
**PLUMAS COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**
Minutes of the Meeting of October 1, 2009

The Plumas County Planning Commission convenes in their regular meeting on October 1, 2009, at 10:05 a.m. in the Permit Center Conference Room, Quincy; Chairman, Mark Dotta, presiding. Members appointed are as follows:

1. Mark Dotta, Chairman (District 1);
2. Elizabeth "Betsy" Schramel, Vice Chairwoman (District 2);
3. Richard Rydell, Commissioner (District 3);
4. Larry Williams, Commissioner (District 4); and
5. John Olofson, Commissioner (District 5).

Staff in Attendance: Randy Wilson, Planning Director; Dennis Miller, GIS Coordinator; and Becky Osborn, Recording Secretary (*pro tem*).

Supervisors in Attendance: Terry Swofford, District 1

I. CALL TO ORDER AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chairman Dotta calls the meeting to order followed by the salute to the flag.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mark Dotta, Elizabeth Schramel, Larry Williams, and John Olofson
Absent: Richard Rydell

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Dotta calls for a motion. Motion is made by Commissioner Williams to approve the agenda as submitted. Vice Chairwoman Schramel seconds the motion with a unanimous affirmative voice vote recorded.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were not available for approval at this time.

V. COMMISSIONER REPORTS / COMMENTS

No Commissioner reports or comments presented.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Mark Dotta, Chairman, opens the Public Comment period.

Public member, Jamie Williams, area resident from Quincy, requests the Commission consider a community-based agriculture and food system (or a civic agriculture component)

be integrated into the General Plan which would allow food production and distribution, such as allowing residents to raise chickens for their eggs, within Quincy. This would allow local residents the opportunity to consume fresh, locally produced food.

Public member, Julie Newman, representing the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), introduces herself to the Commission. Newman states her position with CDFG entails reviewing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents for Plumas County and advises that CDFG is interested in participating in the General Plan update process and requests to intersect with the Commission in order to provide CDFG input on specific issues.

Public member, Gerd Eberling, area resident from Quincy, states municipal governments around the country, including Southern California, are beginning to include the growing energy crisis in their planning decisions and questions if the Commission is aware of this trend.

Chairman Dotta responds that the Commission is aware that energy has become an important issue throughout the country. Vice Chairwoman Schramel interjects that she was intending to explore this specific issue more comprehensively with Design Workshop consultants. Active discussion ensues between the Commission and the public regarding the global energy crisis, energy constraints, and incorporating energy and its components into the General Plan.

Public member, John Shower, Executive Director of Moonlight Valley Alliance and area resident from Taylorsville, is concerned about the proposed copper mineralization located in the Moonlight Valley area of Indian Valley. Nevoro, a Canadian exploration company (who recently acquired Sheffield Resources, Ltd. – but now said that Starfield Resources, another Canadian exploration company, will be acquiring Nevoro but not their Moonlight project), is currently conducting exploratory drilling to determine if there are mineable reserves. Shower states that the majority of the bulleted points included in the '*Planning Commission's Draft Goals*' (dated September 3, 2009) do run counter to developing a global scale acid heap leach style copper mine within Plumas County. Shower suggests that the revised General Plan needs to contain language that encourages the stated goals, broadens the definition of agricultural use, and discourages large-scale mining. Continuing, Shower expounds that the General Plan needs to promote the development of sustainable energy sources and efficiency of use stating that "...we want to promote a sustainable economy..." and will need to use language in the General Plan "...that will be lasting and be helpful on a long-term basis."

With no further public comments, Chairman Dotta closes the public comment period.

VII. GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

Consultant Team's Report: Plumas County's consultant for the General Plan update, Colleen Shade, of Design Workshop, begins by stating she would like to review and refine the goals included in the handout '*Planning Commission's Draft Goals for the General Plan Update*' dated September 3, 2009, discuss General Plan Working Group process, and discuss the first product draft of the '*Briefing Document*' due at the end of October 2009.

- ***Goals:*** Referring to the handout '*Planning Commission's Draft Goals for the General Plan Update*', Consultant Shade states that these were the suggestions collected during the work session that were collapsed into goals and categorized

when it was needed to stand on its own. Shade requests Commissioner feedback. (*Commissioners and public are provided a copy of the 'Planning Commission's Draft Goals for the General Plan Update'*.)

Commissioner Olofson comments that he is concerned about the lack of means of measuring progress with all of the goals. Olofson questions that he may be missing the definition of the term "goals" and how they may be each interpreted, explaining he doesn't see how each of the goals listed can measure progress.

