



**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**Thursday, February 09, 2012**

Council Conference Room

Palo Alto Civic Center

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 PM

**ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Bacchetti, Bernardo, Chen, Ezran, O’Nan, Savage,  
**Staff:** Minka van der Zwaag, Amy Johnson

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the December 8, 2011.  
Seconded by Commissioner Bacchetti AYES: unanimous.

Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the January 12, 2012.  
Seconded by Commissioner Chen. AYES: unanimous.

**AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

Item 1 and item 2 were switched.

**BUSINESS**

**1. REVIEW AND COMMENT ON DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT –  
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT.**

Mr. Steven Turner, the Advanced Planning Manager and a 14 year employee with the City of Palo Alto explained that the city is amending the existing Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). He handed out PowerPoint slides of a presentation that he previously gave to the City Council Blue Ribbon Task Force which provided a background of the existing Comp Plan and a summary of proposed

58 amendment. He explained that the Comp Plan is a requirement of every city and includes elements  
59 such as goals, policies and programs. City projects and building requirements must be consistent  
60 with the Comp Plan. The existing Comp Plan was completed in 1998 and has a horizon date of  
61 2010. The City Council decided to amend the existing plan rather than make a new one. He  
62 discussed briefly the City Council's approved work plan. One task is to update the sustainability  
63 element to be more environmentally friendly. He spoke about the community meetings and public  
64 workshops to provide comments. It was a very successful meeting because of the diversity of those  
65 who attended. Once the comment period is over the Comp Plan will go through a review cycle and  
66 the City Council will make a decision. Mr. Turner asked for commissioner comments. He discussed  
67 the disposition attachment that explained where the changes occur.

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69 Commissioners commented:

- 70 • Commissioner Bacchetti: Did not like the use of the term "customer".
- 71 • Commissioner O'Nan, commented on a lack of specificity with some elements making the  
72 meaning unclear now, and in the future. She was concerned about other programs and  
73 policies might be too excessive which would cause affordable housing to suffer.
- 74 • Commissioner Chen said that many programs were not specific enough.
- 75 • Commissioner Ezran said he liked the structure of the document, but agreed with  
76 Commissioner Chen that programs are too vague to be measurable and not likely to be  
77 achieved and should reflect financial limits.

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79 Mr. Turner responded to comments and explained that the Comp Plan is more about what the city  
80 wants as a guideline and there is no guarantee that the goals will be achieved. Benchmarks are not  
81 used in a Comp Plan. The term "customer" is meant to be more of a complimentary title. There was  
82 a brief discussion about where the Comp Plan sits in the city. Staff and City Council do not  
83 necessarily follow it in every aspect of doing business. The Comp Plan is an aspirational document.  
84 The City Council can choose to amend the Comp Plan when they need to.

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86 They discussed the Draft Community Services and Facilities Element section page by page, with the  
87 Commissioners asking questions and providing comments.

88  
89 The commissioners thanked Mr. Turner for his patience and for attending the meeting to collect their  
90 comments.

## 91 92 93 **2. UPDATE ON HUMAN SERVICES NEEDS ASSESSMENT.**

94 Commissioner O'Nan reported that they have completed the research phase of the project. The next  
95 step is to compile information by coming up with key recommendations and preparing the report.

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97 Ms. van der Zwaag said that the staff intern will be coming back next week to begin working on this  
98 step. She also commented that she was told that when she gives the report to Finance Committee on  
99 2<sup>nd</sup> year HSRAP allocations, she can also provide a status report of the Human Services Needs  
100 Assessment. Once the rough draft is done, it will be reviewed by the commission before it is  
101 presented. There was a discussion about how to develop the data and what the HRC needs to review  
102 in the process to avoid getting too far into the process to be able to make sure that there is enough  
103 "buy in" on the recommendations.

## 104 105 106 **3. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

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**A. Commissioner Reports:**

Commissioner Bernardo reported that she will not be reapplying for the HRC at this time, because of her health. She commented that she has enjoyed her time on the HRC but needs to take a step back for a year and may decide to reapply in the future.

Commissioner O’Nan reported that she attended the monthly meeting of the Palo Alto Mediation Program.

Commissioner Chen reported that she attended the Senior Friendship Day Chinese New Year Celebration. It was a great event and Mayor Yeh had attended.

**B. Council Buddy Reports:**

None

**C. Council Liaison Report:**

None

**D. Staff Liaison Report:**

Ms. van der Zwaag reminded the commissioners of the upcoming AB123 required training.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

- CDBD 2<sup>nd</sup> year Funding Allocations
- HSRAP 2<sup>nd</sup> year Funding Allocations
- Update on Human Services Needs Assessment

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at: 9:00 pm.