



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 4/27/2026
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 846 9472 6242 and
City Council Chambers
751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Chair Andrew Ehrich called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Andrew Ehrich (Chair), Ross Silverstein (Vice Chair), Katie Behroozi, Katie Ferrick, Jennifer Schindler, Misha Silin

Absent: Linh Dan Do

Staff: Matthew Ball, Assistant Planner; Calvin Chan, Senior Planner; Nira Doherty, City Attorney Office; Kyle Perata, Assistant Community Development Director; Mariam Sleiman, City Attorney's Office; Tim Wong, Housing Manager

C. Reports and Announcements

Mr. Perata reported on items of interest to the Planning Commission that the City Council would consider at its April 28, 2026 meeting, including making two appointments to the Planning Commission, ratifying the Menlo Park Fire Protection District's local ordinance, authorizing the City Manager to execute an amended Memorandum of Understanding with Caltrain related to the Middle Avenue Undercrossing project, and amending the City's Comprehensive Master Fee Schedule.

Commissioner Schindler reported she interviewed for one of the Planning Commission vacancies.

D. Public Comment

Chair Ehrich opened public comment and closed it as no persons requested to speak,

E. Presentation

E1. Presentation of the draft Anti-displacement Plan (Attachment)

Mr. Wong presented the item.

Chair Ehrich opened the item for public comment.

Public Comment:

- Angela Evans, Director of Menlo Sparks and District 5 resident, expressed appreciation for the

work and noted Menlo Sparks' four recommendations she had sent to staff to address impacts due to electrification efforts to protect tenants.

- Miyko Harris-Parker expressed appreciation that a number of recommendations from Belle Haven residents were included and expressed support for Ms. Evans' comments. She expressed concern about the indication that staff resources might hamper implementation and asked if City Council would be requested to increase staff levels to ensure implementation.
- Karen Grove, Menlo Park resident and co-founder of Menlo Together, said she appreciated that the City was coming forward with these recommendations and expressed support for the recommendations made by Ms. Evans.

Chair Ehrich closed public comment.

The Commission received clarifications that staff was not proposing increased staffing and would start with the first two programs, the legal assistance and rental assistance and when those were complete, they would then work on the Just Cause evictions.

Commission comments related to housing efforts, support for recommendations by Menlo Sparks, public outreach and legal assistance mechanisms, actualization of a rental registry, and communication of support for tenants facing eviction due to redevelopment.

F. Public Hearing Item

- F1. Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map Amendments/City of Menlo Park:
Consider amendments to the zoning ordinance and zoning map to temporarily exclude sites within the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan subdistricts of D (Downtown), SA-W (Station Area West), SA-E (Station Area East), ECR-SE (El Camino Real South-East), and ECR-NE-R (El Camino Real North-East Residential Emphasis) that are within one-quarter mile of the Menlo Park Caltrain Station, from Senate Bill (SB) 79, the Abundant and Affordable Homes Near Transit Act; Determine adoption of this ordinance is not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") because the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and that adoption of an ordinance under SB 79's procedures specified in Government Code Section 65912.160 are statutorily exempt from CEQA review. The Planning Commission is scheduled to make a recommendation to the City Council, which will be the final decision-making body on the proposed amendments. Separate notice will be given for the City Council public hearing. (Staff report #26-010-PC)

Mr. Perata presented the item. He noted comments received since publication and provided a correction that ECR-NE-R district parcels were not eligible when within 200 feet of a station entrance.

Chair Ehrich opened the public hearing.

Public Comment:

- Paul Roberts, District 5, said the City should adopt SB 79 and simplify and streamline redevelopment to encourage housing and lowering rents.

Chair Ehrich closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed the four implementation options, the local control afforded to the City through the temporary exemption ordinance, the guiding principles and goals of the El Camino Real Downtown Specific Plan and General Plan, possible risk that the temporary exemption ordinance could postpone or slow down housing development, potential alternative approach utilizing SB 79 density, height, and FAR allowances with local objective standards, the pros and cons of a TOD Alternative Plan, and the City's progress on meeting its regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) target and how SB 79 could affect that progress. The Commission generally was supportive of the State's intention with SB 79.

Motion and second (Ehrich/Schindler) to extend the meeting to 11:30 p.m.; passes 6-0 with Commissioner Do absent.

