



City of Sebastopol Planning Department

Date: October 13, 2026
Agenda Item: 6C
To: Sebastopol Planning Commission
From: Eli Arreola, Associate Planner
Subject: Planning Commission Election of Officers Policy Discussion
Recommendation: Review proposed amendments, discuss, and direct staff.

Background:

At the September 9, 2026, meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed the Rules of Order and Procedure for the Conduct of Planning Commission Meetings (Attachment 1) to identify any further edits the Commission might have wanted to pursue to update meeting procedures. The Commission had already adopted updates to the Time and Place of Meetings, Process/Conduction of City Planning Commission Meetings, and the Quorum and Attendance Policies prior to this meeting. The Commission did not identify any substantive edits to pursue at that meeting.

Chair Fernandez was unable to attend the September 9th meeting but submitted Attachment 2 as public comment. The public comment was not addressed by the Commission at that meeting to allow Chair Fernandez to be present to discuss the proposed amendments to Rule 4: Election of Officers in the Rules of Order and Procedure for the Conduct of Planning Commission Meetings.

Rule 4 of the Planning Commission's Rules of Procedure establishes practice for the election of the Chair and Vice Chair. It provides that the Commission shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair by affirmative vote at its first regular meeting of each year following City Council appointment or reappointment of Commissioners (or at the next regular meeting with a quorum present), with newly elected officers taking office at the following Planning Commission meeting. The Chair and Vice Chair serve until their successors are elected or until removed by action of three or more Commissioners. Rule 4 also addresses how a vacancy in either office is to be filled.

While Rule 4 establishes the basic framework and timing for officer elections, it does not specify how a Chair or Vice Chair is actually to be selected — for example, whether selection should proceed by nomination and vote, by automatic succession, or by a rotation among Commissioners, nor does it address the detailed mechanics of a nomination-based process (how nominations are made and seconded, how ties are resolved, or when a newly elected Chair begins presiding). In practice, the Commission has conducted these elections without a formally adopted procedure governing these questions.

Chair Fernandez has proposed a detailed nomination-based procedure to fill these gaps. To ensure the Commission has a full picture of the range of approaches commonly used by comparable bodies, staff has also prepared the additional options included as Attachment 3.

Discussion:

Chair Fernandez's proposal is organized into three parts:

1. **Election of Chair.** The current Chair presides and opens nominations. Any Commissioner may nominate another Commissioner or themselves; a nomination requires a second, and the nominee must accept or decline. After all nominations are closed, staff conducts a roll-call vote, even if only one Commissioner has been nominated, in which case an affirmative vote is still required and recorded. A nominee receiving a majority is declared elected. If no nominee receives a majority, nominations are reopened, and another vote is conducted; if the Commission still cannot elect a Chair, the election may be continued to the next regular meeting, with the existing Chair continuing to serve in the interim. The incumbent Chair may be renominated and, if nominated, continues to preside over the election.
2. **Election of Vice Chair.** The current Chair — not the newly elected Chair — continues presiding and conducts the Vice Chair election using the same nomination, second, acceptance, voting, and tie-vote procedures described above.
3. **Transition of Officers.** Outgoing officers continue serving for the remainder of the meeting at which the election occurs. Consistent with Rule 4(a), newly elected officers assume office at the beginning of the following Planning Commission meeting.

The options presented by staff include three different approaches for selecting a Chair, two approaches to selecting a Vice Chair, three methods for breaking seniority ties, and two choices for when a newly selected Chair is seated.

Chair Selection Options

- **Option 1 – Automatic Succession.** The Vice Chair automatically assumes the role of Chair upon an official vote of the Commission confirming the succession.
- **Option 2 – Nomination and Election.** Staff calls for nominations; any Commissioner may nominate another Commissioner. If only one nomination is received, that nominee assumes the Chair upon an official vote. If more than one nomination is made, each nomination must be seconded, and a formal roll-call vote is taken, with nominations voted on in the order declared until one nominee receives a majority.
- **Option 3 – Seniority Rotation.** The Chair role rotates among Commissioners in order of seniority (length of continuous service on the Commission), subject to confirmation by majority vote of the Commission.

