



CITY OF NOVATO
CALIFORNIA

PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 11, 2022 – 7:00 pm

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Commission Present: Chair Peter Tiernan, Commissioner Dan Dawson, Commissioner Ron Gerber, and Commissioner Curtis Havel

Commission Absent: Commissioner Bill Crockett, Commissioner Justin Derby, Vice Chair Lia Heath

Staff Present: Community Development Director Vicki Parker, City Clerk Laura McDowell, David Bergman (Lisa Wise Consulting)

B. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA

COMMISSION ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Gerber and seconded by Commissioner Dawson, the Planning Commission voted 4-0-0-3 via roll call to approve the final agenda.

AYES: Commissioners Dawson, Gerber, Havel, and Tiernan

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Crockett, Derby, and Heath

Motion carried.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

D. CONSENT ITEM

D.1. Approval of meeting minutes of May 23, 2022 (BC, DD, JD, CH, LH, & PT)

COMMISSION ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Dawson and seconded by Commissioner Havel, the Planning Commission voted 3-0-1-3 via roll call to approve the minutes of May 23, 2022.

AYES: Commissioners Dawson, Havel, and Tiernan

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Gerber

ABSENT: Commissioners Crockett, Derby, and Heath
Motion carried.

D.2. Approval of meeting minutes of June 27, 2022 (DD, JD, RG, & PT)

COMMISSION ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Gerber and seconded by Commissioner Dawson, the Planning Commission voted 3-0-1-3 via roll call to approve the minutes of June 27, 2022.

AYES: Commissioners Dawson, Gerber, and Tiernan
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: Commissioner Havel
ABSENT: Commissioners Crockett, Derby, and Heath
Motion carried.

E. UNFINISHED AND OTHER BUSINESS

NONE

F. PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

G.1. Housing Element Update Community Workshop #2

This second workshop for the Housing Element Update will provide an opportunity for the community to hear about work done to date as well as a forum for the community input on housing related ideas and concerns. During the workshop, relevant housing issues, including potential housing sites and programs that will encourage the development of new housing solutions for Novato, will be discussed.

During the meeting, the City's consultant team will be doing live polling of the audience. In order to participate in that polling, audience members will be directed to a third party platform by following the link or scanning the QR code below. Note that the voting site will not be activated until the meeting begins.

- **Voting code:** 6068 5214
- **Voting link:** <https://www.menti.com/uo178hsmzs>
- **QR code:**



Director Parker introduced the Housing Element item.

Consultant Bergman reviewed a PowerPoint presentation and conducted a live polling exercise.

Commissioner Gerber – If a religious organization, private property owner, nonprofit, or agency had interest in developing housing is it too late to approach City to consider the site?

Director Parker stated she supports property owners and others reaching out to City. However, they should do so as soon as possible.

Commissioner Gerber – The average rent in Novato was noted as \$1,950 per month. Is that for a one or two bedroom unit?

Consultant Bergman – The figure is an average of all rental units – the average skews low.

Commissioner Tiernan – If a certain number of units are listed in the Housing Element have we essentially pre-approved them?

Director Parker – The approach in the Housing Element, a program document, in terms of RHNA and CEQA was to consider the pipeline projects at their maximum development level. The largest of those sites require legislative actions, so there is still room for regular decision making with the caveat that any units that are not picked-up on those sites – we will need to find additional sites at the correct density. We were very judicious about assumptions on pipeline sites with the understanding some are still in review.

Commissioner Tiernan – So when we do the site inventory there won't be as many brand new housing sites?

Director Parker – That is a fair statement. The challenge for this housing element cycle will not be sites, but programs to address renter situations. The data on rental communities shows that until 2014/15, rents in Novato were less than the county average – thereafter rents escalated and are now the same as the county average.

Commissioner Gerber – Are there newer recommended best practices based on southern California? Do we need a buffer of extra projects to cover the unpredictability of the HCD process?

Director Parker - We are assuming a buffer of 18% to 20%.

The public comment period was opened.

Madeline Kellner – One of the policies brought-up tonight addressed low barrier navigation centers. What are these centers?

Commissioner Tiernan – Stated these centers provide services for the disabled and senior communities.

Consultant Bergman confirmed Commissioner Tiernan's understanding.

The public comment period was closed.

There were no further comments from the Commission.

H. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

None

I. ADJOURNMENT

The Planning Commission adjourned the meeting at 8:16 PM.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly adopted at the Planning Commission meeting of November 28, 2022.

/Steve Marshall/

Steve Marshall, Planning Manager