ACTION: Motion and second (Silverstein/Ehrich) to not adopt the draft resolution and instead recommend that the City Council not adopt an ordinance exempting sites from SB 79 and instead let SB 79 go into full effect, and recommend that the City Council direct staff to study the effects of SB 79 on the City at some point in the future; passes 5-1 with Commissioner Ferrick dissenting and Commissioner Do absent.

G. Study Session Item

G1. Senate Bill 9 (SB 9) Ordinance Update/Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Amendments/City of Menlo Park:

Consider and provide feedback on potential amendments to the City's regulations for urban lot splits and two unit housing developments (Chapters 15.31 and 16.77 of the Municipal Code) for compliance with state law (Senate Bills 9 and 450), and potential options to streamline the development review process in single-family zones. A study session is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). (Staff report #26-011-PC)

Senior Planner Chan presented the staff report. He provided updates on comments received since publication and that staff prepared an approved and active SB 9 projects overview table.

ACTION: Motion and second (Ehrich/Silverstein) to extend the meeting to 11:45 p.m.; passes 6-0 with Commissioner Do absent.

Chair Ehrich opened the item for public comment and closed public comment as no persons requested to speak.

ACTION: Motion and second (Ehrich/Behroozi) to continue the item to a date certain of June 8th; passes 6-0 with Commissioner Do absent.

H. Informational Items

H1. Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

- Regular Meeting: May 4, 2026

Mr. Perata said the May 4th agenda included the housing development project at 68 Willow Road

and draft EIR public hearing and study session for the 1005 O'Brien Drive and 1320 Willow Road proposed life science development project.

- Regular Meeting: May 18, 2026

Mr. Perata said the May 18th agenda included a proposal to amend the Downtown Specific Plan related to the Main Street overlay.

I. Adjournment

Chair Ehrich adjourned the meeting at 11:38 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Kyle Perata, Assistant Community Development Director

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on June 8, 2026



Senate Bill 9 (SB 9) Ordinance Update and Single-Family Developments Study Session

Calvin Chan, Senior Planner

1



April 27, 2026 Study Session

- Opportunity to provide preliminary feedback for future potential Menlo Park Municipal Code (MPMC) amendments
- Primary purpose: Consider SB 9 Ordinance update for consistency with state law
 - MPMC Ch. 15.31: Urban Lot Splits
 - MPMC Ch. 16.77: Two Unit Housing Developments
- Secondary purpose: Consider options to streamline development review process for single-family dwelling units in single-family zones
 - Potential to remove use permit requirements
 - Substandard lots
 - Floor area limit (FAL) establishment for lots less than 5,000 SF in area

2

- biologically used
(split lot)





SB 9 and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

- “A menu of options” – development pathways with unique intents
 - SB 9: Larger units and more primary units with ownership opportunity
 - ADU: New housing units that remain secondary in nature to an existing/proposed main residence
- Parcels not created through urban lot split: general ADU regulations dictate number of developable ADUs
- Parcels created by urban lot split: local agency is not required to permit more than two dwelling units of any kind per parcel
- SB 9 can be used to:
 - Add new units to existing parcel
 - Divide an existing house into multiple units
 - Divide a parcel and add units



SB 9 Approved and Active Projects Overview

Description	Count
Approved urban lot split applications	5 lot splits
Active urban lot split applications	5 lot splits
Pre-SB 9 lots	12 lots
Pre-SB 9 units	12 primary residences
Post SB-9 lots	22 lots • 183% lots increase
Post SB-9 units	39 residences • 325% units increase • 28 primary residences and 11 ADUs



Senate Bill 450 (SB 450) Overview

- Intent: Modifies and strengthens SB 9 goal of increasing housing supply on single-family zoned lots
- Highlights:
 1. Apply only standards that “apply uniformly to development within the underlying zone”
 2. Approve or deny SB 9 units/lot split applications within 60 days after receipt of a complete application; denial determination must include list of defects/remedies
 3. “Cleanup” revision to maintain tenant protections for projects involving demolition; SB 9 does not apply to housing occupied by tenants within past 3 years regardless of demolition extent