Tie-Breaking Methods for Seniority-Based Selection (applies to Chair Option 3 and Vice Chair Option 1)

- **Option A – Alphabetical.** Where two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the Commissioner whose last name comes first alphabetically is deemed most senior for purposes of rotation.
- **Option B – Vote of the Commission.** Where two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the Commission determines by majority vote which Commissioner is deemed senior.
- **Option C – Drawing of Lots.** Where two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the tie is broken by a random drawing conducted by City staff in public session.

Seating of New Chair

- **Immediate Seating.** The newly selected Chair takes their seat immediately following selection, at the same meeting.
- **Seating at Next Meeting.** The newly selected Chair takes their seat at the next regular Planning Commission meeting.

Vice Chair Selection Options

- **Option 1 – Seniority Rotation.** The Vice Chair role rotates among Commissioners in order of seniority, subject to confirmation by majority vote, using the same tie-breaking methods described above.
- **Option 2 – Nomination and Election.** Following selection of the Chair, the presiding officer — either the newly selected Chair or the current Chair, depending on which Chair selection process is adopted — calls for nominations for Vice Chair. Any Commissioner may nominate another Commissioner, excluding the newly selected Chair. Nominations are voted on in the order declared until a successful nomination, following the same process used for Chair.

The Commission's central decision is which of three substantively different approaches to officer selection it prefers. Each carries different trade-offs:

- **Automatic Succession (Chair Option 1).** This is the simplest approach and provides continuity, since the Vice Chair is presumably familiar with the Chair's duties. However, it removes the Commission's discretion each cycle and assumes the sitting Vice Chair is willing to become Chair, which may not always be the case.
- **Nomination and Election (Chair/Vice Chair Option 2, and Chair Fernandez's proposal).** This approach preserves full Commission discretion in every cycle and is the most common practice. However, it is also the most procedurally involved and, without the additional detail Chair Fernandez has proposed, is more prone to ambiguity in certain cases such as tie votes.
- **Seniority Rotation (Chair Option 3 / Vice Chair Option 1).** This approach is predictable and depoliticized and ensures that every Commissioner could eventually serve as an officer. Its principal drawback is that it may install a Commissioner as Chair who does not wish to serve in that capacity in a given year, unless a provision is included allowing a Commissioner to decline to serve as an officer. It also requires a reliable tie-breaking mechanism, which may arise with some frequency given that multiple Commissioners are often appointed on the same date.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the proposed election procedure submitted by Chair Fernandez (Attachment 2) and the additional options for Chair and Vice Chair selection included by staff (Attachment 3), discuss the merits of each approach, and direct staff on which approach, or combination of approaches, to incorporate into a formal amendment to Rule 4 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure for adoption at a future meeting.

Attachments:

1. Planning Commission Rules of Order and Procedure for the Conduct of Planning Commission Meetings
2. Chair Fernandez - Proposed Procedure for Election of Planning Commission Officers
3. Staff Recommended Options for Election Procedures

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
ADOPTING RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF PLANNING
COMMISSION MEETINGS

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The rules of conduct of the Planning Commission of the City of Sebastopol meetings shall read as follows:

RULE 1. TIME AND PLACE FOR HOLDING REGULAR MEETINGS.

Regular meetings of the Planning Commission shall be held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The meeting time may be revised by the Planning Director to accommodate necessary business. However, if any such Tuesday falls on any day designated by law or by the City Council as a day for public holiday, such regular meeting shall be cancelled.

The Planning Director, with advance consultation with the Chair, shall prepare an agenda for each meeting with regarding to the scheduling of various items, both as to the meeting date at which items are to be scheduled and the specific scheduling within the meeting agenda. Agendas shall be in conformance with these Rules of Order, and shall be issued to Commissioners and shall be made available to the public no later than 72 hours preceding such meetings.

Meetings shall be held in a location designated by the Planning Director. Such meeting locations shall be within the City Limits of the City of Sebastopol, and may include remote meeting participation as may be available. Regular meetings may be canceled upon the determination by the Planning Director that a quorum will not be present, or that there is not sufficient business to conduct a meeting. All meetings of the Planning Commission shall be open to the public, unless a majority of the Commission present requests otherwise and the City Attorney expressly approves the legality of a non-public meeting. Meetings shall adjourn by or before 10:30 p.m., but may extend past that time by majority vote of Commissioners present.

