

City of Capitola

Special City Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 23, 2026 – 5:30 PM



City Council Chambers
420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010

Mayor: Margaux Morgan

Vice Mayor: Gerry Jensen

Council Members: Joe Clarke, Melinda Orbach, Susan Westman

Special Meeting of the Capitola City Council – 5:30 PM

1. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance – *The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM. In attendance: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan.*

2. Additional Materials

A. *Item 4A - Staff Memorandum with Correction to Table 4 & 6 emails received after publication of the agenda packet.*

3. Oral Communications by Members of the Public

- *Heidy Kellison*
- *Goran Klepic*

The City Council took a recess at 5:37PM due to technical issues. The Council reconvened at 6:06 PM.

4. Public Hearings

A. Capitola Mall and Objective Standards Zoning Code Amendments

Recommended Action: 1) Adopt a resolution amending the General Plan Land Use Element; 2) introduce for first reading, by title only, waiving further reading, an ordinance amending Capitola Municipal Code Title 17: Zoning; and 3) adopt a resolution authorizing submittal to the California Coastal Commission for the certification of an amendment to the Local Coastal Program.

Community and Economic Development Director Herlihy presented the staff report.

The City Council took a recess at 7:42 PM and reconvened at 7:45 PM.

Public Comment:

- ***Speaker***
- ***Rianan Crane***
- ***Daniel Alvarez, NorCal Carpenters Union***
- ***Speaker***
- ***Rafa Sonnenfeld, Santa Cruz YIMBY***
- ***Daya Khunkhun***
- ***Selica Valdez, Unite Here Local 19***
- ***Martha, Unite Here Local 19***
- ***Liz McDade***
- ***Speaker***

- **Janine Roeth**
- **Jamas Gwilliam**
- **Kevin Maguire**

The City Council thanked the public, the Planning Commission, and staff for their efforts on the Zoning Code amendments thus far. Council Member Westman presented the Council with revisions to the Redevelopment Tiers Objective Standards, including changes to Tier 2 to closely mimic Tier 3A with a modification to street setbacks and the size of the hotel development, a reduction in commercial square footage, and converting Tier 3B to Tier 3. The Council expressed a desire for another special meeting to further discuss the topic. The Council requested that staff clarify why objective standards are being applied to the Village and Industrial areas, clarification on rooftop usage for public open space, commercial building height (14 to 18 feet), and bike lanes. The Council also requested that staff evaluate the financial impacts of reducing hotel occupancy from 125 to 120 rooms and reducing commercial square footage. The Council requested that staff discuss the size of the housing units that will be installed on the site.

Motion to continue discussion of the item to a special meeting scheduled for March 16, 2026: Council Member Westman

Second: Vice Mayor Jensen

Voting Yea: Council Member Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, Mayor Morgan

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM. The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is on February 26, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

Margaux Morgan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Julia Gautho, City Clerk