

City of Fresno

Tower Theater
815 E Olive Ave., Fresno, CA 93728



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

5:30 PM

Regular Meeting

In Person and/or Electronic,
Tower Theater Lounge, 815 E Olive Ave., Fresno, CA 93728

Tower District Specific Plan Implementation

Committee

Chairperson - Christopher Johnson

Vice Chair - Janay Conley

Board Member - Annie Lokrantz

Board Member - Michael Birdsong

Board Member - Myra Coble

Board Member - James Kitch

Board Member - Joseph Catania

THE COMMITTEE WELCOMES YOU TO THE TOWER THEATRE, LOCATED AT 815 E OLIVE AVENUE, FRESNO, CA 93728

The meeting can also be viewed live at 5:30 P.M. on Comcast Channel 96 and AT&T channel 99.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The following options are available for members of the public who want to address Tower District Specific Plan Implementation Committee:

1. You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

a) Register in advance for this webinar:

https://fresno-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_taAP1qgNRGGeXj2cB5mzQQ

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

b) If you do not wish for your name to appear on the screen, then use the drop down menu and click on “rename” to rename yourself.

c) Those addressing Committee must state their name for the record.

OR

2. Join by phone: 1-669-900-9128

Webinar ID: 951 8694 8275

a) Those addressing the Committee must state their name and address for the record.

3. Email: LongRangePlanning@fresno.gov

a) Attendees may also email comments to be read during the meeting. Please include the agenda date and item number you wish to speak on in the subject line of your email. Include your name, and address for the record, at the top of the body of your email.

b) Emails will be a maximum of 450 words.

c) All comments received will be distributed to the Tower District Specific Plan

Implementation Committee prior and during the meeting and will be a part of the official record.

d) Notwithstanding subsection c) above, unless otherwise required by law to be accepted by the City at or prior to a Tower District Specific Plan Implementation Committee meeting, no documents shall be accepted for review unless they are submitted to Long Range Planning at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of the meeting at which the associated agenda item is to be heard.

All participants will be on mute until they are called upon at which point they will be unmuted. To prevent participants from having their video on, we will remove the option to show their video.

Pursuant to the Executive Order, and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the Tower District Specific Plan Implementation Committee meeting, please contact the Planning Division, 559-621-8277 within 48 hours of the meeting.

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm and initiated the roll call.

Also present were Long Range Planning staff Jennifer Clark, Adrienne Asadoorian-Gilbert, Yamilex Nava, Maya Mubarak, Preston Her, Christopher Green, and Emily Reyes; consultant Peter Winch; Council District Staff Karla Martinez (District 3)

Present 6 - Chairperson Christopher Johnson, Board Member Michael Birdsong, Board Member Annie Lokrantz, Board Member Myra Coble, Board Member James Kitch, and Board Member Joseph Catania

Absent 1 - Vice Chair Janay Conley

II. Approve Agenda

On motion of Board Member Coble, seconded by Board Member Birdsong, the above AGENDA were APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Chairperson Johnson, Board Member Birdsong, Board Member Lokrantz, Board Member Coble, Board Member Kitch and Board Member Catania

Absent: 1 - Vice Chair Conley

III. Approve Meeting Minutes

III-A [ID 24-413](#) February 20, 2023 Tower District Specific Implementation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes

On motion of Board Member Lokrantz, seconded by Board Member Catania, that the above Action Item be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Chairperson Johnson, Board Member Birdsong, Board Member Lokrantz, Board Member Coble, Board Member Kitch and Board Member Catania

Absent: 1 - Vice Chair Conley

III-B [ID 24-415](#) February 27, 2023 Tower District Specific Implementation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes

On motion of Board Member Catania, seconded by Board Member Lokrantz, that the above Action Item be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Chairperson Johnson, Board Member Birdsong, Board Member Lokrantz, Board Member Coble, Board Member Kitch and Board Member Catania

Absent: 1 - Vice Chair Conley

IV. Council District Updates

Staff member Martinez from District 3 let the public know about the upcoming event at the Tower Theater Lounge to gather community input on budget priorities.

V. Staff Updates

N/A

VI. Continued Matters

N/A

VII. New Matters

VII-A [ID 24-412](#) Presentation by consultant team (WRT) to review the proposed Specific Plan policies on Public Spaces and Historic Preservation.

Winch reviewed the project schedule and community outreach efforts undertaken for policy development. The draft is expected to be ready in July for public review and the project is expected to end in January 2025. Winch explained how the policies will be reviewed.

VII-B [ID 24-411](#) Subcommittee Updates

1. Public Spaces Subcommittee
2. Historic Preservation Subcommittee

Asadoorian-Gilbert recapped the policies on Parks and Historic Preservation.

Chairperson Johnson asked Peter about revising policies and providing clear guidance for changes. They discussed the success of a new pocket

park, the replanting program, and options for planting trees.

Catania suggested smaller parks to access quiet spaces.

Birdsong highlighted the issue of parking in local neighborhoods.

Coble asked about a standalone budget for public safety.

Chairperson Johnson emphasized the need for a historic context statement and Winch agreed to explore the idea.

They discussed the possibility of having code enforcement ensure that the regulations for historic properties are being followed.

Birdsong suggested conducting a new study on potential historic resources.

Winch noted the critical attention these policies are receiving and how they reflect the needs being addressed.

VIII. Unscheduled Oral Communications

Brooke pointed out that the name of the Gillis library branch was misspelled in the Tower District Library policy 1.2 and reiterated that the Gillis library would be a valuable addition to the district.

Christina supported Brooke's extensive groundwork for a Tower District Library.

Dan suggested that the idea of a police substation should be abandoned. He also stated churches are exempted from Historic Preservation by federal law. He pointed out that the connection to downtown is larger than Fulton and Van Ness as there is also Weber and H. The item is too confined and ignores the history of the area.

Daniel highlighted the lack of policy language specific to Tower Theater and questioned the policy's implementation of developing a historic context study.

*Kiel requested air quality monitoring in parks with alerts for poor air.
Suggests capping canal to create space. Against more police, wants better
lighting and safer spaces. Unsure where to find subcommittee meetings.*

Juan wants more accessibility and safety for the bike lanes in Fresno.

*Scott inquired about the boundaries and context of Historic Preservation and
Conservation policy 1.4, specifically regarding historic districts.*

IX. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned meeting at 6:46 pm