Commissioner Williams interjects that he understands that the listed goals are for a guideline only and a measurable outcome will be assessed by the Commissioners at the end of the process.

Consultant Shade extrapolates that the goals are intentionally the starting point for planning and statements of the desired results. Shade gives an example: One of the goals states, "*The General Plan Update is easily read and interpreted by the public.*" Shade explains that there are many different ways to make a document easily read and interpreted and the Commission has an opportunity to identify those different ways (such as maps for those people that are more visual). The Commission will need to ask what are those pieces to be measured. The goals (or objectives) are the Commission's umbrella from which everything will fit underneath. Objectives are measurable.

Commissioner Olofson states that during the process of selecting a consultant for the General Plan, he heard repeatedly that a vision statement is desirable and specifically one should be produced and adopted by the Board of Supervisors prior to entering into the General Plan update process and that the goals would follow the vision statement. Olofson questions what about the vision statement?

In response to Commissioner Olofson's query, Consultant Shade advises that she does not recall placing one before the other – they go hand in hand. These draft goals are guiding the process – the direction the General Plan is evolving.

Commissioner Williams interjects that the vision statement will be hard to develop without knowing what the people of Plumas County are looking for and the lay of the land. Consultant Shade concurs and states a couple of meetings ago a comment was made that environment, economy, communities, lay of the land and the needs of community are important to the people of Plumas County.

Randy Wilson, Planning Director, comments that there are more specific goals with each element. These stated draft goals are "over-all goals". Wilson notes that per the contract with Design Workshop, part of the deliverables under the established working group section is the Visioning Survey Fact Sheet that lends into the refining of the visioning statement and that process pulls together all the other past visioning.

Vice Chairwoman Schramel questions where energy fits into these draft goals. The universal goals are clean air, clean water, heat or warmth, shelter, followed by the energy to push our economy. Energy obviously fits into the group of elements; however, doesn't energy need to be somewhere in these group of goals? Continuing, Schramel surmises that maybe energy should fit along the lines of warmth and shelter. Here in Plumas County, many of us depend on wood for heat.

Possibly in the future, and perhaps in the near future, we will not be able to find wood to heat our homes. Active discussion follows between the Commissioner and the Consultant regarding energy, sustainability, economy, and including energy as an integral part of the goals.

Continuing on the topic of energy, Randy Wilson comments that our economy is primarily agricultural. We live off the excess of agriculture and one component we have (in the culture and the economy of today's industrial world) is the ability to harness and concentrate energy. This bleeds over to everything. For example, this stems out to wise use of energy, sustainability, production of energy, creating a land use pattern that is energy efficient, and greenhouse gas issues. This is ingrained into our culture and our economy. We need energy to produce agriculture, we need energy to turn on the lights, to heat and cool your rooms, to transport goods in and out of the county, etc. In terms of planning, you are looking to promoting energy development or maybe promoting sustainability, promoting compactness of communities, or different types of project development where there is a central energy source, such as an apartment complex, etc. When you think of energy, it is a part of who we are. Energy is intertwined in everything.

Public member, Gerd Eberling, expounds on Wilson's comment suggesting that the Commission add a whole new subsection to the goals called Energy and denote which other factors intersect with it. Eberling asserts that energy can be talked about at the local level; however, his major concern is what is being missed in the public discourse right now. There is a massive energy crisis. The International Energy Agency (IEA) in Paris last year changed their accounting methods and since last November they have been saying that in order to sustain global energy consumption they need to find the equivalent of four Saudi Arabia's by the year 2020. Essentially, what IEA is saying is that energy constraints could derail the recovery by year 2011. Eberling states that it is his perception that any planning at the local level is a subset of the state economy, national economy, global economy, and any planning the County engages in needs to, at some level, take energy into consideration and where the global economy is headed. Eberling would like to see energy as a major subject in this lineup. Discussion follows as to what should be addressed in the General Plan in regard to energy.

Consultant Shade explains to the public and the Commission that a lot of these ideas will be outlined in the *'Briefing Document'*. The *'Briefing Document'* is basically the state of the County. The document illustrates where the County is in all of the listed areas right now, and what the current trends are at the State of California level. Even though Plumas County is not part of a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), the County will still need to address items such as greenhouse gasses, climate changes, etc.