RULE 2. QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE.

Three members of the Planning Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is present and those present may obtain the attendance of the absentees. Action granting approval of any substantive matter must be taken by a simple majority of members present voting in favor, at such times as a quorum is present. A failure to so approve results in automatic denial of the pending matter.

The absence, temporary or permanent, of any Commissioner previously recorded as present, shall be noted in the minutes for purposes of determining the presence of a quorum at all times. The unexcused absence of any Commissioner for three or more consecutive meetings shall be considered as constituting a vacancy and shall be reported to the City Council pursuant to Municipal Code Chapter 2.24.

RULE 3. AGENDA AND ORDER OF BUSINESS.

(a) The Agenda shall be posted at the City Hall bulletin board at least 72 hours before a regular Planning Commission meeting. In connection with any special meeting of the Planning Commission, the notice calling the meeting and Agenda shall be posted 24 hours prior to the special meeting.

(b) No action shall be taken on any item not appearing on the posted Agenda unless the item is added to the Agenda as follows:

(1) Upon a determination by a majority vote of the Planning Commissioners present that an emergency situation exists, as defined in Government Code Section 54956.5.

(2) Upon a determination by a two-thirds vote of the Planning Commission, or, if less than two-thirds of the members are present, a unanimous vote of those members present, that the need to take action arose subsequently to the Agenda being posted.

(3) The item was posted for a prior meeting of the Planning Commission, and at the prior meeting the item was continued to the meeting at which action is being taken.

(c) Dates for public hearings shall be set by the Planning Director.

(d) Where a matter requires a formal public hearing prior to final action by the Planning Commission, no person shall be heard thereon except at the time of the public hearing.

(e) The business of the Planning Commission shall be taken on for consideration and disposition generally in the following order. In setting the agenda, the Planning Director, in consultation with the Chair, may alter this order for purposes of meeting management. The Commission may alter this order of business by direction of the Chair, or by vote of a majority of those present.

(1) Call to order

(2) Roll call.

(3) Approval of Minutes.

(4) Public input from members of the public wishing to address the Planning Commission on items of interest to the public that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Planning Commission but are not on the agenda of the subject meeting. Subject to the direction of the , each speaker may address the Planning Commission for up to three minutes. If there are more than 10 speakers, the may further limit the time of individual speakers or the total time on a particular issue. No action may be taken on the item of interest to the member of the public unless the item appeared on the Agenda in accordance with applicable provisions of Rule 3.

(i) Consent Calendar, generally consisting of those items determined in advance by the Planning Director and Chair to be of a non-controversial nature. Any item requested by any Commissioner or any member of the public in attendance shall be removed from the consent list and placed on the regular agenda. The consent list may be adopted by unanimous voice vote, under a single motion.

(6) Items given partial consideration at a previous meeting, and continued, tabled, or otherwise held over for additional review.

(7) Agendized items of previous meetings, not considered thereat.

(8) New items involving public applications and Commission action.

(9) Items involving procedural or administrative matters, staff reports not connected with a specific public application to be heard during that meeting, and Commission discussion items.

(10) Informational items (Planning Department reports, and Planning Commissioner Announcements, Future Commission Agenda items, written communications, etc.)

(11) Adjournment

(i) Special meetings and study sessions, absent emergency situations, will normally be scheduled by the Commission upon seven days advance notice. The substantive issues considered at any such meeting shall be limited to those announced in the call for such meeting.

(j) During any regular meeting, members of the public may be heard on any matter listed on the agenda at such time as the Chair determines appropriate, except in the case where the public has already been heard on the item and the public hearing has been closed.

RULE 4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

(a) At its first regular meeting of each year after the City Council appoints/reappoints any Planning Commissioners due to term expiration, or at the next regular meeting where a quorum is present, the Commission shall elect by affirmative vote Chair and Vice Chair, who shall take office beginning at the following Planning Commission meeting.

(b) The Chair and Vice Chair shall serve until their successors are elected, or until removed by action of three or more Commissioners.

