order of the agenda to put the Approval of
27 Minutes prior to Reports From Officials. Can I have a motion?

28
29 MOTION

30
31 Commissioner Lippert: I will make a motion.

32
33 Chair Cassel: Can I have a second?

34
35 SECOND

36
37 Commissioner Bialson: Second.

38
39 MOTION PASSED (7-0-0-0)

40
41 Chair Cassel: Any discussion? All those in favor please say aye. (ayes) Thank you very much.

42
43 The next item on our agenda is a public hearing to review the findings and recommendations
44 regarding evaluation of the performance of the new traffic signal on Middlefield at the Midtown
45 commercial center. Would the Staff like to give us a report, please?

46
47 **NEW BUSINESS:**

48 **Public Hearings**

- 1
2 1. Public hearing to review findings and recommendations regarding evaluation of
3 performance of the new traffic signal on Middlefield at the Midtown commercial center,
4 the existing pedestrian-actuated signal on Middlefield at Midtown, the feasibility
5 of additional provisions for bicycle and pedestrian travel along and across Middlefield at
6 Midtown, and the desirability of further review of transportation/planning issues
7 associated with the Midtown area.
8

9 Mr. Joe Kott, Chief Transportation Official: Thank you very much Chair Cassel and members of
10 the Commission. I am Joe Kott, Chief Transportation Official and I have with me this evening
11 my friend and colleague, David Stillman, Traffic Engineer within the Transportation Division.
12

13 You will note at places a revision to recommendation three which was contained in the Staff
14 Report mailed to you. The revision provides more elaboration and detail on recommendation
15 three. One of our City Attorney's, Donald Larkin, has a word or two about the revision.
16

17 Mr. Don Larkin, Senior Deputy City Attorney: Just as a clarification the revision recommends
18 the formation of a continuing stakeholders group and that could take two forms. That could be a
19 recommendation to Council or the City Manager to create a City committee or it could be a
20 request to Staff to work with neighborhood groups in the area or neighborhood stakeholders on
21 the issues with regard to the Midtown traffic but the Commission itself doesn't have authority to
22 create a stakeholders group.
23

24 Chair Cassel: Thank you. Joe, did you want to continue?
25

26 Mr. Kott: Yes, thank you Chair Cassel and Mr. Larkin. Just for the record that recommendation
27 three now read, "The formation of a continuing stakeholders group to advise the Transportation
28 Division on all issues related to access, egress, circulation, parking and travel safety for the
29 Midtown area."
30

31 A little bit of background to all three of the Staff recommendations tonight. In May of 2003 the
32 City Council directed Staff in approving installation of a new traffic signal at Bryson Court and
33 Longs to evaluate the effects of that signal, to evaluate the additional needs that bicycle and
34 pedestrians and drivers for that matter might have in the area. So Staff was directed as part of
35 that to review and evaluate the potential for converting the cross-section in front of Midtown of
36 Middlefield from four lanes to three, actually it would be from five lanes to three since we had
37 created a turning lane with this signal. Creating the extra turning lane required taking some of
38 the existing space without moving curbs. The existing space needed to be acquired by narrowing
39 travel lanes. We narrowed travel lanes down to nine feet in front of Longs so that is about what
40 it is at Colorado Avenue. We don't like to have a long distance of nine-foot travel lanes though
41 because drivers really need, especially drivers going through need some shy space from their
42 vehicles to the adjoining lane's vehicles. There was some concern that in improving safety for
43 drivers turning into and out of the Longs driveway and Bryson having really an assignment of
44 right-of-way by the traffic signal and most importantly the left turning pocket which got the
45 turning vehicles out of the through lanes and really reduced the potential for rear end collisions
46 and also by providing stop control for pedestrians crossing and striped crosswalks on both sides
47 of the Midtown driveway to the north and to the south of the driveways. We would be
48 improving safety for pedestrians and drivers and their passengers perhaps at the cost of safety for

1 bicyclists. I think it was in Council's mind, I was at the meeting that night, and I think it was in
2 council's mind. So we were instructed to look at ways in which we could enhance safety for all
3 modes of travel. We went about in doing that in a convention process with computer simulation,
4 with counts of pedestrians and vehicles before and after, a field test that we did and the field test
5 itself. We coned off a section of Middlefield at Midtown to observe the effects of a five to three
6 conversion and in fact David and I drove that section repeatedly to collect data on travel times
7 and on difficulties entering Moreno, which is a cross street, which intersects with Middlefield.
8 All very important data collection to come up with some findings. We also worked with a
9 stakeholders group, people who live and work within the area, and that stakeholders group is
10 represented this evening. The Chair of that group is Sheri Furman of the Midtown Resident's
11 Association Traffic Committee. I believe Sheri is here this evening and will offer a statement
12 herself. So we did due diligence and technical analysis and our findings reflect the success I
13 think of the signal installation and its positive effects on travel in the vicinity of Midtown. David
14 Stillman will provide a lot more detail on our analysis and the recommendations that are founded
15 on the analysis. I would like to offer Sheri Furman a chance if she would like to make a
16 statement on behalf of the stakeholders committee we work with.

17
18 Chair Cassel: Why don't you finish your presentation and then I will go with her first. Would
19 you fill out a card, Sheri?

20
21 Mr. Kott: If the Commission has no questions of me based on my preface I would like to hand
22 the microphone over to David Stillman.

23
24 Mr. David Stillman, Transportation Engineer: Thank you, Joe. Good evening Commissioners.
25 Our Staff recommendation this evening is that the Commission approve the retention of the
26 existing lane configurations along Middlefield Road between Oregon Expressway and Colorado
27 Avenue, the retention of the existing mid-block pedestrian crossing traffic signal in front of
28 Walgreens on Middlefield, and the formation of a committee for continuing review of Midtown
29 circulation, access, parking and safety issues as outlined by Joe a few moments ago.

30
31 Some history, some of this might repeat a little bit of what Joe was saying. I will try to be brief.
32 The traffic signal with left turn pockets at the Middlefield-Bryson intersection was approved by
33 the City Council on May 19, 2003. At that time Middlefield Road was an undivided four-lane
34 roadway at Bryson. It had the fourth highest accident rate in the city. The traffic signal and the
35 left turn pockets were the attempt to mitigate the safety problems that we were having at that
36 intersection. The exact Council motion that evening is as follows. The City Council approved
37 the Staff and Planning and Transportation Commission recommendation to approve the
38 installation of a traffic signal with left turn pockets and to make explicit that Staff return with 12
39 months of signal completion evaluating the impacts of these changes and the three lane option.

40
41 Here you see a site plan showing the existing configuration along Middlefield Road in the
42 vicinity of Bryson. Bryson is here, Middlefield Road is here, Colorado here, Oregon
43 Expressway would be just off the page to the left. North is to the upper left in this diagram. The
44 new traffic signal at Bryson was installed right here along with new protected crosswalks at that
45 location. You can see the new left turn pockets that were created at that intersection. The
46 existing mid-block pedestrian actuated signal that I will be talking about is located right here and
47 there is also an existing traffic signal at the Colorado Avenue intersection.

48

1 The committee was formed in order to carry out the Council motion prior to the completion of
2 the traffic signal in July of 2004. The primary tasks of the committee were to evaluate traffic
3 flow along Middlefield Road, specifically impacts from the three traffic signals. One question
4 that would need to be answered is should the mid-block pedestrian signal be removed? Also a
5 primary committee task was to look for ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel and in
6 particular to evaluate the three-lane option. The committee that was formed and that met
7 throughout that year was comprised of members of the Midtown Residents Association,
8 Midtown merchants, interested residents, City Staff, and the Palo Alto Bicycle Advisory
9 Committee.

10
11 The first issue we looked at involved the mid-block pedestrian signal at Walgreens. Should the
12 signal be removed? Well, the arguments in favor of removing the traffic signal, first there is a
13 new signal that was constructed just 300 feet away at Bryson Avenue. This signal could be
14 conveniently used by pedestrians that wanted to cross Middlefield so you could look at the mid-
15 block pedestrian signal as possibly being redundant. Another argument in favor of removing the
16 signal is with the construction of the new signal at Bryson there are now three very closely
17 spaced traffic signals along Middlefield Road in the Midtown area. These signals could have the
18 potential to actually increase delays or even create the perception of increased delays for
19 motorists traveling along Middlefield Road.

20
21 Arguments against removing the signal. The signal does provide safety and convenience for
22 pedestrians who wish to cross Middlefield in the vicinity of Walgreens. Also, there is a cost
23 involved with removing the traffic signal.

24
25 So in order to answer the question Staff conducted pedestrian counts on Middlefield Road. The
26 counts were conducted in the morning, noon and evening, what we consider to be the peak
27 pedestrian hours at that location. We counted the number of pedestrians that crossed and we also
28 counted the number of times the traffic signal cycled, in other words the number of times it
29 turned red for Middlefield traffic to allow the pedestrians to cross. What we found is that if you
30 look at those three morning, noon and afternoon time periods together an average of 14
31 pedestrians per hour use the mid-block signal and the signal cycled approximately once every six
32 minutes.

33
34 Now to put that into a little bit of context the cycle length of the three signals on Middlefield, the
35 pedestrian signal, the Bryson signal, and the Colorado signal have cycle lengths of about 60 to 70
36 seconds, about one minute. So you could consider that the mid-block signal turns red for
37 Middlefield traffic about once for every six times that the other signals turn red for Middlefield
38 traffic.

39
40 So based on the results of our survey out there it appeared that the signal was regularly used by
41 pedestrians and this includes the elderly as well as young school children. The signal has little
42 impact to traffic operations. As I just explained it doesn't cycle nearly as often as the other
43 traffic signals do and it is coordinated with the other two signals on Middlefield Road that the
44 City owns so that they all turn red together. So a driver would be unlikely to have to stop at that
45 signal and another one on the same trip through Middlefield Road. So as a result of these
46 findings the Staff and committee agreed that the traffic signal should remain.

1 Next we looked at the three-lane option. This option eliminates one through lane in each
2 direction on Middlefield between Oregon and Colorado. It would extend from Oregon to
3 Colorado but exclusive of those intersections. In other words, we would have to retain the
4 existing lane configurations on the approaches to Oregon and Colorado because we need the
5 vehicle capacity at those intersections. The three lane option would allow room for a short
6 bicycle lane to be striped in that area and a two-way left turn lane would be provided within that
7 segment as well to allow left turns into the Midtown shopping center driveways along that
8 stretch, etc.
9

10 In order to determine the viability of the three-lane option we conducted a real world test. The
11 test was conducted during the PM peak hours, four to six PM specifically, because that is the
12 time when traffic volumes on the Middlefield are the heaviest and we wanted to get a worst-case
13 scenario. We provided no advance warning of the test so that motorists would not be tempted to
14 avoid the area on the day of the test and we could get a realistic assessment using everyday
15 traffic volumes. We closed the curb lanes with cones similar to what you would find in a
16 construction zone but designed so that safety was considered at all times. We observed the
17 effects qualitatively as well as quantitatively. Qualitatively by standing on the sidewalk frankly,
18 and watching driver behavior and quantitatively by performing travel time runs. Joe and I got in
19 a car and drove up and down Middlefield Road ten times in each direction during the duration of
20 the test and timed how long it took to drive the segment. We also times how long it took us to
21 turn left onto Middlefield Road from Moreno to get a measure of how often there were available
22 gaps in the roadway. We also performed this test under existing or no lane closure conditions at
23 a subsequent time in order to provide a means of comparison. So Joe and I went back out there a
24 month or two later, drove ten times in each direction during the PM peak hour with no lanes
25 closed, just as you would find Middlefield Road today.
26

27 During the lane closure test we observed significant congestion along Middlefield Road. In fact,
28 traffic would consistently backup to north of Moreno from Colorado. We found that the
29 southbound direction was very congested, more so than the northbound direction. Cars had
30 difficulty making left turns onto Middlefield Road. There were constant streams of traffic that
31 made it impossible or very difficult to find suitable gaps within which to turn left. We observed
32 unsafe driver behavior. The drivers that did want to turn left would take some risks to try to turn
33 into smaller gaps in order to complete their maneuver. The average time to travel southbound
34 along the segment, the segment defined as roughly from Moreno to Colorado, was 53 seconds in
35 the southbound direction or 9.5 miles per hour and 42 seconds in the northbound direction or 13
36 miles an hour.
37

38 During the existing conditions test that is with no lanes closed, qualitatively there was a lot less
39 congestion, a lot less unsafe driver behavior. The average time to travel southbound along the
40 segment was 31 seconds or 16 miles an hour. The average time to travel northbound was 35
41 seconds or 16 miles an hour. Another piece of data I should mention is the time it took to turn
42 left from Moreno onto Middlefield during the lane closure test was 87 seconds on average, 59
43 seconds during the no lane closure test.
44

45 To summarize those results there was a 69 percent increase in southbound travel time, a 22
46 percent increase in northbound travel time with the lane closure and a 47 percent increase in the
47 amount of time it took to turn left from Moreno onto Middlefield. Basically the observed
48 conditions were a lot worse with the lane closure than without.

