Planning Commission 101
“The Nuts and Bolts of Planning”

League of Cities
Planning Commissioners Academy
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Orange County  Los Angeles  Sacramento  Bay Area
Scenario 1

3 years to get to Planning Commission...and continued.
A Planning Commissioner created a line of questioning that resulted in a continuance.

Considerations

• Could questions have been asked in advance?
• What could be done to move the project forward at that meeting?

Best Practices

• Understand the PC role and planning process.
• Read your staff report and ask questions prior to meeting.
• Be prepared and allow the applicant to also come prepared.
Scenario 2

May not be the most popular opinion, have good reasons.
A run-down gas station, opportunity to be bought, get a visual upgrade, and expand mini-mart into vacant service bays.

Considerations
• A liquor store in the same shopping center – “it will take away business.”
• Adjacent residents did not want it.

Best Practices
• Weigh pros and cons.
• Think long term and the benefit.
Scenario 3

Make recommendations that you can stand behind.
Large retailer proposing a store adjacent to homes. Loading bays were on residential side, could have been on freeway side.

Considerations
• Will it negatively impact existing residents and if so, how can we solve for that?

Best Practices
• Be solution oriented.
• Be respectful.
Take-Aways

• Understand PC Responsibilities.
• Be Prepared.
• Visit the Site.
• Follow the Brown Act Rules.
• If Chair, be Consistent.
• Weigh Options and be Logical.
• Be Solution Oriented.
THANK YOU

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