(c) In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair or Vice Chair, the vacancy shall be announced and confirmed at a regular meeting of the Commission, and the Commission shall generally fill such vacancy by election at the next following regular meeting at which a quorum is present, unless agreed otherwise by the Commission to postpone such election.

RULE 5. APPEALS.

If the appellant in any appeal or request for review to the Planning Commission is a Commissioner, that person may not serve as Chair during the hearing and consideration of the appeal.

RULE 6. PREPARATION OF MINUTES.

The Planning Director shall have responsibility for preparation of the Minutes, and any directions for changes in the Minutes shall be made only by a vote of the majority of those present.

RULE 7. Chair.

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Planning Commission. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall preside. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, the Planning Director shall call the Planning Commission to order whereupon a temporary Chair shall be elected by the Commissioners present to serve until the arrival of the Chair or Vice Chair or until adjournment.

RULE 8. POWERS AND DUTIES OF CHAIR.

(a) Participation. The Chair or Vice Chair or such other member presiding may move, second, and debate from the chair, subject only to such limitations of debate as are imposed upon Commissioners by these rules and shall not be deprived of any of the rights or privileges of a Commissioner by reason of his or her acting as the Chair.

(b) Duties. The Chair shall preserve order at all meetings of the Planning Commission. Such officer shall state each question coming before the Planning Commission, announce the decisions of the Planning Commission on all subjects, and decide all questions of order; subject, however, to an appeal by the Planning Commission, and a majority vote of the Planning Commission on any question of order shall govern and determine conclusively such question of order. In addition, the Chair may appoint such subcommittees as are deemed desirable, consisting of not more than two Commissioners, to review defined subject areas and to make reports and/or recommendations to the full Commission.

(c) Signing of Documents. The Planning Director shall sign all resolutions and other documents necessitating signature.

RULE 9. RULES OF DEBATE.

(a) Getting the Floor. Every Commissioner desiring to speak shall first address the Chair, gain recognition by the Chair, and shall confine himself or herself to the question under debate.

(b) Questions to Staff. Every Commissioner desiring to question the City Staff shall, after recognition by the Chair, address his or her questions to the Planning Director, or any staff person designated to be present for such purposes, who shall be entitled to answer the inquiry himself or herself or to designate a member of his or her staff for that purpose.

(c) Interruptions. A Commissioner, once recognized, shall not be interrupted when speaking unless called to order by the Chair, or unless a point of order or a personal privilege is raised by another Commissioner, or unless the speaker chooses to yield to a question by another Commissioner. If a Commissioner, while speaking, is called to order, he or she shall cease speaking until the question of order is determined and, if determined to be in order, may proceed. Members of the City staff, after recognition by the Chair, shall hold the floor until completion of their remarks or until recognition is withdrawn by the Chair.

(d) Points of Order. The Chair shall determine all points of order subject to the right of any Commissioner to appeal to the Planning Commission. If an appeal is taken, the question shall be: "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?" A majority vote of the Commissioners then present shall conclusively determine such question of order.

€ Point of Personal Privilege. The right of a Commissioner to address the Planning Commission on a question of personal privilege shall be limited to cases in which the Planning Commissioner's integrity, character, or motives are questioned or where the welfare of the Planning Commission is concerned. A Commissioner raising a point of personal privilege may interrupt another Commissioner.

(f) Privilege of Closing Debate. The Chair shall have the privilege of closing debate, after all other Commissioners have been given an opportunity to speak.

(g) Calling for the Question. Any member may call for the question, however a majority of the Commission may vote to continue debate.

(h) Limitation of Debate. Generally, no Commissioner shall be allowed to speak more than once upon any particular subject until every other Commissioner desiring to do so shall have spoken. Each Commissioner speaking on any one item on the Agenda shall generally be limited to 10 minutes per item to state their opinions and views.

RULE 10. REMARKS OF COMMISSIONERS AND SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE.

A Commissioner may request through the Chair under the privilege of having an abstract of his or her statement on any subject under consideration by the Planning Commission entered in the Minutes. If the Planning Commission consents thereto, such statement shall be entered in the Minutes.

RULE 11. PROTEST AGAINST PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION.