1
2 Mr. Kott: Just to interject a point here, this is a five to three conversion not a four to three. So
3 we had as our existing condition left turn pockets, which really help efficiency a great deal. So
4 you wouldn't have this kind of dramatic difference in a four to three conversion. In a four to
5 three the four lanes means one lane is used as a de facto left turn pocket but it is also used for
6 through-traffic and there is an awful lot of lane shifting that goes on, stopping and starting, just
7 because of the lack of a left turn pocket. So just a word of caution in comparing a five to three
8 with a four to three conversion. Also this conversion took place without the possibility of close
9 coordination of the dominant signal operation, which is at Oregon, dominant for the Oregon
10 traffic, and Middlefield. Dave will talk about this specifically. It is very difficult for us to
11 coordinate with that signal which is owned by the County. So we really couldn't mitigate the
12 congestion on a five to three conversion by making the signal operations through the whole
13 movement from the north side of Oregon all the way through Colorado by better coordination of
14 all those signals.

15
16 Mr. Stillman: Yes, this traffic signal at Oregon and Middlefield generally runs on 180 second,
17 three minute, cycle length as opposed to ours, which are on 60 to 70 second cycle lengths. It is
18 very difficult to coordinate that County signal with our signals. Part of what led to a lot of the
19 congestion we feel, especially southbound, was because of the long cycle lengths at the signal at
20 Oregon southbound traffic at Oregon would backup for three minutes and then all of a sudden a
21 huge platoon would be released to travel southbound down Middlefield so you would have just a
22 ton of cars coming by all at once and there just wasn't the capacity with the three lane option to
23 accommodate such a large rush of vehicles all at one time.

24
25 So looking at the advantages and disadvantages of converting Middlefield to the three lanes. The
26 advantage is a short bike lane can be striped, about a two-block long bike lane, traffic would be
27 calmed. We do get complaints of speeders along Middlefield Road from time to time and that
28 would certainly be more difficult if we were to reduce it to one lane in each direction in the
29 segment. The disadvantages are a lot of increased congestion especially during the peak hours,
30 the potential for an increase in cut-through traffic through the neighborhood even though in
31 absolute terms the increase in delays for a driver traveling through this segment wasn't huge the
32 perception of delays may be huge and drivers may be tempted to avoid it in order to travel
33 through the neighborhood. A decrease in safety, drivers attempting to make left turns onto
34 Middlefield with very small or non-existent gaps in the through traffic. The bike lane that we
35 would stripe would have little utility. It wouldn't be continuous at either end, it wouldn't
36 continue to Colorado, it wouldn't continue to Oregon. When a bicyclist reached where the bike
37 lane ended they would have to merge in with the vehicle traffic in order to continue. That in
38 itself poses some safety problems.

39
40 So the conclusions of the committee and Staff are the disadvantages outweigh the advantages in
41 this case and we agree to retain the existing lane configurations on Middlefield. The committee
42 also recommended the formation of an ongoing committee to engage in continuous discussion
43 regarding enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access and safety in the Midtown area, evaluating
44 Midtown circulation, parking issues, etc. There were a few items that came up in the course of
45 our discussions with the committee that were out of the immediate scope of what we were tasked
46 to do and we felt it would be useful to have a continuing discussion to look at these issues on an
47 ongoing basis in the future.

1 Finally, a quick report on the effectiveness of the new signal at Middlefield and Bryson. Before
2 the signal was constructed there were approximately five accidents per year at that intersection as
3 I indicated the fourth highest accident rate in the City with two and a half accidents per year
4 being broadsides which are typically the worst types of accidents and have the most severe
5 injuries. Additionally, before the signal there was no safe pedestrian crossing at Bryson.
6 Following the signal there were two accidents, actually I should qualify that just for the sake of
7 accuracy. There were five accidents in the past year but three of them were kind of freak
8 construction related accidents that had nothing to do with the configuration of the traffic signal
9 or the lanes. There were two accidents where a car hit a metal plate that improperly placed over
10 a construction area. I have removed those from the pool. There were two typical types of
11 accidents in this past year and zero broadsides. We have a new protected crosswalk at Bryson
12 and we have received a lot of positive public feedback about the changes that we made. We
13 therefore consider the signal and the lane changes to be successful. Thank you, that completes
14 my presentation.

15
16 Chair Cassel: Sheri, as a member of the committee would you like to make a statement?

17
18 Ms. Sheri Furman, Palo Alto: I am the outgoing Chair of the Midtown Residents Association
19 Traffic Committee and I am here to say that support Staff's recommendations. I do want to say a
20 couple of other things.

21
22 This was a very contentious issue and there were a lot of rumors and threats going on and I want
23 to say for the public record that the intention of the traffic committee was always to get hard
24 facts not go by what may happen, would traffic be diverted to side streets, we wanted the actual
25 numbers and that is what we got here.

26
27 Again, I support the recommendations although keeping it at the five-lane configuration still
28 causes us issues about what to do about bicycles. If you are familiar with the area you know that
29 the entrance and exits to the Midtown shopping center are kind of dicey. Traffic slows down
30 because people go in the wrong, circulation is bad, hence the ongoing committee to study what
31 we can do. I am also concerned about if bicyclists use the streets that they will just go straight
32 ahead without realizing that the light has changed and traffic is turning in. So we have talked
33 about ways to alleviate that problem. So I would ask you to recommend that they are allowed,
34 this committee, to go on.

35
36 I want to point out that there are four of us from the committee here supporting this and I want to
37 thank Mr. Kott and Mr. Stillman for their patience and thoroughness in dealing with us. Again, I
38 support the conclusions. Thank you.

39
40 Chair Cassel: Thank you very much, Sheri. I have just one card for someone to speak is it okay
41 if we go ahead with that and then ask our questions? The next person that wishes to speak is Bob
42 Jackson. If you would please come forward and state your name and the city you live in, thank
43 you.

44
45 Mr. Robert Jackson, Palo Alto: I was a member of the committee Sheri stole my thunder. As an
46 engineer this was a nice experience because Joe and David were careful to do a good test, to do a
47 good experiment and they didn't cook the answers. They put the light in and they changed the
48 lanes and then they measured what happened. The process was good the answers are very clear

1 so there is no question about what the answers were. Anyway, I thought the result of what they
2 did was very good. Our experience with the committee I think was satisfactory so I will join
3 Sheri in endorsing the report and endorsing the suggestion for another committee which sounds
4 like more of the same but I think we did come up with some ideas that were beyond the scope of
5 this that would bear some discussion.

6
7 Chair Cassel: Thank you very much. I have another card from Bob Moss. If you would state
8 your name and the city that you come from.

9
10 Mr. Bob Moss, Palo Alto: Thank you Chairman Cassel. I don't have any dispute with the Staff
11 Report or their conclusions for Midtown and Middlefield. What interested me is we are going to
12 be doing a trial, assuming we get some money, on Charleston-Arastradero, which is also going to
13 be reducing the lanes. As you know that has had some people quite concerned and it has been
14 somewhat controversial. What I am concerned about after looking at the results of this study is
15 that people will extrapolate that to Charleston-Arastradero and say, we are going to have the
16 same kind of problems here.

17
18 The other thing that is of concern is the number of traffic signals. We have had talk in the past
19 about how many signals we can have in such-and-such a distance. We now have three traffic
20 signals between Colorado and well I guess all the way to Oregon it is four signals. There are a
21 couple of other intersection areas in the town that have close-set traffic signals, Embarcadero just
22 east of Town & Country driveway where Paly is and then El Camino on Arastradero there is one
23 right at foothill and then back at Miranda. So it is possible to have several traffic lights close
24 together but in this case we have three of them within about a block and a half and so the
25 question is going to come up is this reasonable or not? So I just would like to see Staff take a
26 very close look at what has happened in Midtown and what was being proposed on Arastradero
27 and Charleston and make sure that we don't have any unexpected unpleasanties there like we
28 had here. The last thing you need is to have people who are opposed to changing anything
29 coming down here and saying you should have known better because it all went bad in
30 Middlefield. So this is just a cautionary note that's all. Thank you.

31
32 Chair Cassel: Thank you. I will bring the discussion back to us and close the public hearing.
33 Do we have questions of Staff? Karen?

34
35 Commissioner Holman: I have just a couple or three. The accidents that did happen what time
36 of day did those happen? Do you have the information on that? I will just tell you where I am
37 trying to get to is in reading this I was thinking is there any advantage or would there be any
38 benefit to perhaps slowing the traffic in this short distance. They are fairly slowed because of the
39 signals but if the speed limit was actually slower would that have any impact or would that be
40 something that you could look at going forward?

41
42 Mr. Stillman: I don't have specific times of day that the two accidents happened. They did
43 happen during daylight hours. I believe one of them was during peak hour, one was a rear end
44 accident. With regard to slowing traffic the speed limit currently on Middlefield is 25 and yes,
45 cars sometimes typically drive more than 25. We wouldn't be able to lower the speed limit
46 below 25 miles an hour because of vehicle code regulations regarding any speed limits below
47 that number. We could look at stepping up the enforcement of Middlefield Road, we could look

1 at additional signage, striping, to kind of highlight the 25 mile an hour speed limit for drivers in
2 an attempt to slow traffic down.

3
4 Mr. Kott: To just add on a point or two about safety the two major causes of motor vehicle
5 crashes are unsafe speed differentials, when you have a vehicle making a turn, slowing down,
6 stopping and making a turn and the following vehicle not prepared for that vehicle ahead to turn.
7 That is where the rear end collisions come in. The second is when vehicles seek unsafe gaps.
8 We will probably have a chance to talk about this conversion issue more, I hope that we will, but
9 with conversion you do help with the speed differential issue because you are creating these left
10 turn pockets. You remove that big issue of having people stop to make lefts and having through
11 drivers slam into them. You have to be careful that your traffic stream is sufficiently gapped,
12 you have sufficiently small platoons of traffic so that there are safe gaps for turning vehicles on
13 the cross streets to use to get onto the main street. Those are things we are always very cautious
14 about.

15
16 Commissioner Holman: Okay, thank you. I remember the data about the speeds at which cars
17 are traveling and this is such a congested area that the speed at which cars are traveling impacts
18 also the survivability of impact with pedestrians, so that's one. The other question is while it
19 wouldn't necessarily be the typical and it would only be for casual riders, again this is such a
20 congested area, would there be possibility for the committee to look at a for lack of a better term,
21 casual cyclist route that would go behind the shopping? Is there any possibility for that? It
22 seems like there is a lot of open space back there and real pro cyclists aren't going to use that but
23 for the casual cyclist is there any opportunity for the committee to look at that?

24
25 Mr. Kott: There may be, Commissioner Holman and certainly Middlefield as it is now is not
26 particularly conducive to casual cycling.

27
28 Chair Cassel: Bonnie.

29
30 Vice Chair Packer: I don't know if you had any people raising concerns about the entry into the
31 driveway at Longs when you are coming southbound and making a left. I find that very
32 confusing I am not sure where to go after I have stopped. I don't know when it is my turn to go.
33 Have you considered doing some striping so it is clearer for drivers at that intersection?

34
35 Mr. Stillman: Yes, that issue has come up and that is something that we are aware of. We have
36 witnessed that. The current configuration of the driveway is very unfortunate and we would love
37 to, as part of what we looked at as an upcoming committee issue as part of the overall circulation
38 in that parking lot a possible reconfiguration of the driveways. When the traffic signal was
39 installed and the striping was changed in an attempt to mitigate that problem we extended with
40 the yellow bots dots the centerline to guide people there making that left turn into the proper
41 driveway instead of into the exit driveway, which a lot of people are doing. That may have
42 helped a little bit. There are still people that are turning left into the exit driveway. Based on our
43 observations a good portion of those are folks that know it is the wrong thing to do but they are
44 heading towards the Baskin Robbins area and they don't want to go all the way around and come
45 back so they shortcut it into that driveway to avoid circumnavigating the parking lot. We had
46 some police enforce that and we should continue that. That is something that we will absolutely
47 look at as part of this ongoing committee.
48

1 Chair Cassel: Annette.

2
3 Commissioner Bialson: That was my area of inquiry because as you know a lot of that is
4 intentional and I don't know what you can do to physically stop that. Maybe make it really clear
5 and put up lots of signs but I doubt whether you will get the property owners to agree to
6 reconfigure their parking lot but good luck if you do.

