



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA  
Planning Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
July 8, 2025, 6:30 PM  
Amedee O. "Dick" Richards Jr. Council Chambers  
1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A Regular Meeting of the South Pasadena Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Padilla on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was held at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chair: Lisa Padilla  
Vice Chair: Amitabh Barthakur  
Commissioners: Mark Gallatin, Arnold Swanborn, James Martin  
  
Council Liaison: Mayor Pro Tem Sheila Rossi

**City Staff**

**Present:** Serita Young, Esq., Deputy City Attorney  
Erika Ramirez, Community Development Department Director  
Robert (Dean) Flores, Acting Planning Manager  
Stephen Peterson, Senior Planner  
Devan Wells, Assistant Planner  
Lillian Estrada, Administrative Secretary

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Approved, 5-0.

**DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS**

Commissioner Swanborn knows the owner and disclosed a site visit to Agenda Item 8.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)**

None.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **2. Staff Introduction**

Acting Planning Manager Dean Flores introduced two new Staff members to the Community Development Department – Director Erika Ramirez and Senior Planner Stephen Peterson.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS**

- 3. Minutes from the Special Meeting of April 29, 2025**
- 4. Minutes from the Special Meeting of May 7, 2025**
- 5. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of May 13, 2025**
- 6. Minutes from the Special Meeting of May 20, 2025**
- 7. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of June 10, 2025**

Approved, as amended, 5-0.

## **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

- 8. 335 Monterey Road, Project No. TEX25-0001** – A request to grant a Time Extension for a previously-approved Tentative Parcel Map (Project No. 2516-TPM) to subdivide two (2) existing lots into three (3) lots located at 335 Monterey Road (APNs: 5311-012-040 & 5311-012-041) in the Residential Medium Density (RM) zoning district. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense), for CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a certain significant effect on the environment.

### **Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following actions:

1. Finding the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. CEQA Guidelines §15061(b)(3), which states the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.
2. Approve Project No. TEX25-0001, a 36-month extension for a Tentative Parcel Map Project (TPM 2516-TPM), subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval.

**Staff Presentation:**

Assistant Planner Devan Wells gave a presentation, explaining the project's background, zoning changes and compliance with development standards.

**Questions for Staff:**

The Commissioners asked clarifying questions about the project's timeline, zoning requirements and access easements.

**Public Comments:**

None.

**Questions for Applicant:**

Darby Whipple, representing the Applicant, clarified the need for an access easement amendment and the history of the property's lot line adjustments, and addressed the Commissioners' questions.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

The Commissioners discussed the importance of the time extension, the need for consistent design standards, agreed the request was routine and straightforward, and expressed no objections.

**Decision:**

Vice-Chair Barthakur moved, seconded by Commissioner Martin, that the Planning Commission adopt the Resolution as written, with the edits suggested by Commissioner Gallatin, to approve Project No. TEX25-0001, a 36-month time extension for a previously approved Tentative Parcel Map (Project No. 2516-TPM) to subdivide two (2) existing lots into three (3) lots located at 335 Monterey Road (APNs: 5311-012-040 & 5311-012-041) in the Residential Medium Density (RM) zoning district, subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense), where CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a certain significant effect on the environment.

**Roll Call Vote**

Ayes:           Gallatin, Martin, Swanborn, Barthakur, Padilla

Noes:           None

Abstentions: None

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **9. Citywide Objective Design Standards (ODS)**

#### **Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Form a subcommittee consisting of two (2) Planning Commissioners to serve on a Selection Committee responsible for reviewing proposals and recommending a consulting firm for the development of Objective Design Standards (ODS) for residential and mixed-use development; and
2. Authorize the Subcommittee to participate in the project development process, which may include activities such as stakeholder engagement, reviewing draft materials, and providing input to Staff and the Consultant on potential design approaches, policy direction, and community priorities related to the ODS.

#### **Staff Presentation:**

Director Ramirez gave a presentation, explaining the need for Objective Design Standards to comply with State laws and streamline residential development.

#### **Questions for Staff:**

The Commissioners inquired about the length of service and expectations of the Subcommittee.

Director Ramirez explained the proposed plan included the development of a Community Engagement Plan.

Director Ramirez remarked that the Subcommittee would provide regular status updates to the full Commission.

Commissioners Swanborn and Martin each expressed a desire to be a part of the Subcommittee.

#### **Decision:**

Chair Padilla moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Barthakur, that the Planning Commission form a subcommittee specifically to focus on the Citywide Objective Design Standards, with tasks described by the Community Development Director in tonight's presentation, and nominated Commissioner Swanborn and Commissioner Martin to comprise the members of the Subcommittee.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes: Gallatin, Swanborn, Martin, Barthakur, Padilla  
Noes: None  
Abstentions: None

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

**ADMINISTRATION**

**10. Comments from City Council Liaison**

Mayor Pro Tem Rossi welcomed the new Staff members and expressed gratitude to the Staff and Commission for their hard work on recent projects.

**11. Comments from Planning Commissioners**

Commissioner Barthakur welcomed the new Staff members. He discussed the importance of the Objective Design Standards and upcoming legislative changes.

Commissioner Gallatin encouraged the allocation of funds in the next budget for at least one Council member and the Community Development Director to attend the UCLA Land Use Law Conference.

Commissioner Swanborn expressed his gratitude to the recent Subcommittee comprised of Commissioners Gallatin and Claypool for an incredible amount of well-constructed and carefully considered work in a very short period of time.

Chair Padilla also commended the recent Subcommittee and their significant contribution.

Chair Padilla announced that due to the recent dissolution of the Design Review Board, the new protocol regarding applications requiring design reviews involves Chair reviews. As there are many incoming applications, she delegated some of the Chair reviews to Commissioners Martin, Swanborn and Claypool.

**12. Comments from Staff**

Director Ramirez proposed a six-month assessment of the Chair review process for design review. She also acknowledged that the ODS Subcommittee would provide status updates to the Commission regularly.

She thanked the Commission for their warm welcome.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**13. Adjournment to the Regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for August 12, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.**

There being no further matters, Chair Padilla adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.



Lisa Padilla, Chair