



CITY OF SIERRA MADRE

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 15, 2026, 5:30 P.M.

City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with a disability who require a disability related modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, may request such modification or accommodation from the City Clerk at (626) 574-5455. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT & ACCESS

The Brown Act provides the public with an opportunity to make public comments at any public meeting. As an alternative, public comment may be submitted by e-mail to publiccomment@sierramadrecal.gov by 3:00PM on the day of the meeting. Emails will be acknowledged at the City Council meeting, filed into public record, and scanned onto the City website for public review.

A copy of the posted agenda and a live video stream of the meeting can be found on the City's website at sierramadrecal.gov , on Foothills Media website at foothillsmedia.org/sierramadre, and broadcast on Government Access Channel 3 (Spectrum).

If you require special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (626) 355-7135 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of a City Council meeting is to conduct City business. Members of the public that behave in a manner that interrupts or obstructs the City Council's ability to conduct City business may be asked to leave the meeting. Any and all demonstrations which disrupt, interrupt, or obstruct the City Council's ability to conduct City business are prohibited. No signs, posters, or other large objects shall be brought into the Council Chambers or other meeting place if doing so would disrupt, disturb, or otherwise impede the orderly course of the meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Denison called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Director Lin called the roll.

2. ROLL CALL OF PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Thomas Denison, Chair
Patrick Simcock, Vice Chair
Kevin Brennan, Commissioner
Yong Yoo, Commissioner

Absent: Christine Moran, Commissioner

Also Present: Clare Lin, Director of Planning and Community Preservation
Aleks Giragosian, City Attorney
Joshua Wolf, Senior Planner
Katelyn Huang, Assistant Planner

3. REPORTS FROM CITY COUNCIL LIAISON

Council Member Garcia reported that Mayor Lowe would be the appointee liaison for the Planning Commission with himself as the alternate. He highlighted that the City had received another donation of \$20,000 to public safety from an anonymous donor who has contributed nearly half a million dollars since 2000. He noted that the next City Council meeting would include a midyear budget review and recommendations regarding the Ginkgo Stonehouse that the Planning Commission had previously reviewed.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Any person wishing to speak before the Planning Commission is asked to complete a Speaker Card and provide it to staff prior to the start of the meeting. Speakers are generally limited to three (3) minutes per person and time may not be delegated; any changes to the allotted time will be announced prior to the Public Comment period. Under the Brown Act, the Planning Commission is prohibited from discussing or taking action on any item not listed on the posted agenda.

Addressing the Planning Commission from the audience is not permitted; all comments addressing the Commission must be made from the podium. Only public comment made from the podium will be recognized by the Planning Commission and entered into public record.

Chair Denison opened the podium for public comment on items not on the agenda.

Senior Planner Wolf reported that one speaker card was withdrawn. He also noted that one written comment had been received in advance for an item not on the agenda and had been forwarded to the commissioners for their consideration.

Seeing no one come forward, Chair Denison closed public comment.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

Any person wishing to speak before the Planning Commission on a public hearing item is asked to complete a Speaker Card noting the agenda item number and provide it to staff prior to the start of the public hearing. Separate and apart from the applicant (who may speak longer in the discretion of the Commission) speakers are generally limited to three (3) minutes per person; any changes to the allotted time will be announced prior to the Public Comment period. Under the Brown Act, the Planning Commission is prohibited from discussing or acting on any item not listed on the posted agenda. The applicant may additionally submit rebuttal comments, at the discretion of the Commission.

Following the closure of the public hearing and prior to the final decision, Commissioners shall disclose any ex parte communication that has taken place pertaining to the public hearing item. Planning Commissioners shall also disclose all visits to a site that is the subject of a quasi-adjudicatory proceeding before the Planning Commission. The disclosure will include whether the site visit was organized by staff, upon the invitation of the applicant, or on the Commissioners' own accord. The Commissioner must disclose all information learned from the site visit that is not included in the agenda packet and that informs his or her decision-making.

- a) Design Review Permit (DRP 25-02) related to the implementation of The Meadows at Bailey Canyon Specific Plan for the construction of forty-two single-family dwellings and a three-acre park

Chair Denison called for disclosure of ex parte communications pertaining to this public hearing. None were reported.

Senior Planner Wolf presented the Design Review Permit application, highlighting staff's evaluation for conformance. He noted the Meadows Specific Plan, development agreement, and the EIR were certified by City Council in September 2022, and the tentative tract map was approved in February 2024. The project is under the Housing Crisis Act, limiting hearings to five, and the Housing Accountability Act, preventing denial if objective standards are met.

The presentation outlined 42 single-family homes, six open-space parcels with a three-acre park, four architectural styles, three floor plans, and compliance with zoning, landscaping, angle plane, and encroachment requirements.

Wolf identified one area of non-conformance: Lots 1 and 9 have the same building elevation and floor plan. While the lots are not adjacent, both are visible from Sunnyside Avenue, and the specific plan does not allow repetition of the same elevation and plan in this condition. The applicant proposed varying the material palettes to differentiate the homes visually. Wolf also noted that the landscape plans did not include shade trees within the front yard of any lot as required by the specific plan, and recommended a condition of approval to ensure compliance.

