



**DRAFT MINUTES
CUPERTINO PLANNING COMMISSION**

Tuesday, October 28, 2025

At 6:45 p.m. Chair Santosh Rao called the Regular Planning Commission meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance in the Cupertino Community Hall Council Chamber, 10350 Torre Avenue and via teleconference.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Santosh Rao, Vice Chair Tracy Kosolcharoen, and Commissioners Steven Scharf and Seema Lindskog. Absent: Commissioner David Fung.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Subject: Approval of the October 14, 2025 Planning Commission Minutes
Recommended Action: Approve the October 14, 2025 Planning Commission Minutes

MOTION: Lindskog moved and Kosolcharoen seconded to approve the October 14, 2025 Planning Commission Minutes. The motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Rao, Kosolcharoen, Scharf, Lindskog. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Fung.

POSTPONEMENTS – None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

NEW BUSINESS

2. Subject: Study Session: Objective Design Standards.
Recommended Action: That the Planning Commission provide feedback and recommendations regarding the establishment of objective design standards for new multi-family and residential mixed-use development

Assistant Director of Community Development Luke Connolly introduced Senior Associate II at PlaceWorks Greg Goodfellow, who gave a presentation.

Commissioners asked questions, which staff and Senior Associate II at PlaceWorks Greg

Goodfellow and staff responded to.

Chair Rao opened the public comment period and the following people spoke:

- Jennifer Griffin

Chair Rao closed the public comment period.

Commissioners asked questions and made comments.

Commissioners made the following recommendations:

- Use objective design standards to streamline development review and enable ministerial approval for qualifying projects. Consider implementing a point-based system or incentives (e.g., faster approval for projects that meet a threshold) to encourage more of these types of developments. Include clear, table-based layouts and 3D drawings to improve usability and understanding, and incorporate detailed guidance on open space, windows, bird-safe features, landscaping, and pedestrian/bike considerations. Additionally, explore combining objective standards with contextual or subjective criteria to provide richer design guidance, while keeping the review process efficient.
- Develop a standalone document for objective design standards to consolidate guidance in one central location, rather than requiring reference to multiple documents.
- Clearly associate these standards with official city policy so they serve as recognized design guidelines.
- Include rich detail and explanatory context (beyond just numeric or checklist-based criteria) to fully characterize the city's design goals.
- Consider building on existing frameworks (as Sunnyvale has) while maintaining a streamlined, efficient format for projects that may choose a discretionary route.
- Maintain objective design standards as a core part of the review process, as developers generally consider and attempt to follow them.
- Review examples from other cities, like Palo Alto, to understand how objective standards are applied in practice and assess feasibility. Consider consulting Sunnyvale staff to learn from their implementation.
- Ensure that standards are practical and compliant with other regulations (e.g., fire codes), and adjust specifications like tree spacing to balance design goals with safety and accessibility requirements.
- Use the standards to communicate community expectations clearly to developers while allowing for reasonable flexibility in implementation.

- Consider integrating design standards into the municipal code for a centralized, authoritative reference.
- If not incorporated into the code, include hyperlinks or an easily navigable format within the document to allow quick access to related standards, similar to Palo Alto's sidebar approach.
- Exempt remodels from Objective Design Standards (ODS) so existing single-family homes and two-unit remodels aren't subject to new requirements.
- Focus ODS primarily on streamlining new housing development.
- Maintain flexible language (e.g., "at least," "no more than") to give planners discretion while addressing resident concerns like neighborhood privacy, transitions between building types, landscaping, and setbacks.
- Move forward to produce a draft of the document for review, rather than expecting additional feedback at the next meeting.
- Consider that community hearings may involve a broader audience and provide additional input.
- Focus on reviewing and refining the draft as the next key step.

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS –

Assistant Director of Community Development Luke Connolly reported on the next meeting: that the Commission could anticipate one development project and one public hearing. He also reported on the Planning Commissioner Academy, noting it is scheduled for March in Anaheim; registration opens in about a month. Staff will email details. Budget allows sending all interested commissioners.

Commissioner Scharf provided an update on the recent Housing Commission meeting. He reported that affordable housing funding in Cupertino remains limited, with current resources insufficient to support new Below Market Rate (BMR) construction. BMR housing is administered by Rise Housing and tenants must undergo periodic re-approval or reselection to maintain eligibility.

FUTURE AGENDA SETTING – None

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:03p.m. Chair Rao adjourned the Regular Planning Commission Meeting.

Minutes prepared by:

Lindsay Nelson, Administrative Assistant