7
8 Mr. Stillman: Thank you, we will need that. We really beefed up the signing as well as we
9 could when the signal went in to make it clear not to enter the exit driveway, one-way and that
10 sort of thing and we are still finding it is an ongoing problem. So we are still looking at ways to
11 manage that.

12
13 Chair Cassel: Michael.

14
15 Commissioner Griffin: Joe, I was pretty discouraged to learn about the negative impacts of the
16 County computer system that controls the expressway traffic lights. This Commission has spent
17 a lot of time giving you support for a citywide computer controlled signal system and now by
18 reading this it gives the impression we have dueling computers. Is that in fact what we are
19 looking at?

20
21 Mr. Kott: Well, those are good observations. We have 96 traffic signals in town that we, the
22 City of Palo Alto, controls but as the Commission knows Cal Trans controls signals on El
23 Camino Real and the County controls signals on Oregon Expressway, Page Mill and Foothill
24 Expressway. We work with the County amicably but their interest isn't optimizing the flow of
25 traffic on their mainline and ours is to provide our cross-street traffic as much opportunity to get
26 through safely. There is no perfect optimization in this case. We can optimize for our corridors
27 if we have all the signals in control but it is very difficult when you have a street with more
28 traffic on it crossing a street with less traffic similar to Charleston-Arastradero and El Camino
29 Real where we are actually leaving a large swath of that street in its current configuration. One
30 of the big reasons, not the only reason, is we really don't control the El Camino Real
31 intersection. We can't guarantee we can optimize our flows for Charleston. So even though we
32 are automating our signal system it will be imperfectly done because we don't control all the
33 traffic signals in town.

34
35 Commissioner Griffin: It just raises the question in my mind anyway whether this is money
36 being poured down a rat hole. Is it worthwhile trying to fight two other systems, Cal Trans and
37 VTA?

38
39 Mr. Kott: Well, if you look at it from a corridor point of view, if you look at our Embarcadero or
40 our Charleston or Arastradero or Alma most of the extent of those streets are controlled by
41 signals that we own. Most of the time that drivers will be on those streets they will be going
42 through our signals. So the optimization won't be perfect but it will be very, very good. We are
43 expecting for example, as the Commission knows, on Charleston-Arastradero being able to
44 automate our signals in response to real-time demand will probably give us about a 20 percent
45 increase in efficiency at all the signals that we control on that corridor which my recollection is
46 nine signals. But the El Camino Real signal we know with 50,000 cars a day El Camino Real
47 has to have more time.

1 Chair Cassel: Pat.

2
3 Mr. Stillman: If I can add something, there is a push among all the cities within Silicon Valley
4 to communicate with one another with respect to ITS, Intelligent Transportation System, issues
5 including traffic signals. Right now the different jurisdictions don't communicate with each
6 other in that respect but hopefully they will at some point in the future. The citywide signal
7 upgrade that we are now in the process of completing gives us the opportunity to tap into that
8 system and communicate it at some time in the future. With the older systems there was no way
9 that that could have been possible. So this gives us the ability to look at coordinating with Cal
10 Trans, with the County of Santa Clara with their roadways at some point in the future once this
11 gets worked out among all of the cities and jurisdictions.

12
13 Mr. Kott: Just a quick point. When David talks about communication it is not person-to-person,
14 we certainly have that but it is electronic communication between signals we may own and they
15 may own.

16
17 Chair Cassel: Pat, you had a question? Go ahead, Lee.

18
19 Commissioner Lippert: I have a question regarding the pedestrian signal. Before that had gone
20 in did you look at putting in either an illuminated crosswalk or using a signal that would be
21 activated by the pedestrian? Or is that working at cross-purposes?

22
23 Mr. Kott: Without a stop control, without signal control on a four-lane cross-section we would
24 not establish a mid-block crosswalk. Research is clear about this it is just not very safe. Now,
25 the signal control makes it safe there. So we are fine about having a crosswalk there.

26
27 Now in terms of in-pavement lighting to increase visibility of pedestrians we can't really do that
28 if the crosswalk location is signalized because we don't want to send drivers confusing signals
29 about lights. Silly as that seems it can really disorient drivers. Any other location, mid-block,
30 four lane without signal control we would be very uncomfortable about creating a crosswalk and
31 we don't believe in-pavement lighting is sufficient protection for pedestrians in that
32 circumstance.

33
34 Chair Cassel: Go ahead, Pat.

35
36 Commissioner Burt: Joe, it is clear from the data that the three-lane option just isn't feasible
37 even though there is this desire to have better bicycle routes. When I look at the data that you do
38 have though there seems to be an appreciable difference in the southbound travel time and
39 average speed versus the northbound. So it led me to wonder is there any possibility that a
40 different sort of four lane option, I guess it would be two lanes southbound, one lane northbound
41 and a turning pocket would be a feasible option that would still create enough room for bike
42 lanes given that the one lane northbound is close to the same amount of travel time as the two
43 lanes going northbound. If you combine that with optimizing signals is that a feasible option?

44
45 Mr. Kott: Again, very good question. This Commission is quite a challenge sometimes to
46 appear before and David will want to chime in. We did our field test in evening peak hour and
47 our assumption which is usually backed up pretty well by data is that we would have a reversal
48 of flow, it wouldn't be dramatic but it would be a reversal of flow, in the morning so that the

1 heavier traffic would be going in the opposite direction in the morning. So you would still have
2 constraints for people, cross-street drivers, trying to get onto the main street. David?

3
4 Mr. Stillman: No, nothing.

5
6 Commissioner Burt: Okay, thanks.

7
8 Chair Cassel: You have a follow up on that?

9
10 Vice Chair Packer: Yes, I am intrigued by Pat's suggestion because earlier David, you said that
11 one of the problems southbound was the platooning, all those cars that come after waiting for a
12 long time at a light at Oregon and then there is a whole bunch going south. You don't have that
13 situation with northbound traffic. There are people coming in from Loma Verde or way back
14 from Charleston. It is sort of a smooth flowing bunch of cars. So the AM peak hour situation
15 may be different. It might not be the reverse of what you saw PM so I think that is an intriguing
16 idea that Pat has and if there was a possibility if the committee wanted to look at that as part of
17 looking for an option for a bike lane.

18
19 Mr. Stillman: We could look at that. My sense is going along with Joe's point there is what
20 would probably happen is that the northbound in the morning wouldn't be quite as bad as the
21 southbound in the evening because the northbound traffic is a little more random, a little more
22 metered by the Colorado signal but it would still be congested.

23
24 Chair Cassel: Annette, do you have a follow up to that?

25
26 Commissioner Bialson: Yes. I have a comment and that is that I experienced that going
27 northbound in the morning. It isn't as bad as going southbound but almost and especially during
28 school time because a lot of that traffic coming northbound then goes into Jordan or down
29 California to the private elementary school down there. So you have very heavy traffic coming
30 northbound in the morning.

31
32 Chair Cassel: Pat, did you have another question?

33
34 Commissioner Burt: Yes. Bob Moss raised the concern on how these results might be
35 extrapolated to Charleston. Do you have any comments on whether you think that there is likely
36 to be any correlation between what we saw here and Charleston or just thoughts on that in
37 general?

38
39 Mr. Kott: Thank you very much, Commissioner Burt, for that question. I was hoping to get it.
40 There are several big differences and one big difference is that Charleston-Arastradero through
41 many of the cross street intersections, of course not all, of course there are major turn streets with
42 turn pockets, but many of them lack turn pockets so the typical cross-section would be four
43 lanes, two through lanes in each direction. Just the mere fact of putting in turn pockets is not
44 only good for safety but is remarkably good for capacity. Some of the best research on this
45 suggests if you reduce from four to three you are reducing through lanes by 50 percent but you
46 are only reducing capacity based on measured traffic in those conversions where they have been
47 done around the country by 10 percent. If you layer upon that increased efficiency in traffic
48 signal operations, now as Commissioner Griffin pointed out since we don't control all the

1 signals, we certainly don't control Cal Train which is another factor, we cannot fully optimize
2 that whole corridor but we can substantially optimize it. So we are looking forward to between
3 10 and 20 percent increases in efficiency just through automation at Charleston-Arastradero.
4 The third factor we are basically backing off from the dominant intersections, the dominant
5 locations. That whole section of west Charleston will remain as is. We are proposing to put in,
6 based on Council decision, some new center medians but they will not be at the expense of
7 through lanes. We will also give plenty of clear space for the other side of Alma, the other side
8 of El Camino Real that is the west side of El Camino Real and the east side of Alma. Oregon
9 Expressway is dominant in this location and on top of it just very difficult for us to coordinate
10 signals. That was a big factor in the Midtown experience. Another big factor as I mentioned
11 earlier is we began with the left turn pocket so the comparison was with an already more
12 efficient roadway to one that simply reduced the number of lanes without the countervailing
13 mitigation of having these left turn pockets which gather back or capture back of the efficiency
14 or capacity you have lost by reducing lanes.

15
16 Chair Cassel: Do we have any other questions related to the Midtown project or do I have a
17 proposal for a motion? Thank you.

18
19 Commissioner Burt: One other follow up regarding the safe route bike routes to Midtown issue
20 and in particular how it relates to kids. Midtown is a big gathering spot for kids and it is the
21 local hangout. I will just give you a couple of real-world examples of what we are facing there.
22 As our kids have gotten to the age where they can ride their bikes to Midtown and it is the big
23 privilege they have gone with other friends whose parents insist that they ride on the sidewalk in
24 that area which I know has been something that we explicitly have removed and tried to prohibit
25 as part of our bike master plan. When we had that discussion and had some issues about when
26 there is no feasible place to ride a bicycle like on Embarcadero by Town & Country should we
27 be addressing the reality that kids or parents with young kids are going to choose the sidewalk
28 over an even more hazardous roadway and what should we do to contend with that?
29 Alternatively what we have done is required our kids when they go with friends to go up to
30 Cowper, take a safe signalized crossing at Cowper and then go down and come to, I am sorry I
31 have forgotten which street it is before Bryson, and cross in to Midtown at that location as a
32 safest route. It is an inconvenience but it is a tradeoff it is the only way they get to go to
33 Midtown is if they agree to take the safer route. Given that we have that kind of issue and a
34 similar issue on the other side of Middlefield on the Ross side but we have no signalization at
35 Ross and Oregon we all know that we have a problem on how do we get there. So if we all
36 recognize that we have a problem are there ways that we might reduce that problem or look at
37 what is the safest route and encourage it more, look at things on the margins that could make it a
38 bit safer. So I am not offering specific recommendations but I wanted to toss that out as a
39 residual issue given that we are going to stay with the lane configuration that we presently have.

40
41 Mr. Kott: Those are good points, very thoughtful points Commissioner Burt, and ones we have
42 wrestled with. It is true that Council adopted the Bicycle Master Plan heavily discourages
43 sidewalk bicycling to the extent of directing us to remove the signs that permit sidewalk
44 bicycling. I will speak personally I won't speak in terms of what our official policy is. It is clear
45 you can do side paths that are effective and we know that. Sandhill Road side path for example
46 and Palm Drive side path are quite effective. The Dutch do that very well, when I was in Perth I
47 saw many and road many good examples of side paths that worked and converged like Palm
48 Drive and Sandhill converge onto a crosswalk. But what are the factors that make those things

1 work when they do work? The side path has to be wide enough, a big important factor because it
2 is expected to accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians and bicyclists of different skill
3 levels, some wishing to pass others. Also, in terms of safety a big issue is how frequently are
4 these side paths interrupted if they are interrupted by driveways and by cross streets. The ideal
5 situation is like on Palm Drive where you don't really have driveways that cross, you have cross
6 streets and very few interruptions on the Sandhill Road side path too. I think we can probably do
7 better and have a more creative approach for shared use of sidewalks but it would be a case-by-
8 case situation. If there are a lot of crossing driveways it makes it almost impossible to safely
9 encourage cyclists to use sidewalks even if they are wider sidewalks as bicycle paths.

10
11 Chair Cassel: Lee.

12
13 Commissioner Lippert: I had a question for the City Attorney with regard to the composition or
14 how we structure the citizens stakeholders group. Would our recommendation either be for the
15 City Manager or the City Council to form this group or is it that we are just recommending that
16 the working group or the stakeholders group be formulated?

17
18 Mr. Larkin: The way that it is currently existing would be that the Commission would
19 recommend or request that Staff continue to cooperate with the neighborhood association group
20 which is not a city committee however if it was the Commission's desire to create a more formal
21 committee then that would go as a recommendation to the City Manager and/or the City Council
22 but as it is currently existing it is just a request to cooperate with an existing outside stakeholders
23 group.

