



Carson City Planning Division

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
Meeting of March 28, 2012 **ITEM H-4**

FROM: Lee Plemel, Planning Director

DATE: March 21, 2012

SUBJECT: Planning Commission Meeting Times

The Planning Commission meetings are scheduled for the last Wednesday of each month, excluding November and December when the date conflicts with holidays, per the Planning Commission bylaws. However, there is no specific meeting time required by the bylaws or other City requirements. The Planning Commission and City staff can set the meeting times to best accommodate the Commission, applicants, the public, City staff, and meeting-room availability. A member of the Planning Commission has asked that this item be placed on the agenda to discuss the possibility of changing the regular Planning Commission meeting time to earlier in the afternoon.

Planning Commission meetings have started at 5 PM for the last 2-3 years. The change was made from a 3:30 PM start time primarily to accommodate Commissioners' work schedules, but there was also discussion about the later time being more convenient for members of the public to attend after regular work hours. The previous 3:30 PM start time allowed the Planning Commission to conduct business without going too late into the evening. However, in the last three or so years, the number of Planning Commission applications have significantly dropped, so late meetings have not been an issue.

There are pros and cons for starting meetings in the afternoon and in the evenings. Some benefits of an evening start time (e.g. 5 PM) include:

- The public can attend after regular work hours.
- Planning Commissioners can schedule other business during regular work hours.

On the other hand, applicants often have paid consultants who have to attend the meetings after regular work hours when the meetings are in the evening. Most of the Planning Commission meeting participants over the last 2-3 years have been professionals working on the projects that are before the Planning Commission.

Regardless of the preferred meeting time of the Planning Commission, it should be noted that staff will continue to evaluate the agenda each month to ensure a proper meeting time to meet the public's and Planning Commissioner's needs. For example, if meetings were generally held in the afternoon but a potentially controversial item that results in a lot of public feedback were on the agenda, staff could schedule the meeting for a later time or schedule the specific item for a time-certain, e.g. 5 PM.

Staff will consider the discussion and any action by the Planning Commission and schedule future meetings accordingly.