

MINUTES
Regular PEQC Meeting of the
Planning and Environmental Quality Commission
Tuesday, May 5, 2026

The Regular PEQC Meeting Notice and Agenda of the Planning and Environmental Quality Commission of the City of Gardena, California, was called to order on May 5, 2026, 7:00 PM, in the Council Chambers at 1700 W. 162nd Street, Gardena, California.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Stephen P. Langley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Ronald Wright-Scherr; Vice-Chair Jules Kanhan; Commissioner Steve Sherman; Commissioner Stephen P. Langley and Commissioner Deryl Henderson. Employees present: Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi; Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns; Assistant City Attorney Ivy Tsai; and Planning Assistant Kevin La.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.A. Planning and Environmental Quality Commission Approval of Minutes for April 7, 2026.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Langley and seconded by Commissioner Henderson to approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 7, 2026.

The motion passed by a vote of 4-0 (Yea: Wright-Scherr, Sherman, Henderson and Langley; Noes: None)

Abstain: Kanhan

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Administrative Analyst I, Georgina Placido, asked if there were any comments from the public and noted for the record that no members of the public wished to speak to the Planning Commission.

6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

6.A. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT #19-24; SITE PLAN REVIEW #4-24; TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP #2-24 TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF FOUR (4) THREE-STORY CONDOMINIUM UNITS IN THE MEDIUM DENSITY MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-3) ZONED PORTION OF A SPLIT ZONED R-3 AND SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-1) ZONED PROPERTY AT 1031 MAGNOLIA AVENUE.

Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi, Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns and Assistant City Attorney Ivy Tsai were present and available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Sherman recused himself from item 6.A. Assistant City Attorney Tsai noted, that Commissioner Sherman is recusing himself because he lives within 1,000 feet of the property.

Planning Assistant Kevin La presented the staff report informing the Commission that the project is categorically exempt from the provision of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Guideline Sections 15303(b) (Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; and 15300.2 - Not subject to exceptions to the exemptions in CEQA.

Mr. La displayed the Vicinity Map of the existing property located at 1031 Magnolia Avenue, and the Zoning Map, which indicates that the project site is split-zoned as both R-1 and R-3.

Mr. La provided past history of the project from 2020 - 2026. A timeline with important dates and meetings was displayed on the screen and presented photos of the currently vacant project site.

Mr. La provided an overview of the existing Site Plan, which identified both R-1 and R-3 sections of the property, noting that they are only working of the R-3 section.

Mr. La provided an overview of the proposed Site and Floor Plans, highlighting the proposed location of the dwelling units and ADU and the square footage. He proceed to display the proposed elevations for buildings 1 - 4 including the ADU.

Mr. La displayed the Tentative Parcel Map No. 85142. He reiterated that they are only working within the R-3 portions of the property.

Mr. La went over the analysis, noting that the property complies with the development standards within the R-3 zone; Densite permits up to four dwelling units within the R-3 portion; No development proposed in the R-1 portion and shall follow all development standards within the R-1 development standards; Site Plan Review required for all new multifamily developments of 4 or more per GMC Section 18.44.010.E; and Tentative Parcel Map required for the proposed subdivision in accordance with GMC Section 17.08.

Mr. La noted that public hearing notices were duly advertised in the Gardena Valley News and mailed to owners and occupants within 300' of the project site on January 8, 2026, for the January 20, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting. Re-noticed on April 23, 2026, for the May 5, 2026,

Planning Meeting. He noted that, four (4) public comments regarding the project have been received for the January 8, 2026, Planning Meeting and two (2) public comments regarding the project have been received for the May 5, 2026, Planning Meeting:

- Public Comment #1 - Alex ilich
- Public Comment #2 - Hannah Simon

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Conduct the public hearing;
- Receive testimony from the public;
- **Adopt Resolution No. PC 1-26**, approving Site Plan Review #4-24 and Tentative Parcel Map #2-24, subject to the attached Conditions of Approval; and
- Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption.

Mr. La informed the Commission that both the staff and applicant were present to answer any questions.

Chair Wright-Scherr asked if any of the Commissioners had questions and proceeded to open the Public Hearing.

Chair Wright-Scherr invited the applicant to step forward and address the Commission.

Mr. Steve Stapakis, the applicant, introduced himself and expressed his hope that the project would not be approved at the meeting due to concerns about potential litigation from local residents. Mr. Stapakis mentioned his efforts to meet with neighbors to discuss their concerns regarding the proposed project and to find a resolution. He expressed a desire to hear the neighbors concerns so he could provide a response and work towards a common ground, aiming to develop a project that everyone could accept. He also discussed the proposed project and shared his perspective on the matter.