24
25 Mr. Steve Emslie, Planning Director: Let me just add we would recommend that the former
26 recommendation be implemented, the one where we continue to work with the group. The
27 reason for the clarification is we want to make it clear that the Commission isn't forming a city
28 sanctioned committee. We will continue to work with the Midtown group stakeholders as Staff
29 does with numerous other issues. We just wanted to make it clear that this was not going to be
30 an officially sanctioned city committee.

31
32 Commissioner Lippert: I guess what I want made clear is which is the option that we are not
33 changing horses so to speak or changing players?

34
35 Mr. Larkin: That is the continued cooperation with the Midtown group.

36
37 Chair Cassel: That is number three that you handed out? The other one was going to form a
38 formal committee, which we can't form and it would go back to City Council. This one will
39 allow them to continue working, as they are which has been quite successful.

40
41 A follow up question and then I want to have Annette speak.

42
43 Commissioner Burt: As part of that stakeholders group has the Midtown Resident's Association
44 included any of the Midtown merchants to participate in that?

45
46 Mr. Stillman: They are in there.

1 Mr. Kott: Yes, in fact we had Midtown merchants in and if we go onto the parking
2 reconfiguration once again we would most definitely need the merchants involvement.
3

4 Chair Cassel: Annette.
5

6 MOTION
7

8 Commissioner Bialson: Yes, I would like to make a motion to move the Staff's recommendation
9 points one and two as presented in the Staff Report and point three as presented to us in the
10 memorandum that was at our places. Do you want me to state them? I think they are clear.
11

12 Chair Cassel: I think they are clear now. Do we have a second, Michael?
13

14 SECOND
15

16 Commissioner Griffin: Yes.
17

18 Chair Cassel: Michael will second that. Would you like to speak to your motion?
19

20 Commissioner Bialson: I think we have discussed this thoroughly and I think that Staff along
21 with the committee has done an excellent job on this. I think it has been thoroughly studied and
22 find the conclusions to be absolutely correct.
23

24 Chair Cassel: Michael.
25
26

27 Commissioner Griffin: I would just say that I am very pleased that the neighborhood association
28 will continue to be active in this committee and that there will be a continuous idea exchanged as
29 to solving some of these ongoing problems because clearly we are not there yet. It is going to
30 take a lot of people spending time together to work out some ultimate solutions.
31

32 Chair Cassel: Bonnie.
33

34 Vice Chair Packer: I am going to support the motion and I just want to make two observations.
35 One, I think the three singles all in a row really enhance the area and make it feel more like a
36 little Downtown shopping area, another place that should think of that has a lot of lights all
37 together is Downtown. So riding through there you have the sense that you are going to slow
38 down, that this is a place where there ought to be several lights in a row. The other observation
39 is that this is a great example where a lot of people had this thought what would it be like if there
40 were just three lanes on Middlefield. We talked about this in the Comp Plan and it says in the
41 Comp Plan to study it. Here is a great example of when you have the hard facts and you know
42 all the reality that you realize that maybe that wasn't such a good idea after all, an idea that
43 seems like a good idea intuitively at least for some people turned out not to be such a good idea
44 once we had the facts. So I thank Staff for doing the studies as they were done and showing us
45 the light, so to speak or literally. So thank you.
46

47 Chair Cassel: Would someone else like to speak? Lee.
48

1 Commissioner Lippert: I too am going to support the motion here. I think that probably what is
2 the most important thing is that Middlefield Road is an arterial in the city, it has been identified
3 as such, it is moving through a business district and even though there is pedestrian and bicycle
4 traffic in the area there are some alternative routes that the bicyclists can take in order to travel
5 north and south within the city particularly the bike boulevards. I think that anything that can be
6 done to relieve frustration of automobiles and traffic along Middlefield Road will actually reduce
7 people wanting to further speed once they get out of that area. So I think this is an appropriate
8 solution to a very serious problem.

9
10 Chair Cassel: Karen.

11
12 Commissioner Holman: Just very quickly I would concur with the comments of the
13 Commissioners that have spoken to this and congratulate Staff and the area for having worked
14 with Staff collaboratively and the merchants as well. Also just very, very pleased to see that the
15 safety factor has gone up considerably for vehicle traffic and with Staff and the committee
16 considerable good luck in trying to increase the bicycle issue here so we can get more bicycle
17 friendly atmosphere along this avenue.

18
19 Chair Cassel: I use this part of the road since I have almost no choice in order to get any place in
20 town. I find the light has actually been helpful. That is has been easy to move through the area
21 and I would be delighted if they would look at the section from Middlefield south to Safeway
22 about turning down there. I wish the committee good luck and thank you very much to the Staff.

23
24 MOTION PASSED (7-0-0-0)

25
26 I would like to call for a vote. All those in favor please say aye. (ayes) Opposed? Then that
27 vote passes seven to nothing. Thank you Staff for the good work and thank you for the
28 committee in Midtown and those of you who came to speak this evening.

29
30 Mr. Kott: Thank you, Commissioners.

31
32 Chair Cassel: Yes?

33
34 Commissioner Burt: If I might have permission to ask or make a comment to the transportation
35 officials before they leave as opposed to waiting until the end of the meeting when they are gone.
36 We had a public speaker in the opening remarks raise an issue about prohibition on parking on
37 the east side of Ramona between Homer and Channing, is that something that Staff is
38 reevaluating at all?

39
40 Mr. Kott: We certainly could, Commissioner Burt because we are very concerned about this
41 parking shift onto the residential streets.

42
43 Mr. Emslie: We will make contact with the speaker and follow up with them directly.

44
45 Commissioner Burt: Thanks.

46
47 Chair Cassel: I don't really want to go into a long conversation at this point.
48

1 Commissioner Holman: Just one quick question again for transportation staff. When you are
2 making contact with them if there is any possibility or any data about if the Summerhill residents
3 since that is a new development if they are actually using underground parking garages.
4

5 Chair Cassel: Okay, thank you very much. We appreciate that. I would like to go on to item
6 number two. This item has two sections to it. It was renoticed to make sure that it was obvious.
7 It was posted. The rest of us have received the Staff Report that had two sections with this. We
8 have a revised set of bylaws and a revised set of procedural rules. The bylaws were discussed
9 and voted on at our last meeting and we are required to vote on that twice in order to have that
10 pass. It is essentially a Consent item but I need a motion to pass this.
11

12 Commissioner Lippert: Do you need to open the public hearing on that again?
13

14 Chair Cassel: Thank you very much, Lee, I do. I need to have Staff talk to us before we actually
15 make a motion. Staff would you like to make a report?
16

17 ***Other Items:***
18

- 19 2. Revised Bylaws and Procedural Rules: Review and adoption of revised Bylaws and
20 procedural rules of the Planning and Transportation Commission of the City of Palo Alto.
21

22 Mr. Larkin: Certainly. With regard to the bylaws I actually have nothing to add.
23

24 Chair Cassel: Thank you. I will open the public hearing. I have no cards therefore I close the
25 public hearing and I will bring it back to the Commission. Do we have any questions? No, then
26 I need a motion. You had a question, Karen?
27

28 Commissioner Holman: I have a very simple clarifying question. Just for the record's sake on
29 the front page of the Staff Report, well it is not on the bylaws so never mind.
30

31 Chair Cassel: A motion then Lee.
32

33 MOTION
34

35 Commissioner Lippert: I move we approve the bylaws as proposed.
36

37 SECOND
38

39 Commissioner Bialson: Second.
40

41 MOTION PASSED (7-0-0-0)
42

43 Chair Cassel: I have a motion from Lee and a second from Annette to approve the bylaws. Is
44 there any discussion? All those in favor please say aye. (ayes) That motion passes seven to
45 nothing. We will go on to section number two.
46

47 Let me first ask for a Staff Report.
48

1 Mr. Larkin: Thank you. Just one or two items, the first the Chair addressed but the agenda that
2 was provided in the packets doesn't list this item as a topic of discussion. The agenda was
3 reposted and does list this item last Friday. New copies weren't sent out to the Staff but the
4 agenda that was posted and made publicly available does list this as an item of discussion.
5

6 Correction on the report, all the references to June 22 should have been June 29. June 22 was the
7 date of the report not the date of the meeting.
8

9 I am going to address some of the substantive changes that I made and most of the corrections
10 were in the area of formatting but there were some suggestions made and some changes made
11 and some changes made. The first one is on page 1-1 at the top where we added a sentence that
12 clarifies that an opportunity will be provided for members of the public to address the
13 Commission at all meetings particularly on items not on the agenda. There was some confusion
14 as to whether that was stated and it was recommended that it be addressed right at the beginning.
15

16 The language on subsection B, paragraph 2, subsection c was reworded at the suggestion of the
17 Commission. On page I-2 we did make some changes to where we talk about spokespersons for
18 a group to clarify that the group has to be present. What I was going to also add is that at the
19 suggestion of Commissioner Burt and some of the other Commissioners we were asked to look
20 at other options for permitting speakers who are part of an applicant's team and we will be
21 coming back with some further recommendations at the Retreat which is the time that we would
22 normally review our procedural rules because there may be some things we can do short of
23 cutting off speech altogether that would address the concerns.
24

25 Skipping ahead there weren't a lot of changes on the motion procedures. We discussed
26 additional requirements for quasi-judicial hearings. On IV-1 the language regarding ex parte
27 communications with applicants was added. We added a sentence to make it more clear that all
28 communications are strongly discouraged.
29

30 We have added a paragraph on IV-3 that address the record before the Commission and makes
31 explicit that the record contains and includes the Municipal Code as well as the Comprehensive
32 Plan.
33

34 We have added on V-1 an item to the Retreat that would review the work of the Commission
35 over the prior year. This is intended to include the annual report that Commissioner Lippert was
36 looking for but gives us some flexibility if we decide we want to change how we do that.
37

38 We have added some language regarding study sessions at the bottom of that page and
39 continuing on to the next one.
40

41 Then finally on V-2 we have added a paragraph addressing Commission representation at the
42 City Council.
43

44 One other change that I recall but forgot to flag in my notes is Commissioner Holman had
45 recommended on the items to be considered after 10:00 PM some language regarding that we
46 would make reasonable efforts to complete the agenda or complete the responsibilities before
47 11:00 PM. My concern with the word responsibilities was that it was somewhat vague so the

1 way I addressed it was to complete the agenda but I am open to suggestions if there is other
2 language that would be preferable.

3
4 So I attempted, and I didn't have the minutes before me when I was doing this, but my attempt
5 was to address all of the items that were part of the Commission's consensus at the last meeting.
6 If I missed anything I would be happy to address that. Just as a reminder to the Commission the
7 Retreat will be coming up fairly shortly and that is an opportunity if there are things or major
8 items of discussion there is an opportunity to address those at the Retreat as well. I would expect
9 this to be, and I understand this is the Commission's intent as well, that this is a living document
10 and we can always revisit items on here as they become necessary. It is important that we have
11 something that we move forward with so with that I will turn it back over to the Commission.

12
13 Chair Cassel: Thank you, Don. Do we have other questions? Karen.

14
15 Commissioner Holman: I have just a few. This was a topic of discussion on the 29th and that is
16 page I-2, the spokesperson for a group. I believe we talked about why 10 minutes because if the
17 person is speaking for a group of five, five times five is 25 minutes, five times three is 15
18 minutes, so it seems like 10 minutes for speaking for a group of five – why not 15? I guess I
19 would throw that out to the other Commissioners to say why not 15? It seems reasonable and
20 certainly is going to save time on the one hand and would be no longer on the other hand. So
21 that is one question that actually is posed to the other Commissioners as opposed to the Attorney.

22
23 Then on page II-4 we were talking about the order of the meeting. What isn't addressed here is
24 the procedures for the public hearing, which are on the front of our agendas all the time. I had
25 referenced last time that there should be some reference to that, if that be inserted or referred to.
26 Was that overlooked?

27
28 Chair Cassel: No, it wasn't overlooked. Did you want to discuss why you didn't include that?
29 These were the procedures at the front of the agenda that you indicated when I discussed with
30 you the items that were going forward we did have a conversation. Do you want to explain that?

31
32 Mr. Larkin: You can correct me if I forget anything but the procedures for public hearing are all
33 things that need to be carried out but don't necessarily need to be carried out in a particular order
34 except that members of the public have to be able to speak before a motion is made. So the idea
35 was to give the Chair some flexibility as due process might require to allow things to happen in a
36 workable order.

37
38 Chair Cassel: In addition to that we can change that order by vote of the Commission that day to
39 allow a much more flexible arrangement. This is to give guidance of what we usually do but not
40 necessarily a requirement.

41
42 Commissioner Holman: My concern about that was as we discussed somewhat last time is for
43 instance there was one meeting where the public was supposed to speak or asked to speak before
44 the Staff presentation was given and that really puts them at a disadvantage. The other was, and
45 I didn't find it in here this time when I read it.

