

SALT LAKE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION TRAINING RETREAT
City & County Building
451 South State Street, Room 326
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Present for the Planning Commission training were: Chairperson Maurine Bachman, Vice-Chair Mike Christensen, and Commissioners, Amy Barry, Aimee Burrows, Andres Paredes, Levi de Oliveria, Rich Tuttle, , Anaya Gayle, Jon Lee, and Brenda Scheer. Commissioner Andra Ghent was absent from the meeting.

City Staff members present at the meeting were: Planning Director Nick Norris, Deputy Planning Director Michaela Oktay, Senior City Attorney Paul Nielson, Senior City Attorney Katherine Pasker, Administrative Assistant Aubrey Clark, and Administrative Assistant David Schupick.

The meeting was called to order at 5:20 PM.

Deputy Director Michaela Oktay introduced Commissioner Anaya Gayle. The Commissioners went around the room and introduced themselves.

Deputy Director Michaela Oktay reviewed the topics that would be discussed.

Director Nick Norris informed the commission that this would be a question and answer type meeting.

Deputy Director Michaela Oktay reviewed the role of the Commission.

Commissioner Barry notified Staff that some files that are put into the commission dropbox are not readable as they were not in pdf format.

Commissioner Tuttle asked if there was a way to provide meeting packets sooner than they are currently being provided to the commission.

Nick Norris reviewed the petition process and why it's not always possible to provide information any sooner than it is currently submitted. He also provided insight into what the planners are spending their time doing.

Michaela Oktay reviewed the meeting functions and how important the findings are for each petition and decisions made by the commission. She went over the function of staff reports.

Commissioner Barry said she is finding it difficult to sift through all of the information provided and be efficient.

Commissioner Scheer agreed. The commission wanted hyperlinks for attachments to reduce time spent scrolling through a meeting.

Chair Bachman said the unreliable internet in the room can also be an issue and makes getting into the staff reports difficult. Staff discussed possible improvements.

Commissioner de Oliveria asked if there are things that they should be focusing on in the staff reports to streamline the hearing process. Nick Norris said that asking if there are any standards that are not met, that is the key question to start off with in discussion rather than asking about things that commissioners don't like from a personal standpoint.

Commissioners discussed what their roles could be and how there is no cut and dry way to go about participating in the meetings.

Commissioners discussed how to incorporate their decision making with design reviews. Nick Norris encouraged the commission to add conditions within standards and to feel comfortable using their authority. He also stated that it will be beneficial to start discussions by asking what standards are not being met.

Commissioners asked that the acting director have more of an active role in keeping the meeting on track. Staff agreed to try to be more vocal throughout the meeting to clarify or to address items outside of the commission's authority.

Commissioners and staff discussed the best options for treating each application with fairness. Key takeaways were to be more forthcoming with concerns, questions, and ideas from both staff and commissioners. Also, creating an environment in the room which these difficult conversations can take place.

Michaela Oktay shared videos from of the Minneapolis Planning Commission meeting displaying how they run their meetings such as the use of the consent agenda or the Chair moving items around on the current agenda based on the attendance in the audience that evening. . The Planning Commission and staff discussed what they saw and how it would look to incorporate some of these ideas into Salt Lake City Planning Commission Meetings.

Michaela Oktay then went over expectations of the Commissioners and the applicants. The Commissioners discussed referring to each other by formal titles such as "Commissioner Sheer" or "Chairperson Bachman" to make the meeting a more formal setting. Michaela Oktay and Nick Norris also covered priorities for 2023 and Commissioners brought up concerns and questions to discuss.

The Commissioners brought up the previously discussed idea of Planning Commissioner field trips. Field trip concerns were discussed. Work sessions were presented as an alternative to field trips.

The City Attorney's Office discussed how they want Staff and Commissioners to always feel safe and if they do not, to bring those concerns forward. They also talked about how there will be an Open Meetings Act (OPMA) training in the future after the 2023 legislative session.

Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:46 PM.

For Planning Commission agendas, staff reports, and minutes, visit the Planning Division's website at slc.gov/planning/public meetings. Staff Reports will be posted the Friday prior to the meeting and minutes will be posted two days after they are ratified, which usually occurs at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission.