Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead

Richard J. Bruckner
Director

July 29, 2014

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

CONFIRMATION OF HEARING EXAMINERS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING (ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS) (3-VOTES)

SUBJECT

Recommendation to confirm the appointment of three Hearing Examiners within the Department of Regional Planning (Department). Hearing Examiners are employees of the Department who are appointed by the Director of Planning and confirmed by the Board of Supervisors. Their duties are to conduct public hearings, receive public testimony and make recommendations to the Regional Planning Commission (Commission) on land divisions, land use permits and variances.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD, AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING:

Confirm the appointments of John Calas, Alejandro Garcia and Gina Natoli as Hearing Examiners within the Department.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On August 12, 2008, the Board of Supervisors passed ordinances establishing a Hearing Examiner within the Department. The Hearing Examiner procedure increases opportunities for public participation earlier in the planning process and enables the Commission to make decisions in a more timely and efficient manner.

Section 22.08.080 of the County Code (Zoning Ordinance) requires all Hearing Examiner appointments to be confirmed by the Board of Supervisors.

John Calas has nine years of experience within the Systems Analysis and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Sections within the Department. He currently serves as a Hearing Officer renderring decisions on subdivisions and land use permits.

Alejandro Garcia has worked for the Department for seventeen years in various capacities. Most recently he has managed the Zoning Enforcement North Section. He has also served as a Hearing Officer for eight years.

Gina Natoli has been employed by the Department for fifteen years. She has worked in the Land Use Regulation Division and is currently the manager of the Community Studies West Section of the Advance Planning Division and has served as a Hearing Officer for six years.

All three individuals are highly qualified to serve as Department Hearing Examiners.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommendations herein are consistent with the principles of the Countywide Strategic Plan Operational Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability (Goal 1) and Community Support and Responsiveness (Goal 2), by increasing effectiveness of County processes and operations and delivering customer oriented services to unincorporated communities in a proactive and responsive manner.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The appointment of the Hearing Examiners does not require additional funding; therefore, there is no impact on net County costs.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

County Code (Zoning Ordinance) Section 22.08.080 permits the Director of Planning to appoint Hearing Examiners, subject to confirmation by the Board of Supervisors, to perform the duties prescribed by Title 22 in conducting public hearings, receiving public testimony, and making recommendations to the Commission.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Your approval of this recommendation will enable the Department to devote and maintain an appropriate number of Hearing Examiners to enhance the quality of services provided to the public.

CONCLUSION

Upon Board approval, the Executive Office, Board of Supervisors, is requested to return one adopted, stamped Board letter to the Department of Regional Planning.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Sorin Alexanian, Deputy Director, Current Planning Division, at (213) 974-6441 or at salexanian@planning.lacounty.gov.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Bruckner
Director

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c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Chief Executive Office

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