1 Chair Cassel: Well, my comment to the other one is if the Chair makes an error she makes an
2 error and she might make an error either way whether it was in the procedures or not. I mean
3 that is not normally the way it should have gone.
4

5 Commissioner Holman: I think that was a decision of the Chair in this case, not to pick on
6 anyone but I think it was a decision of the Chair and not an error. So we can come back to that if
7 others have questions about it.
8

9 Then on III-4 it is an informative clarification that we can refer to a city agency, body,
10 committee, board, commission or officer. So if we have questions that we think we might be
11 better informed on, I will give just an example out of the air, if we think we would have better
12 information if we have a project that we have Site and Design purview on if we thought we
13 might be better informed if it went to the ARB and then came back to us that is something that
14 we could do? I don't think we have ever done that.
15

16 Mr. Larkin: Only on certain items but on those items that the Planning and Transportation
17 Commission has the authority to refer to the ARB for example that would be the time that it
18 would be done. Otherwise the Planning Commission can also make referrals to City Council on
19 certain types of items for example zoning changes. So it is not for everything that comes before
20 the Commission but for certain items the Commission has the discretion to refer.
21

22 Commissioner Holman: Can you give an example of what kind of circumstance?
23

24 Mr. Larkin: Well, an example of something recently would be the application at 2300 East
25 Bayshore in which the Commission made specific referrals to the ARB to look at certain items.
26

27 Commissioner Holman: Okay, thank you. Do you want me to do a couple more or do you want
28 to go on?
29

30 Chair Cassel: What I would like to do is if someone would place a motion – well I have to open
31 the public hearing and see if anyone would like to speak to it, bring it back to us, put a motion on
32 the floor and then have people make amendments to that motion so that we could then be
33 specific. In other words you would like to see it 15 minutes instead of 10 then we could discuss
34 those specifically and then move on that is what I would really like to do.
35

36 Commissioner Holman: Aren't we still in the question phase though?
37

38 Chair Cassel: Except that sometimes you are asking questions that would be for instance like the
39 10 or 15 minutes you are not really asking them that that is really an issue that we need to decide.
40 I am just trying to get decisions going and we can still ask questions.
41

42 Mr. Larkin: Since we are on the topic of procedures just as a clarification a motion can be made
43 at any time after the public has had an opportunity to speak. It doesn't foreclose asking further
44 questions and it is not intended to cutoff questions but debate on an issue can't begin until there
45 is a motion to debate.
46

47 Commissioner Holman: A clarifying on that because the procedures also say that once a motion
48 is made there is only one question per Commissioner asked. So that seems in conflict.

1
2 Mr. Larkin: I don't believe it was intended to mean one question only but one question and then
3 each Commissioner would have an opportunity and then it would come back.
4
5 Chair Cassel: That had been our agreement but we keep sliding on that one. Either that or we
6 said two but we picked this up from the City Council. Their habit is each person has a chance to
7 speak before the next person has a chance to speak.
8
9 Mr. Larkin: Just as another further clarification the Chair has discretion to allow more questions
10 provided there is no objection from another Commission member.
11
12 Chair Cassel: So I would like to open the public hearing. I have no cards. No one wishes to
13 speak to this item from the public so I wish to close the public hearing. I would like if I could to
14 have a motion. Lee, would you make a motion?
15
16 MOTION
17
18 Commissioner Lippert: Yes. I move that we adopt as has been proposed and amended here.
19
20 Chair Cassel: Do I have a second?
21
22 SECOND
23
24 Commissioner Bialson: Second.
25
26 Chair Cassel: Annette seconds that. Would you like to speak to it?
27
28 Commissioner Lippert: I think that the City Attorney's Office has done a great job of
29 incorporating the language that we have given him at the previous hearing. It looks pretty good.
30 I know this is a living document and it will be updated and revised from time to time. I think it
31 is fairly complete and I think we should vote on it.
32
33 Chair Cassel: Annette.
34
35 Commissioner Bialson: I agree with Lee. Further I understand that perhaps Karen may have
36 some question about making things a little more detailed and nailed down but I don't think that is
37 the role of these guidelines and these rules that we are creating. I think that as they are stated at
38 this point, again as a living document subject to change, I am happy with them.
39
40 Chair Cassel: Pat and then I will go back to you, Karen.
41
42 Commissioner Burt: It is interesting that our discussion of the procedures in itself brings up
43 some of the issues. I happen to think that we for instance tonight I hadn't had an opportunity to
44 ask any questions before the Chair wanted a motion on the floor and our procedures as they are
45 stated in the agenda have a particular section for Commissioners to be able to ask questions. To
46 me it illustrates and maybe reaffirms that we should adopt those procedures for the hearing as a
47 procedure.
48

1 When I was thinking earlier about well, okay maybe they belong in this third segment that was
2 called guidelines or protocols?
3

4 Chair Cassel: We have some protocols that apparently City Council is going to be working on.
5

6 Commissioner Burt: Okay. Why would we put it on our agenda in writing every meeting as a
7 procedure of the Commission if we don't mean it to be what we over here call a procedure?
8

9 Chair Cassel: Let me respond. We have done this two meetings and a Retreat and that is why in
10 this case we had a lot of discussion and I am perfectly willing to have you ask more questions. I
11 was hoping we would be able to focus a little bit this evening because we have already had this
12 on our agenda three times.
13

14 Commissioner Burt: Well, I guess my response to that would be if Commissioners don't have
15 questions they don't have questions. We don't need the Chair to tell us we don't have questions.
16

17 Chair Cassel: Would you like to ask some questions, Pat?
18

19 Commissioner Burt: Yes but part of it has to do with I think our discussion tonight illustrates
20 why we should in fact have this sort of sequence for our meetings. When it was first brought up
21 and Don had said well it probably wasn't necessary, I thought maybe that is the case, and then as
22 I observed the discussion and looked at how we have it spelled out in the agenda and observed
23 what occurred tonight it kind of reaffirmed to me that maybe we do need to have this solidified a
24 little more. We have had a bunch of occasions over the last year or so where we have completely
25 skipped the questions to Staff before hearing from the public, that prelim round of questions we
26 got into a habit of that, we have gone back to doing that more which had been part of our
27 protocol. I think if you don't lay it out there is a lot greater tendency to drift from practices that
28 we have all agreed upon. Just as in the section now where we are supposed to have a question
29 asking session and I think it is appropriate to retain it and if we omit it from our procedures we
30 are going to have a lot greater tendency to just lose sight of what we think are best practices.
31

32 Chair Cassel: Would you like to make an amendment to the document to say that?
33

34 AMENDMENT
35

36 Commissioner Burt: I would propose an amendment that we adopt the section on our agenda as
37 Procedures for Public Hearings and include that within the II-4 segment, as the City Attorney
38 deems appropriate where to insert it but include that as Procedures for Public Hearings as part of
39 the Planning and Transportation Commission Procedural Rules.
40

41 Chair Cassel: Okay, you want to adopt the section of the agenda; can you state that for me
42 because I don't have the agenda in front of me?
43

44 Commissioner Burt: Yes. Adopt the section of the agenda titled Procedures for Public Hearings
45 and include that under II of the Commission procedural rules.
46

47 Chair Cassel: Do I have a second? I need a second.
48

1 Commissioner Holman: Is that a secondary motion or are you asking for an amendment to the
2 original motion?
3
4 Chair Cassel: An amendment is a secondary motion.
5
6 SECOND
7
8 Commissioner Holman: I will second it.
9
10 Chair Cassel: Thank you. Discussion? Do you want to say anything else, Pat?
11
12 Commissioner Burt: No, I think I have expressed myself.
13
14 Chair Cassel: Karen, do you want to make a comment?
15
16 Commissioner Holman: I think it has been explained, thank you.
17
18 Chair Cassel: Does anyone else wish to say anything? Bonnie.
19
20 Vice Chair Packer: I appreciate Pat and Karen's concerns and we have all had concerns with the
21 proper order of when we do questions, when does a question become a discussion, etc. Each
22 situation has its unique needs. What I see before us in the procedural rules, the existing II, items
23 5 and 6 just say Unfinished Business and New Business. I see these procedures for public
24 hearings are detail under whatever that business is. Thus I think that maybe what needs to be
25 discussed further in the protocols when you guys get to do it in the Retreat is perhaps think
26 through a little bit more carefully what do we mean by Planning Commission questions by the
27 applicant and Staff, how you want to do that. How many and whether you go up and down the
28 dais and also a clarification that there can be additional questions when there is a motion and
29 debate. What I am suggesting is that the issues that you are raising may be more appropriate in
30 the protocols and discussed with more finesse so that you can maybe give yourselves more
31 flexibility depending on the kind of business that is before the Commission at the time.
32
33 I think one of the issues that we have struggled with is when a question simply a clarification
34 question and when is a question beginning to set the stage for a position that we may have or
35 want to explore during debate. I think all of us have been confused about that. I think that in the
36 protocols may be a better place to explore what you are trying to achieve.
37
38 So I am going vote against this motion just because I think the issue needs to be fleshed out more
39 carefully under protocols.
40
41 Chair Cassel: Lee.
42
43 Commissioner Lippert: I have a question for the Chair. As an amendment doesn't the first and
44 seconder have to agree to the amendment? That is a procedural question.
45
46 Chair Cassel: As an amendment, no not to my understanding not if you have an amendment to
47 the floor. If it is a friendly amendment, yes, but if it isn't – would you like that as a friendly
48 amendment?

1
2 Commissioner Burt: So ordinarily we would ask the maker if the maker would be receptive to it
3 as a friendly amendment, which is what I would prefer to do. Would the maker accept that as a
4 friendly amendment? Who was the maker?
5
6 Commissioner Lippert: I agree with Bonnie's point of view here and I would not accept it as a
7 friendly amendment to the motion.
8
9 Commissioner Burt: Okay, so I guess we keep it as an amendment.
10
11 Chair Cassel: Is there anyone else that would like to speak on this item? You spoke to it?
12 Karen.
13
14 Commissioner Holman: So a clarification then. Pat was asking for a friendly amendment so
15 then

16
17 Chair Cassel: The friendly amendment was turned down so he wants it to become and
18 amendment to the motion.
19
20 Commissioner Holman: So we are back to that with Pat making the amendment and my
21 seconding. Then just one last point about why I think these are also important especially for the
22 order because the question then the discussion and then the motion is because when a motion is
23 made too early, and I have seen this happen on Boards, I have seen this happen on the Council,
24 when a motion is made too early and then questions follow that and then the discussion follows
25 that a lot of times the motion gets lost. When a motion is made what is supposed to be addressed
26 then is as a part of the discussion and questions is the motion itself. The motion just can really
27 get so lost so I think this procedure that is outlined on our agenda is a very good one.
28
29 Chair Cassel: Does anyone wish to speak before I go back? Pat.
30
31 Commissioner Burt: Well, first I think that Bonnie's point that there may need to be additional
32 discussion of what subtleties there are between genuine questions and rhetorical questions that
33 may be a valid thing to discuss further at the Retreat but I don't think that that nuance precludes
34 the need to adopt the fundamental procedures. Just because there may be something we want to
35 refine in them I don't think is a good argument to not adopt them at all.
36
37 Second, there is a fundamental logical inconsistency if we are going to have on our agenda a list
38 every meeting of procedures but we say that they are not a procedure. We either ought to adopt
39 them while we are adopting the update to the Planning Commission Procedures or we ought to
40 get rid of them as a procedure. I just don't find logically how we can keep both in place.
41
42 Chair Cassel: Lee.
43
44 Commissioner Lippert: I think there is some confusion in what we are really talking about here.
45 With regard to the procedures for public hearing that we have on our agenda is really more of a
46 protocol and I think that's point that Bonnie was trying to make. That it really is not the
47 procedure by which we operate as a Board but how we conduct our hearings and that is more of
48 a protocol and that is where it belongs is in Protocols.