Randy Wilson suggests, under the category *Economy* in the draft goals, language that should read as follows: "The General Plan Update considers energy production and utilization in its policies." Active discussion follows between the Commission, the Consultant, and the public regarding what should be included within the goals and what should be submitted to the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Olofson comments he would like to amend the wording under the category of *Economy* (bulleted item three) to read, "The General Plan Update

promotes the economics of pure water resources development (quantity and quality).” Consultant Shade concurs.

Discussion then veers to the *Parking Lot* category listed on the goals. Parking lots are temporary holding areas for ideas or suggestions brought up during the meetings that merit additional discussion. The Commission would like to continue to keep the *Parking Lot* items as part of the meeting record and as visible reminders. However, the Commission requests that the *Parking Lot* be kept on a separate document that is not attached to the *‘Planning Commission’s Draft Goals for the General Plan Update’* and given to the Board of Supervisors for informational purposes only.

After much discussion, it is decided that language should be added under the category *The Document* to read as follows: “The General Plan Update considers energy production and utilization in its policies.” It is also decided that under the category *Economy*, the third bulleted item will be amended to read as follows: “The General Plan Update promotes the economics of pure water resources development (quantity and quality).”

Commissioner Williams makes a motion to present to the Board of Supervisors the *‘Planning Commission’s Draft Goals for the General Plan Update’* as amended. The Commission will also present to the Board of Supervisors a separate document of *Parking Lot* ideas or suggestions to keep the Board apprised. Vice Chairwoman Schramel seconds the motion.

Chairman Dotta calls for a voice vote on the motion to present to the Board of Supervisors the *‘Planning Commission’s Draft Goals for the General Plan Update’* as amended.

The motion passes (4-0) on the following vote of the Planning Commission:

AYES: Dotta, Schramel, Williams, and Olofson

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Rydell

- **Working Groups (“Stakeholders”):** Randy Wilson, Planning Director, advises that he has placed on the Board of Supervisor’s agenda for October 6, 2009, the request to begin the application process to establish General Plan Working Groups. (*Commissioners and public are provided a copy of the ‘Plumas County General Plan Update – General Plan Working Groups’.*)

Consultant Shade begins by explaining the Working Groups are comprised of five groups of 8-10 people representing each of the five supervisorial districts within the County. The purpose of the groups is to inform, assist, and guide the update of the General Plan and public engagement process. These selected groups of individuals represent interests important to and that contribute toward the General Plan update process. All Working Group meetings will be open to the public. Shade continues by explaining the selection process and how each Supervisor will appoint up to 10 people in their district based on the skills and characteristics of the individual. Shade hopes the Working Groups will be designated prior to the November 10, 2009, General Plan Workshop.

Randy Wilson interjects that the Commission and the Board of Supervisors has settled on November 10, 2009, for a joint meeting (open to the public) wherein Design Workshop's Consultant Team will be giving a workshop on the General Plan Update. The purpose of this workshop will be a forum for discussion and feedback on the General Plan Update process. Detailed discussion follows.

Status on Consultant Products: Consultant Shade begins by explaining the handout she supplied (*'Table of Contents'* for the *'Briefing Document'*) lists the key issues that will be included in the *'Briefing Document'*. The *'Briefing Document'* will provide background information on existing conditions in Plumas County and will be used as a reference guide during the General Plan update. The *'Briefing Document'* will be used by the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Working Groups, and the public to identify key issues to be addressed throughout the General Plan Update process. Shade requests Commission comments or suggestions. (*Commissioners and public are provided a draft copy of the 'Table of Contents' for the 'Briefing Document', color handouts of 'General Plan Update Process', and 'Roles and Responsibilities' that will be presented to the Board of Supervisors.*)

The Commission discusses amongst themselves what should be included within the *'Briefing Document'* and pertinent points the document should address. Public member, George Terhune, states that under the category *Economy* and sub-category *"Forest Products,"* he advises there are other economic issues involved besides forest products and suggests that the category be called *'Ecosystem Services'*. The Forest Service, in particular, has started to use that term to represent services. Terhune basically explains that ecosystem services are the beneficial outcomes for the natural environment or people. Consultant Shade concurs.

Vice Chairwoman Schramel suggests including the category *'Health and Safety'*. Consultant Shade concurs and advises Health and Safety will be captured under the category *'Community'* and quite possibly under *'Public Services and Utilities'* and *'Environmental Hazards'*.

Referring to the color handouts titled *'General Plan Update Process'*, and *'Roles and Responsibilities'*, Consultant Shade advises these are works in progress which can be made into posters as a general overview of where we are in the General Plan update process. Commissioner Williams suggests that the arrows be reversed on the handouts.