Basic SB 9/SB 450 Development Opportunity

Standard	Description	Notes
Number of units	2-4 units	• Without urban lot split, 2 primary units and up to 2 new ADUs/JADUs can be built • With urban lot split, up to 4 units—2 units maximum per newly created lot including any ADU/JADU—can be built on a lot area typically used for a single-family home
Minimum lot area	2,400 SF	Urban lot split created parcels must be no smaller than: • 1,200 SF • 40 percent of the original parcel lot area
Minimum floor area	800 SF	• Local standards cannot preclude 2 units of at least 800 SF
Minimum yards (setbacks)	Side: 4 ft. Rear: 4 ft.	• No setback shall be required for an existing structure or a structure constructed in the same location and to the same dimensions as an existing structure • Proposed housing may include connected structures if they comply with building code safety standards and are sufficient to allow separate conveyance of primary dwellings
Minimum parking	1 space per unit	No parking requirements if parcel is located within: • One-half mile walking distance of a high-quality transit corridor or major transit stop • One block of a car share vehicle



SB 9 Ordinance Update

Consistent Standards	Inconsistent Standards
Where existing SB 9 standards remain consistent with state law, they could be maintained More permissive (less restrictive) standards than State law can be explored and incorporated	Where existing SB 9 standards are no longer consistent with state law, they must be removed and are unenforceable Existing SB 9 standards inconsistent with state law: • Lot Dimensions • Minimum Yards – Second Floor Yards (Step Back) • Minimum Yards – Corner Lots • Minimum and Maximum Primary Dwelling Unit Floor Area • Maximum Building Coverage • Maximum Height of Structures • Daylight Plane • Front Yard Paving And Landscaping • Design And Materials



Potential development of objective residential design standards

- Consider development of objective residential design standards to address common concerns
 - Promoting privacy between neighboring structures
 - Reducing over-massing with limited articulation
 - Supporting high-quality design and neighborhood compatibility
- Consider “tiered standards” or “blanket standards” that apply uniformly to all single-family zones
- Consider more permissive standards than State law
- Separate process from SB 9 Ordinance Update, subject to City Council direction

Potential options to streamline housing development review process in single-family zones



- Option 1: Consider removing use permit requirement for development on substandard lots
 - Use permit process is a discretionary process that requires a public hearing for development projects
- Option 2: Consider removing use permit requirement for floor area limit (FAL) establishment for lots less than 5,000 SF
- Separate process from SB 9 Ordinance Update, subject to City Council direction

Option 1: Consider removing use permit requirement for development on substandard lots



- Zoning Ordinance: use permit required to construct two-story residence on a substandard lot
- Substandard lot: lot which does not meet minimum required lot width, depth, and/or area per zoning
- Planning Commission reviews use permit applications to construct two-story residences on substandard lots
 - 2024: 19 public hearings
 - 2025: 18 public hearings
- Consider removing use permit requirement to streamline development process for two-story residences
 - Potential cost and time savings for homeowners
 - Simplify the development process
 - Not expected to increase net housing unit production
- Building permit application process maintained, including staff-level zoning review

Option 2: Consider removing use permit requirement for FAL establishment for lots less than 5,000 SF



- Zoning Ordinance: FAL for lots with less than 5,000 SF of area shall be determined by use permit
- FAL: max. permitted floor area for a property
- Planning Commission reviews use permit applications to establish the FAL for development on single-family lots
 - 2024: 1 public hearing
 - 2025: 2 public hearings
- Historically, staff has recommended approval of projects with an FAL of 56% or less on lots less than 5,000 SF in area
- Consider removing use permit requirement to streamline development process; establish a defined FAL
 - Potential cost and time savings for homeowners
 - Provide more certainty in the development process



Conclusion | Planning Commission is requested to:



1. Provide feedback for the existing SB 9 development standards and desirable next steps
 - Are there basic SB 9 standards that should be explored with the intent of being more permissive (less restrictive) than state law?
2. Provide feedback regarding interest to modify/remove use permit requirements for 1) substandard lots, and 2) floor area limit (FAL) establishment for lots less than 5,000 square feet in area (separate process from the SB 9 Ordinance update)
3. Provide feedback regarding interest to explore development of objective residential design standards (separate process from the SB 9 Ordinance update)

Next Steps | Thank You

- Staff will review feedback and return to the Planning Commission for further review
- Staff will maintain the SB 9 Projects webpage and keep the community informed of SB 9 related activities and information
- Feedback for options to streamline the development review process and interest to develop residential design standards will be shared with the City Council for staff direction in the future