1
2 MOTION FAILS (2-5-0-0, with Commissioners Burt and Holman voting for)
3

4 Chair Cassel: Is there anyone else who wishes to have some discussion? No, then I will call a
5 vote. I will repeat the motion, it is to adopt the procedures section of our agenda where it says
6 Procedures for Public Hearing and place it in our procedures under item 2.4 of those procedures.
7 May I have a vote? All those in favor please say aye. (ayes) Opposed say no. (nos) It fails on
8 a vote of two to five.
9

10 Now Pat, you have some other questions you would like to ask.
11

12 Commissioner Burt: Yes. I just wanted to ask Don to clarify Section D under Study Sessions. It
13 talks about neither the Commission nor Staff may relay upon information obtained or comments
14 made during a study session unless such information or comments are reintroduced during a
15 subsequent noticed Public Hearing, etc. I was trying to recall and envision the practical impact
16 of that and so I was just a little bit uncomfortable with whether that was consistent with our
17 historic practices. I just was trying to recall it and make sure that it was something that didn't
18 come in conflict with what we actually do.
19

20 Mr. Larkin: It shouldn't because if it is part of the historic practices it shouldn't be because it is
21 really a due process question. An applicant is entitled to a fair and impartial hearing particularly
22 on quasi-judicial items and that hearing and the findings made at that hearing should be based on
23 the evidence as presented at that hearing. So if there are items that are presented in a study
24 session that are important to the findings of the Commission they should be represented at the
25 Public Hearing where the public has an opportunity to be heard on the issue before a decision is
26 made and the applicant has the ability to address all issues that are going to be considered.
27

28 Commissioner Burt: Is there somewhere in this section that it clarifies that it is only referring to
29 hearings where we have applicants as opposed to other legislative matter?
30

31 Mr. Larkin: There isn't but it would apply – the due process rights are different but it would still
32 apply in a legislative hearing because the public still has the opportunity to participate in the
33 Public Hearing. So the same would apply that anything that is being considered by the
34 Commission in either a legislative or a quasi-judicial action should be presented at the Public
35 Hearing where the decision is made.
36

37 Commissioner Burt: So I am just trying to recall times where we had legislative matters and we
38 had the study session in advance and do we necessarily follow this practice where if we have a
39 Study Session, we have Staff Reports and then a subsequent hearing on a legislative matter I
40 don't think we have necessarily reintroduced everything that occurred in the Study Session in
41 order to be able to use it in our legislative decision-making.
42

43 Mr. Larkin: It is not that you have to reintroduce everything that happens in the Study Session
44 but the basis for the decision which is typically for example on a legislative matter will be the
45 whereas clauses, the findings, those have to be included and they would be. The Commission
46 does that and those go into the public documents and are often discussed at the Commission
47 hearing.
48

1 Commissioner Burt: So where this says rely upon information obtained or comments made
2 during a Study Session that is what I am kind of focusing on. We get information provided by
3 Staff or consultants at a Study Session, we may have comments by members of the public at a
4 Study Session and I don't recall them necessarily being reintroduced at the Public Hearing on the
5 legislative matter. So is that practice in conflict with what we have as a procedural rule?
6

7 Mr. Larkin: If it is we will correct that and make sure that we are doing that properly.
8

9 Commissioner Burt: Correct it in what way? Does that mean that if we get information at a
10 Study Session all of that is going to have to be reintroduced at the Public Hearing for a
11 legislative matter?
12

13 Mr. Larkin: No, it is the information that the Commission is going to rely on in making the
14 decision and if the Commission is relying on a study then the study ought to be made available at
15 the hearing and it could be made available by placing it at the table.
16

17 Commissioner Burt: Steve, could you comment on the practical impact of that? Does that seem
18 okay?
19

20 Mr. Emslie: The issue is really going to come up when you are doing a legislative act and rules
21 of evidence are much broader for a legislative act because you get to take into account basically
22 information that you can gather from a variety of sources. So what I think Don is saying is that
23 when a legislative decision is made and say there had been a prior Study Session involved in that
24 the Commission needs to take that into account in reaching that decision and have that be
25 documented in the adoption of that legislative act. What Don is saying in the findings there
26 should be some reference to a prior Study Session or any other piece of information that the
27 Commission as whole has taken into account? So it is a matter of documenting that either prior
28 studies or Study Sessions or comments or experiences you have had or observations that relate to
29 that legislative act are equally as important to document in that decision.
30

31 Chair Cassel: So you would be saying for instance I am voting for this because I heard these
32 statements at this study session that said this would be a good idea because of A, B and C. That
33 is what you mean, you don't have to go back and say everything that happened at the meeting
34 but those points which you made up your mind because there was that information at that session
35 you would then state or it would be in the record or the Staff would have said we think you
36 should do X, Y and Z based on the study that you received.
37

38 Mr. Emslie: Or take another example, I am going to vote for this ordinance to put a stop sign at
39 this intersection because I got hit when I went through that intersection. That is an experience
40 that you need to articulate and that would be a good finding for that decision. So it is really you
41 articulating the reasons for your decision based on information that you have gathered either in
42 the hearings or from other sources. It just needs to be articulated that is what we are saying.
43

44 Mr. Larkin: We haven't observed a problem with this and this isn't new to the procedures I
45 don't believe. It is certainly part of the City Council's procedures and it hasn't been an issue, it
46 hasn't been a problem because it is not as formal as the way that you might be reading it. It is
47 more you have to be able to articulate why you made the decision you made.
48

1 Mr. Emslie: Let me just give you an observation. This Commission does an extraordinary job of
2 documenting your decisions. You are very well schooled in giving very sound reasons that make
3 it very easy for Staff to translate those into very well thought out and defensible decisions. I
4 don't think you have to worry about your relationship with the record and using proper
5 recordation of that in documenting your decisions. You are doing fine in that area.

6
7 Chair Cassel: Did you have another question, Pat?

8
9 Commissioner Burt: I minor one on where you say in here one question per Commissioner and
10 we had had a practice I think at one time where the Chair...is it in there? I think the Chair
11 alluded to it.

12
13 Chair Cassel: Karen alluded to it and I don't know where she saw it.

14
15 Commissioner Burt: Anyway, if it is in there, if my memory serves me correctly I think in the
16 past year or so the Chair had setup a practice of going two questions per Commissioner and that
17 seemed to work pretty well. I just don't want to get us bound. It is kind of ironic to me that I am
18 reading these things in a more literal way that if we adopt them as a procedure then that is what
19 we have to follow. I want to make sure that we don't set ourselves up to be violating our own
20 procedures when in fact it is something we are comfortable giving latitude on.

21
22 Chair Cassel: Karen, can you tell me where that was because I thought it was in here too?

23
24 Commissioner Holman: I was just looking for it.

25
26 Vice Chair Packer: Is it on page 3-2 up on the top where it says F. Discussion? The second
27 sentence says, "Generally Commissioners will speak only once with respect to a motion."

28
29 Chair Cassel: That's right. That came out of the City Council wording. You are right Pat, we
30 have never limited ourselves that severely.

31
32 Mr. Larkin: That doesn't apply necessarily to questions but to debate and it is to avoid the
33 problem of up and down debating although the Chair has discretion to allow additional
34 comments as appropriate.

35
36 Commissioner Lippert: May I be recognized by the Chair?

37
38 Chair Cassel: Yes, Lee.

39
40 Commissioner Lippert: My understanding was with regard to the line of questioning was that it
41 was one question per Commissioner at a time with the ability to ask a follow up question if it
42 was pertaining to the first question or a question in terms of asking for clarification because the
43 answer that they received was not clear. That is what I understand. The reason why we looked
44 at this was because that way each of us would get an opportunity to ask our questions and we
45 wouldn't get all bundled up with one specific person at a time asking their questions.

46
47 Chair Cassel: That was my understanding and we have a tendency not to do that. We have slid
48 back into the two questions because other people thought it was two questions. The question is

1 how specific do we need it here? I think the intent here is that you will have one person speak
2 and then the next person speaks and then everyone should have an opportunity to speak before
3 we go back. Sometimes someone doesn't appear to want to speak and so then we go back. What
4 your Chair is trying to do is see if everyone wants to speak not necessarily in the order before
5 they go on to the next person. Sometimes someone doesn't want to speak for awhile before they
6 do want to say something. This I think is the intent of this. Bonnie.

7
8 Vice Chair Packer: If you read the following sentence the Chair can allow Commissioners to
9 keep on speaking and just treat all the Commissioners equally. I think in essence this is what we
10 have really been doing.

11
12 Chair Cassel: Do I hear any other questions or any other amendments? Karen.

13
14 Commissioner Holman: I have one. I have to go back to it. It is a clarification and maybe a
15 correction as well on 4-1, number 2 at the bottom of the page and it is regarding Additional
16 Requirements for Quasi-judicial Hearings and Planned Community Zone Applications. In the
17 highlighted or underlined portion it says, "Conversations or correspondence with an applicant,"
18 and I believe what we had discussed previously and what our policy has been that it was
19 conversations or direct correspondence because we do get correspondence through Staff. So I
20 think to clarify it would be conversations or direct communications with an applicant, an
21 applicant's agent or members of the public about a pending application. The reason for that
22 clarification is because we need to be even-handed. An applicant should not be put at
23 disadvantage any more than anyone else. The other reason for that is because sometimes
24 unbeknown to us members of the public could well be working for the applicant and we would
25 have no idea until much later when the project would come to us. So I think it is a more even-
26 handed and clear approach than I think what we have been doing.

27
28 Chair Cassel: Do you want to comment on that, Don?

29
30 Mr. Larkin: No.

31
32 Chair Cassel: Okay. Did you want to make a motion to that effect?

33
34 Commissioner Holman: Sure. I would ask the maker and seconder of the motion to accept as a
35 friendly amendment the clarification and change the language that is highlighted on page 4-1
36 under B-2, the underlined portion. So then that language then become conversations or direct
37 (add the word direct) correspondence with an applicant, an applicant's agent or members of the
38 public about a pending application and carry on.

39
40 Commissioner Lippert: I can accept that.

41
42 Chair Cassel: Annette.

43
44 Commissioner Bialson: I think I can accept your intent. I think the use of the word 'direct'
45 actually makes it a little more confusing as I read. You can have correspondence with an
46 applicant only directly otherwise you are corresponding with the City Attorney. You may
47 receive correspondence that was sent from the applicant but you are not corresponding directly
48 with him unless you were receiving it.

1
2 Chair Cassel: Without the direct it covers everything. It covers both the stuff that comes
3 through the City and the stuff that comes direct.
4
5 Commissioner Bialson: You receive correspondence it is not like you received a document from
6 the applicant. It depends on how you are defining correspondence. Correspondence to me is
7 something sent to you. How are you defining correspondence? A letter?
8
9 Commissioner Lippert: Well, a clarification is recently on the Bayshore project the applicant
10 submitted documents directly to us.
11
12 Commissioner Bialson: That is correspondence to us it is not....okay, I won't parse the word too
13 much but I think that you understand what I am saying. When you use the term
14 'correspondence' it means with you.
15
16 Mr. Larkin: The public has a right to petition for redress of grievances and they can contact you
17 all they want and you should be discouraged from talking back.
18
19 Chair Cassel: So the word direct doesn't make any difference whether it is direct or not direct.
20 So the question Annette is do you want to accept that as a friendly amendment?
21
22 Commissioner Bialson: I understand what is intended I think it actually puts a level of confusion
23 into it but if everybody else is happy with it I won't attorney it.
24
25 Commissioner Lippert: It is a living document.
26
27 Chair Cassel: It has been accepted by the maker and the seconder. So I don't think we have to
28 go on any further with that. We can just proceed. Are there any other questions or any other
29 proposals for amendments? Pat.
30
31 Commissioner Burt: Returning to III-2 and this 2-F this issue we were talking about a moment
32 ago on the discussion. As I look at it more the second sentence says, "Generally Commissioners
33 with speak only once with respect to a motion." I guess that was drawn from the Council
34 procedural rules. I don't think that reflects our practices and even though the next sentence
35 allows the presiding officer to speak more than once since it is not our practice why would we
36 want that in the procedure?
37
38 Chair Cassel: Do you have a proposal?
39
40 Commissioner Burt: Maybe just omit the second sentence. I was looking at different
41 alternatives. Well, I am not sure. What we had talked about was we have what is probably more
42 appropriately in a protocol which is the Chair has allowed in the past either one question per
43 Commissioner before each Commissioner has had a chance to speak or two and maybe those
44 things belong in protocols not procedures. If we omit the first sentence.
45
46 Chair Cassel: Would you like to ask Lee if he would accept that?
47
48 Commissioner Burt: Yes, I am struggling with what would be a proper omission. Do we omit...

