

# City Planning Commission Operational Meeting

## Minutes – July 11, 2023

The City Planning Commission Operational Meeting, which included the City Planning Commissioners and CPC Staff, was held on July 11, 2023, in Conference Room A on the 7th floor of City Hall.

Attendance:

Present:	Absent:
Dasjon Jordan	Lorey Flick
Dianne Alexander	Jonathan Stewart
Kelly Brown	Katie Witry
Nomita Gupta	
Kathleen Lunn	
Robert Steeg	

At 12:35 PM Chair Dasjon Jordan called the meeting to order. A motion was made by Commissioner Steeg and was seconded by Commissioner Alexander to approve the minutes from the June 13, 2023 meeting.

Ayes:	Nays:
Dianne Alexander	none
Kelly Brown	
Dasjon Jordan	
Kathleen Lunn	
Robert Steeg	

### REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director Robert Rivers opened by announcing that the proposed planner series salary adjustments have been approved by Civil Service at its June meeting. The recommendation has been forwarded to the City Council, which will receive it on July 13, 2023 and which will then be referred to their Budget Committee for review.

The Chief Financial Officer has stated that we may not hire any more permanent staff at this time, leaving CPC with a staff of 22. CPC did receive approval of four temporary positions to assist with the Short Term Rental Special Exceptions process. These temporary employees are expected to be under contract for six months.

The inability to hire more permanent staff makes it difficult for CPC to complete many projects, such as the housing study, which has been left unfinished for several years now, and the STR study. Some studies have been completed by other agencies as CPC did not have the staff capacity to complete them.

Since the planning season for Budget Year 2024 is now in process, CPC will be asking for more staff positions, but every indication is that staff increases are unlikely, as everyone is being asked to further reduce their budget (per memo from the CFO).

Discussion was held and it was proposed that a proposition of what a reduced staff of 22 can reasonably accomplish be presented to the Commission, who will then present it to City Council. It is also noted that by the next CPC Operational Meeting (August 8, 2023) there should be a clearer idea of what the 2024 budget will be.

Rachael Berg has requested that the final Master Plan meetings be moved from the planned date of September-October to November-December. This will both avoid interfering with the budget meetings happening at that time and also give more time to finish the Master Plan Process. Typically, there is only one CPC meeting per month during November and December, so a special meeting would have to be set up for the purpose of discussing the Master Plan.

There continues to be logistical issues resulting from the Safety & Permits move to 1340 Poydras Street. While CPC planners are expected to do desk duty at the new location, few accommodations have been made for them to meet with the public – there is a room where they can meet with the public but no power, phone, internet hookups, etc. A separate cubicle has been made available for planners to use which does have power and internet but they are not allowed to bring members of the public to that area. Also, security staff in the City Hall building continue to tell citizens who come to the building that to meet with both City Planning and Safety and Permits, they need to come to the former location at the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of Perdido Street.

### **Report from Chair**

None

### **Report from Committees**

The subdivisions regulations committee met on June 27. Kelly Brown reports that there is a plan to change the administrative approval process, with the major focus being on increasing transparency and accountability. The committee will have to meet a second time to clarify what changes they plan to make and then put together a list which they will then bring to the full Commission.

### **Additional Items and Questions**

When will the Annual Retreat be held? Katie Witry plans to send everyone a list of available dates in August to see which date works best for everyone.

What should a Commissioner do if they are approached by the press for comment? As per Commission rules, please refer the press member to the Executive Director or the Commission Chair.

### **Brownfields Program Status**

The Brownfields Program, run by Kari Godchaux, has now been granted \$2 million to remediate the NSA Complex. Future funding sources may be used to hire additional staff to help run the program – in the meantime there are 3 internship opportunities being explored for assistance, one from UNO, one from Tulane, and one from a national competitive program. Also, it is possible the Biden administration may host a public event highlighting the official delivery of the \$2 million check which could be any time between late July to September, which would bring good press to the Brownfields program and the CPC.

Motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Steeg, seconded by Commissioner Alexander.

Ayes:	Nays:
Dianne Alexander	none
Kelly Brown	
Nomita Gupta	
Dasjon Jordan	
Kathleen Lunn	
Robert Steeg	

**Meeting Adjourned at 1:17 PM**