Jonathan Frankel, representing the applicant, explained that constraints related to single-story units and retaining wall height limits affected Lots 1 and 9. He also noted the inclusion of an extra single-story unit to meet Mater de la Rosa's needs and stated that the applicant agreed to conduct supplemental soil testing prior to grading in response to Eaton fire concerns.

Chair Denison asked if the applicant would agree to a condition requiring completion of soil testing with negative declaration before any work started. Frankel confirmed they would and noted that staff was already including this as a condition of the grading permit.

Community Input

Chair Denison opened the floor for community input for public hearing item a.

Public comments on the project included:

Rob Fukuzaki

501 N. Sunnyside Ave.

Rob Fukuzaki expressed concerns about materially changed environmental conditions resulting from the Eaton fire, arguing that CEQA required new analysis of the site.

Dr. Christine Kederian

615 Edgeview Dr.

Dr. Christine Kederian, who lives adjacent to the development, was concerned about ongoing tree excavation and soil disturbance, asking for independent soil testing to ensure safety for nearby families.

Phil Yao

513 Sierra Keys Dr.

Phil Yao noted the discrepancy between the presentation's depiction of nicely landscaped houses and what he felt would be a "wall of houses" seen from existing homes. He also highlighted that the project site is within a very high fire severity zone.

Judy Magnuson

491 Grove St.

Judy Magnuson expressed concerns about traffic safety on Carter Avenue with the increased traffic from the new development.

Anne Chesterman

671 Brookside Ln.

Anne Chesterman raised concerns about the hydroecology study being based on a 50-year time period rather than 100 years, questioning who would be accountable for potential mudslides and flooding.

Sharil Fukuzaki

501 N. Sunnyside Ave.

Sharil Fukuzaki described her family's experiences during the Eaton fire, including evacuation challenges, and raised concerns about potential evacuation issues with 42 new homes.

Deb Sheridan

Valle Vista Dr.

Deb Sheridan requested more notice for future hearings, emphasized the need for soil testing, and urged the commission to ensure fire safety measures.

Caroline Brown

Alta Vista Dr.

Caroline Brown highlighted the importance of controlling access to Bailey Canyon from the development and discussed fire prevention concerns.

Deliberation

Commissioner Brennan praised staff for ensuring compliance with the specific plan and for achieving significant reductions in building massing. He added that he was comfortable with the proposed approach for Lots 1 and 9 due to their separation, differing elevations, and the use of different materials.

Commissioner Yoo expressed appreciation for neighbors' concerns but noted these were beyond the purview of the design review. He was pleased that the developer agreed to conduct soil testing. He observed that the design showed sensitivity in its layout, with single-story homes transitioning to two-story homes as the development moves up the slope. He also noted that modern building codes would ensure strict fire safety measures.

Vice-Chair Simcock emphasized design review while noting soil testing concerns. His main focus was ensuring the project complies with fire code requirements, particularly the "Zone 0" ember-resistant zone standards.

Chair Denison noted that the limited number of plans with varied facades did not affect the determination of conformance with the specific plan. He acknowledged public comments, welcomed the developer's agreement to conduct soil testing before grading, and supported adding conditions for Zone 0 compliance and varied materials on Lots 1 and 9.

Deputy City Attorney Homaechearria clarified that the AB 3074 Zone 0 regulations still needed state fire marshal promulgation to be officially enforceable, but the applicant confirmed they had already designed with no landscaping within 5 feet of structures and would include this requirement in their CC&Rs.

Vice-Chair Simcock made a motion to approve Design Review Permit DRP 25-02 related to implementation of the Meadows at Bailey Canyon specific plan for the construction of 42 single family dwellings and the 3-acre park as amended and discussed.

Chair Denison seconded the motion.

Ayes: Chair Denison, Vice-Chair Simcock, Commissioner Brennan, and Commissioner Yoo

Noes:

Absent: Commissioner Moran

Abstain:

The motion to approve Design Review Permit DRP 25-02 was passed by majority vote of all commissioners present.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered to be routine and can be acted on by one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the Planning Commission requests that a specific item be removed from the Consent Calendar for separate discussion and action.

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2025

Chair Denison asked the Commission for a motion.

Commissioner Brennan made a motion to approve the December 18, 2025 meeting minutes.

Vice-Chair Simcock seconded the motion.

Ayes: Chair Denison, Vice-Chair Simcock, Commissioner Brennan, and Commissioner Yoo

Noes:

Absent: Commissioner Moran

Abstain:

The motion to approve the December 18, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes was passed by a unanimous voice vote by all commissioners present.

7. REPORTS FROM PLANNING COMMISSION

Commissioner Brennan announced he would be attending the Planning Commissioners Academy in March with Vice Chair Simcock and would report back to the commission afterward.

8. REPORTS FROM CITY STAFF

Planning Director Lin announced that the first February meeting was canceled for Council Chambers renovations, with meetings resuming at the second February session.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Denison made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Chair Denison, Vice-Chair Simcock, Commissioner Brennan, and Commissioner Yoo

Noes:

Absent: Commissioner Moran

Abstain:

The motion to adjourn the Regular meeting was approved by all Commissioners at 7:30 pm.

The Planning Commission will adjourn to a regular meeting on Thursday, February 19, 2026.



Secretary to the Planning Commission

Clare Lin, Director of Planning and Community Preservation