1
2 Chair Cassel: Just the whole sentence because what you do want it to say is if the presiding
3 officer or Commissioner permits any Commissioner to speak more than once on a motion all
4 Commissioners shall receive the same privilege.
5

6 Commissioner Burt: Okay. So then my friendly amendment would be to omit the second
7 sentence which reads, "Generally Commissioners with speak only once with respect to a
8 motion."
9

10 Mr. Larkin: I would just clarify that this sentence that you are suggesting to omit doesn't apply
11 to Commissioner questions. Commissioners are free to ask as many questions as they want.
12

13 Commissioner Lippert: I think it is important that Commissioners be succinct with their
14 comments and speaking to a motion and they are given as much time as they want to speak in
15 support or against a motion they should put it all together at once and at the Chair's discretion if
16 the Chair wants to allow for a second round of comments or discussion then that's when it
17 should happen.
18

19 Chair Cassel: Okay. He said no.
20

21 Commissioner Bialson: Can we vote on the motion?
22

23 Chair Cassel: I was trying to see if there were any other changes. I keep having people wanting
24 to make changes and Karen has another one.
25

26 Commissioner Holman: I was just going to try that as a separate motion but I will let it slide. I
27 do want to make the point though that if it does happen that a motion is made early because we
28 are not including these procedures that are on our agenda, if it does happen that a motion gets
29 made first that over time there can be creep, slippage this means that questions, comments,
30 discussion would be one opportunity for Commissioners to speak to the motion.
31

32 Chair Cassel: No, it does not limit questions.
33

34 Mr. Larkin: I want to make perfectly clear a motion can be made at any time after the public has
35 an opportunity to speak. It does not limit questions but it does limit debate to what the subject of
36 the motion is but it also begins debate because you can't debate a motion that hasn't been made.
37

38 Commissioner Burt: A clarification. So Don, does that mean that if we adopt this language as
39 written a motion has been made but Commissioners can continue to ask questions after the
40 motion has been made and that is not to be confused with speaking to the motion. Is that
41 correct?
42

43 Mr. Larkin: That is correct. Commissioner can ask questions for clarification at any time before
44 a vote has been called.
45

46 Commissioner Lippert: In other words you can do jeopardy.
47

48 MOTION PASSED (7-0-0-0)

1
2 Chair Cassel: Okay. Having nothing else then I will call the question. All those in favor please
3 say aye. (ayes) Opposed? Then that motion passes seven to nothing. Thank you, we will look
4 at these again at our Retreat to see if we need to update these or make any more changes. Go
5 ahead.

6
7 Commissioner Burt: I would like to make a related recommendation and I am not sure that it
8 maybe even requires a motion. We have in our agenda this thing that we discussed earlier called
9 Procedures for Public Hearings. We have just adopted our procedural rules and we are calling
10 something on our agenda a procedure. I think we ought to rename it whether we call it a
11 protocol or maybe just a guideline for Public Hearings is the way it should be on the agenda.

12
13 Chair Cassel: I think we should do something with that too. I agree with you.

14
15 Mr. Larkin: That doesn't require a motion. We can do that.

16
17 Chair Cassel: We can do that. All right. Karen.

18
19 Commissioner Holman: Yes, the motion was voted on but I didn't hear it stated as the motion as
20 amended so I just want to be clear about that.

21
22 Chair Cassel: The motion as amended? Yes, I have consensus on that. Thank you.

23
24 The next item on the agenda is the City Council Joint Meeting and we are to discuss what items
25 we would like to put on that agenda. When we get that list we want to remember that we may
26 need to cut that. Do you have something to say about that, Steve?

27
28 **3. Discussion of Topics for the Joint Study Session with City Council.**

29
30 Mr. Emslie: Yes. I just wanted to reiterate what has been the past Commission practice, which
31 to Staff's way of thinking has been successful. There has been kind of a very quick
32 brainstorming at a meeting, a long list is generated and I think sometimes that list has come back
33 to the Commission for further refinement. Then the Chair and the Vice-Chair and the Mayor and
34 Vice-Mayor meet to go over that list and then they set the agenda. Then that becomes the
35 agenda for the Joint Session.

36
37 I also wanted to point out that the study session is scheduled for October so there is time for this
38 to return to the Commission for further refinement if so desired.

39
40 Chair Cassel: Okay. I thought we were going to finish that tonight. Go ahead.

41
42 Mr. Larkin: Just to clarify it is scheduled for October but the date is still uncertain because the
43 date it was scheduled for there is no meeting.

44
45 Chair Cassel: Well Columbus Day is on Monday and I am understanding that the 11th will have
46 to be rescheduled if there is anything on the agenda because that is a holiday, or the 13th I guess
47 it would be. Lee.

1 Commissioner Lippert: I would like to make two points. The first one is that the date that we
2 were given, October 10th is not only Columbus Day and a holiday but the 11th is Yom Kippur eve
3 therefore it couldn't be on the 11th either.

4
5 Chair Cassel: It won't be.

6
7 Mr. Emslie: We are aware of that and that won't be scheduled.

8
9 Chair Cassel: I was informed this evening at the beginning of the meeting by the Secretary that
10 that will not happen.

11
12 Commissioner Lippert: The second point I would like to make is that we do have two new
13 Commissioners that will be joining us. So I would suggest that we discuss this tonight and then
14 continue the item when the other two Commissioners join this body so they may provide some
15 input as well.

16
17 Chair Cassel: Thank you. At this time I would like to know what items you would like on the
18 agenda. Shall I start on this end and work down?

19
20 Commissioner Lippert: I think one of the discussion items generally could be the ZOU and the
21 work that has already been acted on. I think that is particularly important. We have not entered
22 into a dialogue with Council on the ZOU and I know there are still some very rough spots in the
23 ZOU on the sections that they have already adopted. So that would be I think a good topic of
24 discussion.

25
26 Chair Cassel: Pat, do you want to say anything?

27
28 Commissioner Burt: Well, I agree with Lee that's our number one arena. Over the last three
29 years we actually had had a couple of discussions with the Council but things have evolved. So
30 even though prior to Commissioner Lippert being on there were discussions I think it is entirely
31 appropriate that we do have a discussion where we step back. I think one of the major issues that
32 has changed in the three-plus years that we have been working on the ZOU is what has happened
33 in the pace of housing development in the community. When we first began our discussions we
34 were searching for ways that we could incentivize additional housing. I recall saying myself that
35 with the downturn in commercial property values we might have one or two years of a window
36 where we could actually consider rezoning certain commercial properties for residential and not
37 have world war three going on with the fact that suddenly commercial property values were at a
38 parody with residential property. I don't think any of us, Staff or Council or Commission, had
39 envisioned that we would be having what is now happening where after 30 years of allowing
40 RM-30 development in our manufacturing zones both our LM and even the GM zones and never
41 having a taker in 30 years to my knowledge that we are having a very pronounced trend in that
42 direction. So we are not only having housing in the areas that we had targeted of what we called
43 Pedestrian and Transit Oriented Development but now we are having a real strong trend that may
44 be accelerating in significant amounts of housing in LM zones and otherwise.

45
46 Chair Cassel: So you would like us to schedule this discussion to rethink about that issue.

1 Commissioner Burt: Yes, and whether we need to fundamentally change whether it is a
2 permitted use or a conditional use in those areas.

3
4 Chair Cassel: Shall we move down? Do you have anything that you want us to schedule,
5 Bonnie?

6
7 Vice Chair Packer: This is just a thought. During my interview last week I was asked by one of
8 the Council Members what do you think the Planning and Transportation Commission should do
9 on its own to make changes? I pointed out that we don't have authority to direct Staff to do big
10 studies that comes from City Council. So one of the things that might be discussed is what
11 latitude, what direction can City Council give the Commission to allow the Commission to
12 instigate studies or give a little bit more discretion to the Commission so that we can be more
13 proactive? We tend to be reactive because we have limited powers. So that is something that
14 you might want to throw out on the table as a discussion point for a Joint Meeting.

15
16 Chair Cassel: Going back to the ZOU we need to talk not just about where we have been but
17 what progress we've made, where we need to go and how do we get items from the Planning
18 Commission to City Council a little more quickly. We need some nice way of wording that but
19 we finish the item and then it seems to take a very long time to get to City Council. Is there
20 some other way we can help in the presentation of the material for them so they have a chance to
21 hear it, think about it and then ask questions or some way to work it? Here is where Karen says
22 you bring up the issue, it comes in, they have a public hearing and then there is almost no
23 discussion. It seems like some for them to think about it in a different way that would move the
24 process along a little more smoothly than it is. Once it gets delayed then it seems to be delayed
25 for some period of time. I am concerned about that.

26
27 So basically it is not just where we have been with the ZOU but where we need to go with the
28 ZOU and how do we get there?

29
30 Commissioner Griffin: I am sorry that I will be missing your meeting but one of the things that
31 occurs to me is we have already in a sense put to bed the R-1 portion of the ZOU but there are
32 some developments that other Commissioners have talked about that have taken place in the City
33 and one of them that has cropped up recently in addition to Commissioner Holman's discussion
34 of two story basements the phenomenon of three story above grade additions has apparently, at
35 least has one opportunity for happening here. I am wondering if it would be possible to discuss
36 that aspect in the context of R-1, do we wish to continue to allow additional stories both above
37 ground and below ground to keep going? In other words, where do we stop in the R-1? Three
38 story basements and three stories above ground or where? It is a topic, not looking for any
39 particular resolution but bringing it to people's attention that one of these days it is going to have
40 to be dealt with.

41
42 Chair Cassel: Annette.

43
44 Commissioner Bialson: The area I think we can get the attention of the City Council which is of
45 critical importance, I think it feels good to have a Joint Meeting but it can be very meaningless as
46 well besides making us all feel happy about getting together, is in the ZOU area. I think that is
47 the area given the limited amount of time that we should focus on. I appreciate that there are lots
48 of things we could talk about but I think we need to articulate some specific areas in the ZOU

1 where we have as I think Lee put it we have some rough spots and get some understanding from
2 them and us that we will try to not have that happen in the future. If there is anything we can do
3 to go back and smooth some of them that would be good. Focus on particular issues and specific
4 matters rather than general philosophy. I don't think we get anywhere discussing general
5 philosophy.

6
7 Chair Cassel: Karen.

8
9 Commissioner Holman: I couple of things here. One is a tangent to Commissioner Burt's
10 comments about housing construction and where are we with that. Something that I think it
11 would be helpful to discuss is we also have a retail concern that is going on and in regards to the
12 housing development how might that be impacting our retail and services in this community by
13 housing replacing those properties that are currently in retail and services use? So I think that
14 would be a healthy and productive discussion to have.

15
16 Then, this is also Zoning Ordinance Update related. Some months ago this group reviewed and
17 the Council then passed changes to the HIE findings and also the Variance findings. It is kind of
18 a check-in. Our Planning Commission Handbook says that if too many Variances or too many
19 exceptions are being granted then maybe we need to look at changing the zoning. So I would
20 think it would be interesting and productive to know how many exceptions are granted, how
21 many Variances, how many HIEs, how many PCs and that is directly related to the ZOU. Are
22 we succeeding or not?

23
24 Then lastly would be a discussion of guidelines. We have some sustainability guidelines. We
25 have the El Camino Guidelines. How are those being implemented in relation again to the
26 Zoning Ordinance Update? The reason I am asking this one is because we had a couple of
27 projects come to us where the guidelines were being used but the guidelines are in conflict with
28 the code. So the guidelines then are superceding the code. So I am interested in knowing if
29 there could be a discussion about that and what the timeline is of bringing these into compliance
30 with each other or what really should be used for reviewing projects. I think some clarity along
31 those lines would be helpful for this body and I would like for Council to give us some guidance
32 on that.

33
34 One more thing. Is this going to be a one-hour meeting or is this going to be a longer more
35 meaningful?

36
37 Chair Cassel: Unfortunately this is a one-hour meeting but I think we have some really good
38 issues for discussion that would last much longer and be very useful. Lee.

39
40 Commissioner Lippert: I just want to remind the Chair to open the public hearing and allow
41 members of the public to speak, please.

42
43 Chair Cassel: Do we have to do that on this item?

44
45 Mr. Larkin: Are there any members of the public that wish to speak?

46
47 Chair Cassel: Yes there is, but my question was that I want to make sure that I don't miss
48 something that I could have done. I can always open the public hearing.

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Mr. Larkin: The public has the opportunity to address the Commission.

Chair Cassel: Would anyone in the public like to speak? Having no one here then I will close the item for the public hearing. Thank you.

Commissioner Lippert: I was very politely wondering if Paula had anything to add.

Chair Cassel: Thank you, Lee. Are there any other items that we should put on this agenda?

Commissioner Burt: Just following on to a couple of the comments that have been made within the ZOU context related to the housing development that is occurring at I guess the fastest rate in 30 years I would like to have a discussion with the Council on their concerns about the impact of that on our ability with the fiscal constraints that we have as a city right now for services and parks and schools to keep up with the growing population and how that should affect what we do in the ZOU. It is a very fundamental question and one that the Council and the Retail Committee and others all seem to be struggling with but we haven't had an open take-a-step-back discussion of that so I would like to see that. That is kind of related to what Karen had talked about on the economic impact of housing also replacing retail. So it is how does the ZOU relate with other fiscal issues and service issues within the city?

Chair Cassel: Any other items? Okay, then that item is then complete and we will continue that item until probably our next meeting.

The next item on our agenda are the minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 8 and 29, 2005

Chair Cassel: We have two sets of minutes one for June 6, we had Michael absent that day and Annette was in conflict with item number one. Annette.

