



## City of Sebastopol Planning Department

Date: October 22, 2024  
Agenda item: 7A  
To: Design Review Board  
From: John Jay, Associate Planner  
Subject: Design Review Board and Planning Commission combination

---

As you are aware, the City of Sebastopol will be considering the reorganization of certain boards, committees, and commissions as part of its on-going budget review process to identify possible streamlining and process improvement opportunities as well as cost savings, including those related to staff time and supporting technology. Planning Department staff met with the Design Review Board at your regularly scheduled May 28, 2024, meeting to inform you of this process and to seek feedback from your membership. Below is what staff initially suggested to your group as a potential makeup for this combined group:

- Combine roles and responsibilities of the Design Review Board and the Planning Commission;
- Membership of the combined bodies would be seven (7) members, with at least two of the members having relevant community development design expertise, e.g., architectural, landscape architectural, etc.)
- City Attorney to review State Brown Act requirements with Board member's and Planning Commission member's as they pertain to the merged roles and responsibilities
- Meetings will be held in-person with Zoom and live-streaming; and,
- Meetings will be scheduled monthly.

After this May 28 meeting you provided additional information to staff on how you felt about the combination of these groups, which included ideas on how a combined group could be beneficial for both staff and applicants as it would streamline the process for getting development projects through the necessary requirements. You also provided input on how the combination may not be the best for the City as it could stifle creativity that the Design Review Board provides for projects.

In addition to the above, staff is recommending a final proposal to the group that breaks down the makeup of the proposed 7 members. We would like to have a discussion and action on the bulleted list below at this meeting; this allows staff to provide this recommendation to the City Manager for their report to Council in early 2025.

- Planning Commission/DRB membership be expanded to seven (7) members, with membership to include at least one architect, one landscape architect, and one allied construction industry member.
- Continue to have in-person with Zoom and live-streaming option meetings.
- Continue to have two meetings a month and current schedule.