Active discussion follows between the Commission, the Consultant, and the public regarding the contents of the *'Table of Contents'* and the *'Briefing Document'*. It is decided that the documents discussed will be included on the website but notably labeled as a "Draft" working document.

VIII. AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION – PowerPoint Presentation

Chairman Dotta introduces George Terhune, Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) Vice Chairman. Terhune begins by explaining ALUC was established by the Board of Supervisors and is comprised of seven commissioners, two appointed by the Board of Supervisors, two by incorporated cities (City of Portola), two by airport managers, and one public member appointed by the Commissioners to represent the general public. ALUC is

governed by the Public Utilities Code Section 21670 and has a basic responsibility to assist local agencies in ensuring compatible land uses in the vicinity of all airports in the County. Terhune explains that ALUC deals primarily with *new* or *changed* land uses near airports including zone changes, lot line adjustments, new subdivisions, use permits, and building permits. (*Terhune presents a PowerPoint slideshow of the ALUC along with maps of the Airport Influence Areas designated for each airport within the County.*)

Continuing, Terhune advises that ALUC's basic responsibilities include protecting the public from adverse effects of aircraft noise, even though noise is not expected to be a problem at our airports, and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards within the Airport Influence Area for each airport within the County. Over the next forty-five minutes, Terhune's PowerPoint presentation expounds on what ALUC can or cannot do and how ALUC intertwines with the General Plan update process. Terhune states that the Government Code states that the General Plan shall be consistent with Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs).

Planning Director, Randy Wilson, interjects that ALUC has worked very hard in developing the ALUCPs and understands that the General Plan update process will take into account the ALUCPs and part of the update process will be these considerations and how they could impact land uses and future land uses around the airports in this County.

General discussion follows between the Commission and the public about planning direction, airport land use, public participation, and implementing ALUC into the General Plan update.

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- **Planning Director's Report:** Randy Wilson briefly reports on the following:
 - At the last Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) meeting, John Benoit was appointed as the new Executive Officer for LAFCo.
 - A General Plan update workshop with the Board of Supervisors is planned for November 10, 2009.
 - The Board of Supervisor meeting last week discussed that the County budget continues to be very tight and the County did initiate a layoff procedure eliminating four full-time positions, one of which was vacant. At the meeting, the General Plan workshop was mentioned along with requesting applications to be opened for the Working Groups.
 - The Planning Commission is now receiving Zoning Administrator Staff Reports. Wilson advises that on the October 21, 2009, in Chester, the Zoning Administrator will announce its decision on the certification of the Lake Front Environmental Impact Report.
 - Wilson will be giving a presentation to the County's Department Heads at the monthly meeting on the status of the update of the General Plan on October 2, 2009. Wilson will also be giving a brief presentation regarding the status of the General Plan update to Plumas Corporation that evening.
- **Planning Department Website Update:** Dennis Miller, GIS Coordinator, announces that the Planning Department's website is up and running. Discussion ensued about what information is included on the site and suggestions for future content.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Dotta reports he received information about the annual California County Planning Commissioners Association Conference to be held on November 9, 2009, in Sacramento. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, the County cannot fund the Commissioners to attend the Conference; however, if any of the Commissioners wish to attend on their own expense, please contact Dotta for more information.

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Several items were noted as future agenda items as follows:

- Discussion of length of future Planning Commission meetings and starting times.
- Presentation of the Almanor Basin Watershed Advisory Committee (ABWAC), an organization created by the Plumas County Board of Supervisors to address water quality, land use, and critical habitat issues in the Lake Almanor Basin, at the October 15, 2009, Planning Commission meeting given by Carl Felts, Chairman of ABWAC.
- Presentation of the Stewardship Council, a private, nonprofit organization that was established in 2004 as part of the settlement of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) bankruptcy, by Brian Morris, Plumas County's Flood Control District Manager, at the November 5, 2009, Planning Commission meeting.
- Any additional items presented by the County's consultant, Design Workshop's Colleen Shade, that is relevant to the General Plan update.

IX. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Dotta calls for a motion to adjourn. Motion is made by Commissioner Olofson to adjourn. Commissioner Williams seconds the motion with a unanimous affirmative vote recorded. The meeting adjourns at 1:20 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is set for October 15, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. at the Permit Center Conference Room located at 555 Main Street in Quincy.



Mark Dotta, Chairman
Plumas County Planning Commission



Becky Osborn, Recording Secretary (*pro tem*)