Any Commissioner shall have the right to have the reasons for his or her dissent from, or his or her protest against, any action of the Planning Commission entered in the Minutes. Such dissent or protest to be entered in the Minutes shall be made in the following manner: "I would like the Minutes to show that I am opposed to this action for the following reasons."

RULE 12. RULES OF ORDER.

Except as otherwise provided herein, by City Ordinance, by other rules adopted by the Planning Commission, or by applicable provisions of state law, the procedures of the Planning Commission shall be governed by the latest revised edition of Roberts Rules of Order. The Planning Commission rules, or any one thereof, may be suspended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Commissioners present.

RULE 13. FAILURE TO OBSERVE RULES OF ORDER.

Rules adopted to expedite the transaction of the business of the Planning Commission in an orderly fashion are deemed to be procedural only, and the failure to strictly observe such rules shall not affect the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission or invalidate any action taken at a meeting that is otherwise held in conformity with law.

RULE 14. ADDRESSING THE PLANNING COMMISSION.

(a) Submittal of Materials to the Planning Commission. Persons wishing to submit written materials to the Commission at the meeting shall provide such materials to the Planning Director at the beginning of the consideration of the agenda item.

(b) Manner of Addressing the Planning Commission. Each person desiring to address the Planning Commission shall step up to the microphone, state their name and address for the record, state the subject they wish to discuss, state whom they is representing if they represents an organization or other person, and, unless further time is granted by majority vote of the Planning Commission, shall generally limit their remarks to up to three minutes per item.

(c) A project applicant shall generally be allowed up to ten minutes initially, and may request up to three minutes in rebuttal to conclude the public hearing. The applicant's rebuttal must be authorized by the Chair, and shall be in response to and within the scope of the testimony presented at the hearing by

members of the public, if any. For purposes of this rule, the project applicant shall include the applicant's architect, attorney, facilitator, and all other representatives of the applicant who have been or will be performing work on the proposed project.

(d) An appellant, other than the project applicant, shall also generally be allowed up to ten minutes initially and up to three minutes in rebuttal. The appellant's rebuttal must be authorized by the Chair, and shall be in response to and within the scope of the testimony presented at the hearing by the project applicant and proponents of the project. For Appeals, the order of presentation shall be as follows: the appellant shall testify initially followed by the project applicant. The project applicant's rebuttal shall precede the appellant's rebuttal. All remarks shall be addressed to the Planning Commission as a whole and not to any member thereof. No questions shall be asked of a Commissioner or a member of the City staff without the permission of the Chair.

(e) After Motion. After a motion has been made or a public hearing has been closed, no member of the public shall address the Planning Commission from the audience on the matter under consideration without first securing permission to do so by the Chair.

(f) Special Time Limitations. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Rules, if seven or more persons wish to speak on an item, or if 20 or more persons have requested to speak on any combination of items, each speaker's remarks may be limited to two minutes at the discretion of the Chair.

RULE 15. RULES OF DECORUM.

(a) Commissioners. When the Planning Commission is in session, Commissioners must preserve order and decorum, and a Commissioner shall neither by conversation nor otherwise delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the Planning Commission nor disturb any Commissioner while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the Chair. Commissioners shall not leave their seats for more than five minutes during a meeting without first obtaining the permission of the Chair.

(b) Employees. Members of the City staff and employees shall observe the same rules of order and decorum as are applicable to the Planning Commission.

(c) Persons Addressing the Planning Commission (whether in person or participating remotely)

(1) No person other than a Commissioner and the person having the floor shall be permitted to enter into discussions, either directly or through a Commissioner, without permission of the Chair.

(2) No questions shall be asked a Commissioner except through the Chair.

(3) All remarks shall be addressed to the Planning Commission as a body and not to any one member thereof.

(4) Any person making impertinent, slanderous, or profane remarks, or who becomes boisterous while addressing the Planning Commission, shall be called to order by the Chair and, if such conduct continues, may at the discretion of the Chair, be barred from a further audience before the Planning Commission during that meeting.

(d) Members of the Audience.

