

**City of Gilroy**  
**Downtown Committee Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, November 14, 2023 | 8:00 AM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marques at 8:00 AM.

**2. ROLL CALL**

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Attendee Name</b>
Present	Fran Beaudet, Committee Member Toni Bowles, Committee Member Matt Gallion, Committee Member Jane Howard, Committee Member Susan Jacobsen, Committee Member Dave Leal, Committee Member Savannah Logenbach, Committee Member Carol Marques (Council Member), Chair Emily McEwan-Upright, Committee Member Jeanie Rizzuto, Committee Member Fred M. Tovar (Council Member), Vice-Chair
Absent	Rebeca Armendariz (Council Member), Committee Member Marie Blankley (Mayor), Committee Member Dion Bracco (Mayor Pro Tempore), Committee Member (Excused) Frank Johnson, Committee Member (Excused)

**3. Public Comment**

Chair Marques opened Public Comment. There being no speakers, Chair Marques closed Public Comment.

**4. Approval of the Minutes:**

**Motion: Approve the October 10, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes**

**RESULT:** Pass

**MOVER:** Fred M. Tovar

**SECONDER:** Dave Leal

**AYES:** Fran Beaudet, Toni Bowles, Matt Gallion, Jane Howard, Susan Jacobsen, Dave Leal, Savannah Logenbach, Emily McEwan-Upright, Jeanie Rizzuto, Fred M. Tovar, Carol Marques

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Rebeca Armendariz, Marie Blankley, Dion Bracco, Frank Johnson

**5. Introduction of Two New Committee Members**

Chair Marques introduced Jane Howard and Susan Jacobsen to the rest of the committee.

## 6. Final Approval of the Following Sub-Committee Reports

### a) Plywood Removal

- Initial Discussion: The committee reviewed the plywood removal proposal, focusing on the report's specifics to the council and the handling of associated fees.
- Report to Council: Discussed presenting a red-lined version of the committee's edits in a council meeting, tentatively scheduled for January. The plan is for the committee to present the report, followed by a council discussion to direct staff on ordinance introduction.
- Citation Attachment: Proposed attaching non-paid plywood removal fees to property tax bills, similar to garbage liens, avoiding a ballot measure.
- Ordinance Changes: Addressed modifying the existing ordinance to include the new plywood fee provisions.
- Artwork Guidelines: Debated the phrasing of artwork guidelines for plywood coverings, particularly around the terms "tasteful" and "representative of Gilroy." Concerns were raised about the subjectivity of these terms and the need to represent the diversity of Gilroy.
- Community Standards: Discussed using 'community standards' as a basis for determining what is considered tasteful or appropriate.
- Approval Process: Considered the potential for a committee or subcommittee to review and approve artwork, with concerns about the time this process might take.
- Public Reaction and Enforcement: Acknowledged the likelihood of public feedback if inappropriate artwork is displayed and the city council's role in addressing any issues that arise.
- Final Adjustments: Decided to refine the wording regarding decorative artwork to ensure it is appropriate and respectful, possibly taking inspiration from other cities' mural guidelines. The committee agreed to revisit the final phrasing and present it in the second council meeting in January 2024.

### b) Vacant Buildings

- No report was given.

### c) Beautification of Downtown

- Lighting: Continued efforts to replace downtown lighting bulbs and maintain their quality, with potential collaboration with the GDBA.
- Arches and Sidewalks: The proposal of installing two welcome arches in downtown and setting up a fund for monthly power washing of sidewalks (currently only done once or twice a year).
- Landscaping Improvements: Replacing bushes, weeds, and dirt beside sidewalks with stones or other materials to enhance aesthetics and deter pests like rats and cockroaches.
- Pop-Up Park and Gourmet Alley: Enhancements to the pop-up park, including overhead lighting, interactive artwork, and a stage for community events. For Gourmet Alley, there's a call for publishing a project timeline and notifying affected businesses about construction.
- Facilitate Outdoor Dining and Business Engagement: Promoting and marketing the Facade Improvement and Permit Abatement programs to assist businesses in enhancing their outdoor dining spaces and storefronts.
- Advertisement and Promotion: A budget for promoting downtown Gilroy beyond its association with garlic and showcasing diverse business offerings.