Assistant City Attorney Tsai provided clarification regarding Mr. Stapakis's comments. According to her understanding, Mr. Stapakis would like to hear testimony from the public regarding his project, after which he would have the opportunity to respond. Additionally, Mr. Stapakis requested to continue the item to allow time to work with the neighbors.

Chair Wright-Scherr then asked for public speakers;

Public Speakers: Michael Lee, Javier Marquez and Neal Natsumeda, residents of Gardena, spoke in opposition of the proposed project, expressing concerns regarding its potential impact on the character of their neighborhood.

Chair Wright-Scherr asked Mr. Steve Stapakis when he would like the proposed project to be brought back to the Planning Commission. Mr. Stapakis requested to return in four weeks, hoping to reach a resolution with the neighbors.

Assistant City Attorney Tsai informed Mr. Stapakis that the item could be brought back on July 7th. Mr. Stapakis agreed to this date.

Assistant City Attorney Tsai provided direction to all the Commissioners regarding the motion to continue the item.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Langley and seconded by Chair Wright-Scherr to Continue the Public Hearing to a Date Certain of July 7, 2026:

The motion passed by a vote of 4-0 (Yea: Wright-Scherr; Kanhan, Henderson and Langley; Noes: None)

Recuse: Sherman

Commissioner Henderson wanted to add his perspective about the existing structures and mentioned that he would be making another trip to the project site.

Director of Community Development Tsujiuchi noted that city staff would reach out to him and also take a look at the project site.

There were no additional questions or comments made by any member of the Commission or by members of the public.

Assistant City Attorney Tsai requested that Commissioner Sherman return to the meeting.

6.B. ZONE TEXT AMENDMENT #1-26, PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 18.13 OF THE GARDENA MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS AND JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi and Assistant City Attorney Ivy Tsai were present and available to answer any questions.

Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns presented the staff report informing the Commission that the goal of the Zone Text Amendment is to achieve compliance with state law and to align with AB 1154 and SB 543. These laws were signed by the governor in October 2025 and became effective on January 1, 2026.

Ms. Burns provided an overview of the proposed changes to the Gardena Municipal Code (GMC) to ensure consistency with the new state laws, as displayed on the screen.

Ms. Burns noted that public hearing notices were duly advertised in the Gardena Valley News on April 9, 2026, well beyond the required 20-day notification period for any matters impacting zoning codes and uses. To date, no public comments regarding the project have been received.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Conduct the public hearing;
- Receive testimony from the public;
- **Adopt Resolution No. PC 5-26**, recommending that the City Council adopt an Ordinance for Zone Text Amendment No. 1-26

Ms. Burns informed the Commission that staff are available to answer any questions.

Chair Wright-Scherr asked if any of the Commissioners had questions.

Commissioner Langley asked for clarification, stating that the proposed changes are fundamentally about aligning local regulations with state law. Ms. Burns confirmed that he was correct.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was open. City staff confirmed that no public comments had been received.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was closed.

There were no additional questions or comments made by any member of the Commission.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Langley and seconded by Vice-Chair Kanhan to Recommend to the City Council on adoption of Zone Text Amendment #1-26 to amend Chapter 18.13 of the Gardena Municipal Code relating to accessory dwelling units and junior accessory:

The motion passed by a vote of 5-0 (Yea: Wright-Scherr, Kanhan, Sherman, Henderson and Langley; Noes: None)

7. OTHER ITEMS

No Items.

8. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi, announced upcoming city events.

1. Gardena Community Meeting for the Open Space Conservation Plan for the Community Resources Element of the City's General Plan on May 14, 2026; 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm., at the Nakaoka Community Center, Room A. Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns encouraged everyone to participate in the Community Survey by scanning the QR code displayed on the screen.
2. Sounds & Bites on the Gardena Boulevard, Friday, May 8, 2026, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Director Tsujiuchi noted that both Economic Development and Animal Control will be participating in the event.
3. 23rd Annual Jazz Festival, Sunday, August 23, 2026 at Rowley Park.

4. Food, Wine & Brew, Saturday, September 26, 2026, from 12:00 pm - 7:00 pm at the City Hall Complex. Director Tsujiuchi informed the Commissioners that they will receive two tickets for each event.

9. PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

1. VICE-CHAIR KANHAN - No items to report.
2. COMMISSIONER LANGLEY - No items to report.
3. COMMISSIONER HENDERSON - No items to report.
4. COMMISSIONER SHERMAN - No items to report.
5. CHAIR WRIGTH-SCHERR - No items to report.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wright-Scherr adjourned the meeting at 7:57 PM.

APPROVED:

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____

RONALD WRIGHT-SCHERR, CHAIR

GREG TSUJIUCHI, SECRETARY

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