(1) Any person in the audience (or at the Planning Commission dais) who engages in disorderly conduct such as excessive hand clapping, stamping of feet¹ whistling, using profane language, yelling, and similar demonstrations, or who disturbs the peace and good order of the meeting, or who refuses to comply with the lawful orders of the Chair shall be guilty of an infraction and upon instructions from the Chair, with the consent of the majority, through the Planning Director, it shall be the duty of the Sergeant at Arms to remove any such person from the Meeting room and to place him or her under arrest.

(2) No person shall be permitted to interrupt the individual Commissioners or the Planning Director when the Planning Commission is in session.

(e) Persons Authorized to be Within Seating Area. No person except Commissioners and City staff and recognized representatives of the news media shall be permitted within the seating area of the Commission without the consent of the Chair.

(f) Enforcement of Decorum. The Planning Director or other designee shall assist the Chair in maintaining decorum during a meeting. The Planning Director may contact the Chief of Police or such member or members of the Police Department as he or she may designate, to assist with the purpose of maintaining order and decorum at Planning Commission meetings. Any Commissioner may move to require the Chair to enforce the rules and the affirmative vote of a majority of the Planning Commission shall require him or her to do so.

RULE 16. VOTING PROCEDURE.

Any vote of the Planning Commission, including a roll call vote, may be registered by the members by answering "Aye" or "Yes" for an affirmative vote or "Nay" or "No" for a negative vote upon his or her name being called by the Planning Director. Unless a member of the Planning Commission states that he or she is not voting, silence shall be recorded as an abstention, and roll call votes shall be recorded in the minutes.

RULE 17. DISQUALIFICATION FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

(a) When any Commissioner identifies a conflict of interest with any matter coming before the Planning Commission, they shall notify the Planning Director as soon as possible once they are aware of said conflict.

(b) Any such Commissioner who is disqualified from voting on a particular matter by reason of a conflict of interest shall publicly state or have the Chair state the nature of such disqualification in an open meeting. Where no thoroughly disqualifying conflict of interest appears, the matter of disqualification may, at the request of the Commissioner affected, be decided by the other Commissioners. A Commissioner who is disqualified by reason of a conflict of interest in any matter shall not remain in his or her seat during the debate and vote on such matter, but shall request and be given the permission of the Chair to step down from the dais and leave the meeting room. If the Commissioner is participating in the meeting remotely, the video and audio for that Commissioner shall be turned off and muted during the course of said item. A Commissioner stating such disqualification shall not be counted as part of a quorum and shall be considered absent for the purpose of determining the outcome of any vote on such matter.

RULE 18. FAILURE TO VOTE.

Every Commissioner is entitled to vote unless disqualified by reason of a conflict of interest. A Commissioner who abstains from voting in effect consents that a majority of the quorum may decide the question voted upon.

RULE 19. TIE VOTE.

Tie votes shall be lost motions and may be reconsidered.

RULE 20. CHANGING VOTE.

The vote of a Commissioner may be changed only if he or she makes a timely request to do so immediately following the announcement of the vote by the Planning Director and prior to the time that the next item in the order of business is taken up.

RULE 21. RECONSIDERATION.

(a) A motion to reconsider any action of the Commission may be made only prior to adjournment of that meeting, or prior to final action on the matter, whichever is later.

(b) A motion to reconsider may be made by any Commissioner who voted on the prevailing side of the action to be reconsidered, and may be seconded by any Commissioner. If an action was decided as a matter of law, without a majority of those present affirmative or negative, any Commissioner may make such a motion.

(c) A motion to reconsider is considered substantive, and hence requires a majority of those present to carry.

RULE 22. PROCEDURE ON AGENDA ITEMS REQUIRING A MOTION.

The following procedure shall generally be followed in connection with any Agenda item requiring a motion:

- (a) Chair reads the title.
- (b) Commissioner statements of any conflict of interest.
- (c) Explanation of item by staff, if called for by the Chair.
- (d) Questions to staff by Commissioners.
- (e) Statement by Applicant, if any.
- (f) Questions of Applicant by Commissioners.
- (g) Public to be heard subject to the limitations set forth herein.
- (h) Close of public discussion.
- (i) Chair to ask for a motion and second.
- (j) Motion and discussion by the Planning Commission.