- Partnerships: Exploring partnerships with local entities like the Sharks, Visit Gilroy, and local wineries for joint promotional efforts.
- Facade Improvement Program Expansion: Discussion about expanding this program to include patio improvements, not just the front of the buildings. Concerns were raised about stipulations and prevailing wage requirements possibly hindering participation.
- Challenges with Historic Buildings: Discussion about the challenges faced when making improvements to historic buildings, including compliance with specific materials and aesthetics.
- Potential Overlap with Other Initiatives: Consideration of how beautification efforts could align with other city projects and initiatives and the importance of coordinating these efforts.
- Funding and Resources: Discussion about the potential sources of funding for these initiatives, including the general fund and not relying solely on business and property owners.
- Addressing City Entrances: A suggestion to expand the focus to beautifying city entrances, particularly those areas that fall under county or state jurisdiction.
- Collaboration and Advocacy: Emphasis on the need for stronger collaboration and advocacy with county and state authorities, especially in areas outside the direct jurisdiction of the city, and addressing issues with entities like Valley Water.
- Future Planning and Reporting: Plans were made for the committee to reconvene, further discuss these initiatives, and prepare a detailed report for the council, including proposed funding sources.

#### **d) Noise**

- Staff is currently reviewing the noise ordinance as part of the zoning code update.
- Subcommittee Feedback: The subcommittee provided feedback, suggesting not changing the general ordinance but making specific alterations. These include keeping the current language for most items and changing the word "music" to "noise" in one item. No consensus was reached on raising the decibel level or extending the noise curfew from 10:30 p.m. to midnight.
- Decibel Level Discussion: A detailed discussion on decibel levels ensued, with 85 dB compared to the sound of a food blender or a room of applauding people. Concerns were raised about potential hearing damage at higher levels. The committee debated whether to adjust the decibel level or the time frame of the ordinance.
- Compromise and Enforcement: A compromise was suggested to adjust the noise level time frame rather than the decibel level, with a proposal for 85 dB until midnight, then reducing to 75 dB until 2 a.m. The enforcement of this ordinance would be complaint-based.
- Concerns Over Impact on Businesses: Some members expressed concerns about the potential negative impact of the ordinance on local businesses, especially those that rely on late-night activities.
- Final Decisions: The committee leaned towards allowing 85 dB until midnight, followed by a reduction to 75 dB until 2 a.m., aligning with practices in other cities. This approach was seen as a balance between the interests of residents and businesses.
- Next Steps: These recommendations would be brought to the Council for consideration in the citywide noise ordinance, specifically focusing on the downtown area.

Committee Member Bowles raised concerns about big rig trucks using Monterey Street as a throughway. The key issues identified included noise disruption, safety hazards, and the negative impact on the downtown area's aesthetic and pedestrian-friendly environment. The committee discussed various options to address the problem, which included:

- **Rerouting Trucks:** Exploring alternative routes for big rig trucks to reduce their presence on Monterey Street.
- **Implementing Traffic Regulations:** Considering new traffic rules or signage to guide truck traffic away from the downtown area.

The committee aimed to find a balance between the needs of transportation and local business and residential interests, ensuring a safer and more pleasant downtown environment. Plans were made to investigate further feasible solutions, including engaging with transportation authorities if necessary and to bring forward specific proposals or recommendations for addressing the issue.

## 7. Code Enforcement Sub-Committee Report

Chair Marques assigned Committee Members Jacobsen, Logenbach, Howard, and Johnson to the sub-committee.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Marques adjourned the meeting at 9:01 AM.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Gilroy Downtown Committee of the City of Gilroy.**

/s/Thai Nam Pham, MMC, CPMC  
City Clerk

DRAFT