Commissioner Bialson: I just want to say that it is June 8 and I can't vote on the June 8 minutes.

Chair Cassel: That is correct. Can I have a motion?

Vice Chair Packer: I will make my last motion.

Chair Cassel: Go ahead.

MOTION

Vice Chair Packer: I am making my last motion to approve the minutes of June 8, 2005 and June 29, 2005.

SECOND

Commissioner Lippert: I will second that.

1 MOTION PASSED (7-0-0-0)

2
3 Chair Cassel: Thank you. Any other questions, comments or discussion? Thank you very
4 much. All those in favor? (ayes) Opposed? That motion passes seven to nothing.

5
6 Now the next item on our agenda is some comments from Steve, our official.

7
8 ***REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS.***

9
10 Mr. Emslie: I had two areas to report. First of all to give you a very brief summary of the
11 Council's action on your item on 2300 East Bayshore. The Council approved the project as
12 recommended by the Planning Commission. There was one direction if you will to Staff for the
13 ZOU, to bring back and that is scheduled to come back to the City Council in September, to
14 include a recommendation for the LM district or that which will change into the LM to analyze
15 the effects of medical office as a permitted use with the concern that without discretion over that
16 permit that traffic and parking impacts could be compounded in that area especially given the
17 movement of private practice doctors out of the Welch Road area. So that is something that Staff
18 will be bringing back when the ZOU is scheduled for the latter part of September. Essentially it
19 was a unanimous vote, nine to zero, and the project stands approved.

20
21 Chair Cassel: Pat, question?

22
23 Commissioner Burt: Steve, would that also be coming back to the Planning Commission prior to
24 going to Council?

25
26 Mr. Emslie: We are looking at that. We think that the Commission has had a great deal of
27 discussion about the whole area of conditional uses and permitted uses and there actually is quite
28 a bit in the record that I think the Planning Commission has already covered. So we think that
29 for a matter of expediency of getting that to Council is probably if possible we would like to do it
30 that way but if determined that we haven't sufficiently covered it here at the Commission we will
31 bring it back to you. I believe that just a quick check of the record since Monday it looks like we
32 have a lot in there that you have covered.

33
34 Chair Cassel: You were going to discuss what is happening to the ZOU at this point for us. We
35 have had a change of Staff.

36
37 Mr. Emslie: That was my second point.

38
39 Commissioner Bialson: I just have one question. When you say they approved the project that
40 was in accordance with our passing of the project or did they alter it?

41
42 Mr. Emslie: They adopted the Staff recommendation and as the Commission is aware Staff
43 differed with the Commission on one item and that was the right-in/right-out driveway and they
44 adopted the Staff recommendation to retain right-in/right-out rather than right-in only for that.

45
46 Commissioner Bialson: Thank you.

47
48 Chair Cassel: Your item number two? Oh, I'm sorry.

1
2 Commissioner Holman: Could you clarify was the motion to study medical offices or medical
3 offices and schools?
4

5 Mr. Emslie: It was broader than that, thank you for that clarification. It was schools and then I
6 think it said any other high traffic generating use as well. So that is the case.
7

8 Chair Cassel: I am sorry. Anyone else with a question on that? Lee?
9

10 Commissioner Lippert: What was the ARB's recommendation?
11

12 Mr. Emslie: The ARB recommended for the project. They had some items coming back for
13 further study through subcommittee or on the Consent Calendar regarding when more details are
14 known primarily related to the equipment screen that was part of the recommendation and they
15 asked for those details to come back as ways of minimizing the equipment screen. The ARB did
16 recommend in favor of the project.
17

18 Commissioner Lippert: With regard to our referral for the story poles on massing?
19

20 Mr. Emslie: We understood that the applicant had complied by indicating height. They didn't
21 end up having to use story poles because there were a sufficient number of trees that they were
22 able to flag at the requisite height. So that was done before the ARB.
23

24 Chair Cassel: Any other questions? Okay, now item number two.
25

26 Mr. Emslie: I did want to bring you up to date with our staffing situation. As you know we
27 recently lost our Chief Planning Official to the County of San Mateo. She sends her regards. I
28 had lunch with her last week. As you know, one of our key Current Planning Staff, Amy French,
29 has delivered a happy and healthy baby girl and she will be returning to us from her maternity
30 leave in mid-September. Those are two key vacancies that we are feeling the effects of to put it
31 lightly.
32

33 So in the interim we have moved Curtis Williams who has been a key consultant on the ZOU
34 team to help us manage the many Current Planning projects. So you will see Curtis here
35 between now and the time that Amy returns and maybe even a little after. Well, consequently
36 that means he is not able to devote that time to the ZOU. So the Current Planning projects since
37 they are always on deadline and we do not have the luxury of setting those aside unfortunately
38 will have to take precedence. So we will begin to once we get back up to full staff in Current
39 Planning and our Chief Planning Official position filled, which I don't anticipate any sooner than
40 this fall, we will be taking a bit of a hiatus from the ZOU just out of necessity of limited Staff
41 resources at this point.
42

43 Chair Cassel: You have lost a third person also.
44

45 Mr. Emslie: Yes, Chris Magnusson, many of you knew him he was an Associate Planner. He
46 has also taken a position. We were able to very fortunately fill that position internally. Actually
47 with various jockeying and positions in the layoff situation and the budget we were able to use

1 that vacancy to move an internal staff member into that. So that will be less of an impact
2 because we were able to get an internal candidate into that position.

3
4 Chair Cassel: How long do you think it will be before we start doing ZOU again?

5
6 Mr. Emslie: I would say probably we would be able to move Curtis back into the ZOU shortly
7 after Amy returns and they are able to make the handoff on the projects. So I would say
8 probably in early October.

9
10 Chair Cassel: But they will be taking the Industrial Light Manufacturing material to City
11 Council in September?

12
13 Mr. Emslie: That is correct. That is not going to be delayed.

14
15 Chair Cassel: Okay. That was scheduled originally in July to go to City Council and was taken
16 off the agenda and I have been assured that it will be there in September.

17
18 Okay, Don.

19
20 Mr. Larkin: Just very quickly I didn't get a chance to introduce Melissa Tronquet to everybody.
21 Melissa is a Deputy City Attorney in our office who will be covering for me on my rare
22 vacations and other times when I am unable to attend. So she is going to be sitting in just
23 occasionally just so she keeps up with what is happening.

24
25 Chair Cassel: Thank you. Lee.

26
27 Commissioner Lippert: Welcome, Melissa. Steve, just so you know she does have a planning
28 background just in case.

29
30 Chair Cassel: Thank you and welcome. Good luck with the staff so that we can get back to
31 working on the ZOU. It has been nice to have a summer vacation however.

32
33 Now the last item is Commission Member Questions, Comments and Announcements.

34
35 ***COMMISSION MEMBER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND/OR ANNOUNCEMENTS.***

36
37 Chair Cassel: What I had hoped to do at this time is thank our former Commissioners for all of
38 their kind work they have done with us. We are losing two. We are losing both Bonnie and
39 Michael. Michael has served as Chair, Vice-Chair and he came to us from working on the IR
40 process, which he had done for a number of years before it came to us.

41
42 Bonnie has worked on many of our ZOU committees and been with us for six years. She was
43 Vice-Chair twice. We really have appreciated her time. She has put a lot of time and effort into
44 this, as has Michael. We are really going to be sorry to miss you. Is there anyone else who
45 would like to make any comments at this time? Michael.

46
47 Commissioner Griffin: I would like to be able to thank Staff properly for handling all of my
48 questions during the last four years and dealing with the garbled syntax and able to make sense

1 out of what I was trying to get across. Sort of in honor of that I have written a limerick if you
2 will permit me. Here we go.

3
4 There once was a Planning Commission
5 Who occasionally thought it was there mission
6 To argue all night as to who had the right
7 To torture the Staff with their quizzin’
8

9 I also want to thank my fellow Commissioners for putting up with all the things that you have
10 put up with. You are good folks. I mean that despite our difference of opinions from time to
11 time we have all kept things on a pretty even keel I think. So in respect to that I have another
12 limerick.

13
14 Now this same little band of seven
15 Despite all their pushing and shovin’
16 Worked as hard as they could even when misunderstood
17 To make Palo Alto a true piece of heaven.
18

19 That’s it.

20
21 Chair Cassel: Thank you, Michael. Bonnie, I think you wanted to say something. Be sure and
22 save those because I am sure Steve wants to keep them.

23
24 Commissioner Griffin: I will give them to Zariah.

25
26 Chair Cassel: Bonnie.

27
28 Vice Chair Packer: Michael, you are a hard act to follow. It has only been five and a half years
29 not six years. It has been great working with everybody, all the Commissioners. I am going to
30 miss you guys. You might see me around anyway. Staff, what more can I say?

31
32 One of the things I did do when I realized I wasn’t going to be – and I realized this right after I
33 heard the wonderful interviews, I am really looking forward – I think you are going to be well
34 served with Paula and Dan on the Commission. I think they are going to make great
35 Commissioners. I wrote and it is not a limerick it is real serious and I am sorry if it is boring-
36 sounding. But I wanted to read this. I wrote a little letter to a new Planning and Transportation
37 Commissioner.

38
39 Welcome to your new role as a Land Use and Transportation Advisor to the City Council. You
40 are about to begin a four year endeavor working with your fellow Commissioners, the City Staff
41 and the public to balance difficult competing issues between growth and no-growth, between
42 traffic efficiency and traffic safety, between the need for affordable housing and demands for
43 recreational parkland, just to name a few issues.

44
45 You will be learning the inherent conflicts within the Comprehensive Plan and the dense and
46 outdated Zoning Ordinance. You will be in touch with the latest in urban infill planning
47 concepts. You will become accustomed to the regulars who show up at almost every Wednesday

1 meeting to voice their perspectives and you will hear from countless other members of the public
2 who come occasionally to present their points of view.

3
4 You will hear eloquent presentations from visionary architects and appeals of Variance requests.
5 You will learn about how traffic counts are made and such esoteric statistical measurements for
6 traffic congestions known as levels of service. You will on occasion spend long weekend hours
7 pouring over 300-page Draft Environmental Impact Reports. These will teach you more than
8 you ever wanted to know about air and water quality, hazardous materials and archeological
9 remains.

10
11 In my five and a half years as a Commissioner I have learned that respect is key to being an
12 effective public servant. Respect the Staff and their professional expertise but do not be hesitant
13 to ask hard questions. Your hard questions should be the ones that will help you make a decision
14 not merely academic or those that would be time consuming and costly to answer. Respect your
15 fellow Commissioners. Each comes to the dais with a unique perspective. Each works hard to
16 understand the issues and each thinks deeply about the project on the table. Work together with
17 the Commissioners so that the advice that goes forward to the City Council is the best from all of
18 you. Respect the public. Each Commission meeting is open to the public and almost all items
19 are public hearings. There is much to be learned from the public but it is sometimes a challenge
20 to sort out the gems of wisdom from the emotional appeals, exaggerations of fact, hyperbole.
21 The best way to do that is to keep your sights on the common good. Finally, respect the
22 Comprehensive Plan. Its vision is Palo Alto will be a vital attractive place to live, work and
23 visit. Keep your sights on that vision and all your decisions advising the City Council will
24 enhance the common good.

25
26 Good luck. I hope you will enjoy the experience and grow from it as much as I have.

27
28 Chair Cassel: Thank you, Bonnie. We do have two new Planning Commissioners. One is
29 Daniel Garber. He is out of town this week so he was not there Monday I could not say hello to
30 him. The other is Paula Sanders and thank you Paula very much for joining us and we appreciate
31 your coming here this evening. I am sorry I didn't see you on Monday evening. I was looking
32 for you but just missed you somehow. Welcome.

33
34 Did you want to say something, Lee?

35
36 Commissioner Lippert: I just want to thank both Michael and Bonnie. I have only been here for
37 a year but generally you guys speak to the audience but you also have spoken to me and I have
38 learned an awful lot from you. I really appreciate it. I just want to give you my thanks and my
39 congratulations for being great Commissioners and adding to the diversity of the discussion that
40 has gone on here.

41
42 Chair Cassel: Thank you very much, Lee. Lee has brought a cake and it is in the back. We
43 haven't had a break so we haven't gotten it out of the refrigerator. I have brought something to
44 drink. Someone else needs to help open the bottles because I can't.

45
46 Commissioner Burt: That is all on the record, right?

1 Chair Cassel: That's all right I brought safe stuff but I still need help opening the bottles. I will
2 adjourn the meeting and thank you very, very much for coming.

3

4 ***ADJOURNED: 9:30 PM***

5

6 ***NEXT MEETING:*** August 31, 2005.

7