(k) The maker of the motion to have a chance for further discussion.

(l) Chair to restate the motion.

(m) Vote on the motion.

RULE 23. STUDY SESSIONS AND INFORMAL MEETINGS.

The Planning Commission, subject to notice and other requirements imposed by law, may hold study sessions and informal meetings at such times as may be designated either at a regular meeting or a special meeting. At any such study session or informal meeting, the Planning Commission shall not take any formal or binding action upon any formal motion, resolution, ordinance, nor any other action required by law to be taken by the Planning Commission. Such study sessions or informal sessions shall be devoted exclusively to the presentation, exchange of information, and direction to staff and the applicant by the Commission.

RULE 24. COMMUNICATIONS BY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.

The Planning Commission may adopt an official resolution or other written statement regarding a planning or land use matter pertaining to the scope of the Commission's authority, but shall not transmit such official resolution or any other correspondence on any matter of City policy to any non-City Agency, Board, or Commission without a vote of the Planning Commission to do so, nor without the prior approval of the City Council that such communication be so transmitted.

RULE 25. PRESENCE OF CITY STAFF AT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS.

The Planning Director, and in their absence, their authorized representative, shall attend and be present during all Planning Commission meetings and give necessary service and advice.

RULE 26. RECORD OF MEETINGS.

All public meetings of the Planning Commission shall be recorded in the form of minutes prepared by Planning Department staff. Such minutes shall be part of the records of the Planning Commission. The use of audio or video recording by members of the public is permitted so long as it is not disruptive of the meeting.

RULE 27. EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

(a) During the pendency of any quasi-judicial proceeding, no member of the Planning Commission may engage in ex parte communications with applicants, appellants or members of the public with respect to the matter which is the subject of the proceeding unless that member of the Commission:

(1) Places on the record the subject and substance of any written or oral ex-parte communication concerning the matter and the identity of the person, group, or entity with whom the communication took place.

(2) Makes any written communication part of the record.

(b) A member of the Planning Commission may conduct site visits pertaining to the matter which is the subject of the proceeding if the site visit and the date of the site visit are placed on the record. Any

communications during the site visit with applicants, appellants, or members of the public with respect to the matter shall be disclosed in accordance with Section (a) of this Rule.

(c) Disclosures required by Section (a) and (b) of this Rule shall be made before public testimony on the matter has commenced so that persons will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the ex parte communication or site visit.

(d) Once the public hearing has commenced, no member of the Planning Commission shall engage in any ex parte communication with applicants, appellants, or members of the public with respect to the matter which is the subject of the proceeding. However, a member of the Planning Commission can seek specific information or data from any individual relative to the matter if such request and the response to the request are made on the record.

(e) Written communications on a matter before the Commission, including e-mails, should be sent to the Planning Department staff, not to individual Commissioners. Commissioner receipt of such communications shall not constitute a violation of these Rules, provided the procedures set forth in this Rule are observed. Prior to the date of the hearing, the staff shall forward all written communications received no later than noon of the day of the meeting to Planning Commissioners. Late written communications may be provided to the Commission at the hearing, but may or may not be reviewed by the Commission. All written communications will be made part of the public record.

RULE 28. INTERPRETATION AND MODIFICATION OF THESE RULES.

These rules shall be interpreted liberally in order to provide for the optimum in the free interchange of information and public debate without an unnecessary waste of time or duplication of effort. These rules may be amended by resolution upon the approval of a majority of those present.

SECTION 2. Any resolution adopting, amending, or relating to Planning Commission Rules of Order, is hereby repealed in its entirety.

SECTION 3. The Planning Director shall certify to the adoption of this Resolution, and thenceforth and thereafter the same shall be in full force and effect.

Approved this 13th day of June, 2023 by the following vote:

Aye:

No:

Abstain:

Absent:

Certified: _____

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Proposed Procedure for Election of Planning Commission Officers

Election of Chair

1. **Opening Nominations.** The current Chair shall preside over the election of officers and shall open nominations for the position of Chair.
2. **Making a Nomination.** Any Commissioner may nominate another Commissioner or themselves for the position of Chair.
3. **Second Required.** A nomination must receive a second from another Commissioner before proceeding.
4. **Acceptance or Declination.** Following a nomination and second, the Chair shall ask the nominee whether they accept the nomination. If the nominee accepts, their name shall be placed in nomination. If the nominee declines, the nomination shall be withdrawn.
5. **Additional Nominations.** The Chair shall ask whether there are any additional nominations. This process shall continue until no additional nominations are offered.
6. **Closing Nominations.** When there are no additional nominations, the Chair shall close nominations.
7. **Voting.** Staff shall conduct a roll-call vote on the accepted nomination or nominations. If only one person has been nominated and accepted, an affirmative vote of the Commission shall nevertheless be conducted and recorded.
8. **Election.** A nominee receiving the required majority vote shall be declared elected Chair.
9. **Tie Vote or Failure to Elect.** If no nominee receives the required majority, nominations shall be reopened and the Commission shall conduct another vote. Commissioners may nominate the same or different candidates. If the Commission remains unable to elect a Chair after additional voting, the Commission may continue the election to its next regular meeting. The existing Chair shall continue to serve until a successor has been elected and takes office.
10. **Incumbent Chair as Nominee.** The current Chair may be nominated for another term and, if nominated, shall continue to preside over the election process.

Election of Vice Chair

11. Following the election of the new Chair, the **current Chair shall remain presiding** and shall conduct the election for Vice Chair using the same nomination, second, acceptance or declination, voting, and tie-vote procedures described above.

Transition of Officers

12. The current Chair and Vice Chair shall continue serving in their respective positions for the remainder of the meeting at which the election occurs.
13. The newly elected Chair and Vice Chair shall assume their respective offices **at the beginning of the following Planning Commission meeting**, consistent with Rule 4(a)

Staff Recommended Options for Planning Commission Election Procedures

CHAIR OPTIONS:

SELECTION OF CHAIR:

Option 1:

Vice Chair shall assume the role of Chair upon an official vote of the Commission.

Option 2:

City Staff shall call for nominations for Chair. Any Commissioner may nominate another Commissioner for Chair. After all nominations are received; if only one nomination, person nominated shall assume the role of Chair upon an official vote of the Commission. If more than one nomination is made, selection shall be seconded; and a formal roll-call vote taken, with the nominee receiving a majority of votes cast declared Chair. Nominations will be voted upon in order of declaration until a successful nomination.

Option 3:

Chair shall be selected on a rotating basis among Commissioners in order of seniority (length of continuous service on the Commission), subject to confirmation by majority vote of the Commission.

Tie-Breaking for Seniority-Based Selection:

- **Option A - Alphabetical:**
In the event two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the Commissioner whose last name is first alphabetically shall be deemed most senior for purposes of rotation.
- **Option B - Vote of the Commission:**
In the event two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the Commission shall determine which Commissioner is deemed senior by majority vote.
- **Option C - Drawing of Lots:**
In the event two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the tie shall be broken by a random drawing conducted by City Staff, in public session.

Seating of New Chair:

- Chair shall take seat immediately following selection as Chair at the meeting selected; or
 - Chair shall take the seat at the next regular Planning Commission Meeting.
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VICE CHAIR OPTIONS:

SELECTION OF VICE CHAIR:

Option 1:

Vice Chair shall be selected on a rotating basis among Commissioners in order of seniority (length of continuous service on the Commission), subject to confirmation by majority vote of the Commission.

Tie-Breaking for Seniority-Based Selection:

- **Option A - Alphabetical:**
In the event two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the Commissioner whose last name is first alphabetically shall be deemed most senior for purposes of rotation.
- **Option B - Vote of the Commission:**
In the event two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the Commission shall determine which Commissioner is deemed senior by majority vote.
- **Option C - Drawing of Lots:**
In the event two or more Commissioners have equal seniority, the tie shall be broken by a random drawing conducted by City Staff, in public session.

Option 2:

Following the selection of Chair, the (newly incoming Chair or current Chair depending upon process approved above) shall call for nominations for Vice Chair. Any Commissioner may nominate another Commissioner (excluding the newly selected Chair) for Vice Chair. Nominations will be voted upon in order of declaration until a successful nomination similar to Chair.