
**PLUMAS COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**
Minutes of the Meeting of July 7, 2016

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Dr. Robert Abbott, *Commissioner* (District 1)
Dr. Shauna Rossington, *Vice Chair* (District 2)
Richard Rydell, *Commissioner* (District 3)
Larry Williams, *Chair* (District 4)
John Olofson, *Commissioner* (District 5)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Plumas County Planning Commission (the *Commission*) convenes in a meeting on July 7, 2016, at 10:04 a.m. in the Planning and Building Services Conference Room, Quincy, CA;

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: John Olofson, Larry Williams, Dr. Shauna Rossington (Dr. Robert Abbott joins the meeting at 10:10 am)

Commissioners Absent: Rich Rydell

Also in attendance (*Supervisors and staff*)

Randy Wilson, Planning Director

Rebecca Herrin, Senior Planner

Supervisor Jeff Engel, District 5

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Supervisor Engel questions why the Planning Commissioners' Reports are not on this agenda as was discussed at the last meeting.

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rebecca Herrin apologizes; it was an oversight. Randy Wilson responds that the item will be added to the next agenda.

Wilson distributes the brochure titled: "California and Our Nation's Military". Plumas County's General Plan policies regarding military compatibility are featured in the brochure. The County continues to have an excellent relationship with the Department of Defense. Steve Chung is a civilian that works with the Department of the Navy who has offered to come to Plumas County with his assistant to give a presentation to the Commission this fall.

The County was the first jurisdiction in the State without a military base to adopt these policies. The Department of Defense and Wilson gave presentations in Sacramento and with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research in Los Angeles County at the California APA

conference. There has been a DVD made of the presentation that is available on the Web. Wilson distributes copies of the DVD to Commissioners Abbott and Rossington.

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research has also released a draft document on military compatibility in General Plans and Wilson will try to distribute copies at the next meeting.

Wilson continues to formulate strategies regarding the cannabis ordinance. Workshops will likely be held at areas around the County and scheduled so that the Commissioners can attend. The first meetings will be informational in nature. The Commission and the public will need to be educated on current state laws plus the initiative on the ballot in November so that the interaction between the County ordinance and the state legal framework can be understood.

Wilson goes on the state that while some members of the Commission may not support cannabis personally, the recommendations of the majority will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. Chair Williams adds that it does not matter if you are anti-cannabis or pro-cannabis, your duty as Commissioner is to represent the people within your district and their interests.

Commissioner Olofson questions Wilson's statement that the Planning Department will hold the workshops. Wilson responds that the Planning Commission will hold the workshops. Commissioner Olofson states that County Counsel reported that the zoning code needed to be updated. He questions if that has changed since the appeal. Commissioner Olofson expresses concern that the Commission is not addressing the zoning code update.

Wilson responds that Olofson is correct and that we are compelled legally to update the zoning code but there are remaining issues that need to be resolved such as the completion of the SRA Fire Safe regulation update. Also, there are only two staff members in the Planning Department. The strategy is not formulated yet and will certainly be discussed at future meetings.

VI. PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW OF PLUMAS COUNTY ORDINANCES IMPLEMENTING THE CA FIRE SAFE REGULATIONS (TITLE 14, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS BEGINNING WITH SECTION 1270)

Wilson and Herrin met with representative of the fire chiefs Joe Waterman of the Chester Public Utility District, Shane Vargas from CALFIRE and Sue McCourt from the County on June 1st to discuss the SRA Fire Safe Regulations.

Herrin has provided the Commissioners a copy of a letter from Don Gordon, CALFIRE Chief, indicating that notice of building permits in State Responsibility Areas be sent to his designated representative Shane Vargas.

There have been about 400 building permits thus far this year. Herrin explains that she is copying the front page of the application and the back page with Planning approval and sending these copies to Shane Vargas every two weeks or so. Chair Williams inquires if CALFIRE has to sign off on building permits and if this has resulted in a delay in processing the permits. Herrin responds that the Building Official, Jim Green, maintains that there is nothing in the building code that allows CALFIRE to approve building permits. Herrin opines that the State wants to check and make sure that Planning issues (setbacks, driveways) are being approved according the SRA Fire Safe regulations.

Herrin explains that she had a meeting with Vargas and Wilson to discuss the exception process. Vargas has prepared a draft form that applicants for building permits can fill out to request an exception from CALFIRE. Herrin reviews building permits for compliance, and sends a letter to the applicant explaining that, if they want an exception, they need to apply to CALFIRE. Vargas gets a copy of this letter.

Herrin reviews changes that have been incorporated into the draft ordinance since the May 19, 2016 Planning Commission as a result of the June 1st meeting. Only those codes with changes have been provided to the Commission for today's discussion.

In addition, the draft ordinance was sent to County departments for review; Building, Engineering and Department of Public Works. Rob Thorman of the Engineering Department provided comments on the Vehicle Code sections cited in the ordinance. The load and weight requirements from CALFIRE only cited certain Vehicle Code sections and Rob has provided citations that are more broad than those from CALFIRE. These changes will be incorporated into the ordinance.

Wilson explains that staff is recommending that the Planning Commission retain certain exceptions for setbacks to be enforced locally, rather than referring all exceptions to CALFIRE. The Board of Supervisors adopts the ordinance and then the County can apply for Board of Forestry certification. Staff's opinion is that the County should retain the built-in exception process that was in the previous ordinance, with modifications to bring the process to current standards. Herrin adds that she views this as a political issue, best left to the Board of Supervisors' decision. If the Board decides that CALFIRE needs to be the decision-making body, rather than the County, the Board can give direction to staff.

Herrin reviews the exceptions to the yard requirements on page 47 of General Requirements. Section 9-2.419. There was a clarification in the language that if any of the exceptions can be met, the setback reverts to the zoning setback. Also, there was an exception added to retain the exception process as approved by CALFIRE as one option.

There has been an expansion clause added, similar to that in Nevada County's code, to allow construction within the thirty foot setback.

Commissioner Olofson asks if it is the intent that the Commission accept and recommend this ordinance to the Board of Supervisors or discuss. Herrin responds that the Commission should review the changes to the ordinance, and set a public hearing date for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. In the meantime, she will submit the proposed ordinance to County Counsel for review.

Commissioner Olofson questions the references to the California Code of Regulations (1270) and how familiar the Commissioners should be with the regulations. Wilson responds that the Commission received that information and discussed the State regulations at the first meeting this was brought forward.

Herrin explains that, on page 148, "Graeagle" was added as an example of a town. Discussion ensues on "towns" as defined in the General Plan. Commissioner Abbott questions why "towns" if they are not incorporated cities, such as Portola. Wilson explains that, although they are not cities, the plan recognizes the uniqueness of the "town" areas. The General Plan identifies towns

and communities and provides drivers for unique community plans for these areas and perhaps rezoning within those communities to update to current times. This process would involve a very comprehensive review. It is possible that in the cannabis ordinance, certain towns or communities may decide to not be involved and will be precluded from allowing cannabis growing or processing.

The requirement for emergency water for fire protection (2500 gallons per dwelling unit) is no longer included in the SRA Fire Safe Regulations. Discussion ensues on whether or not to keep this provision in the County code that implements the SRA Fire Safe Regulations. Chair Williams asks the "fire people" in attendance for their input.

Chief Cassou responds that he likes tanks but would rather have centralized water systems with strategic placement around his district. Some areas collect water tender funds to pay for these systems. The small 2500 gallon tanks are not adequate for structural fire protection. Larger tanks would be available for structure protection as well as for wildfire protection.

Wilson adds that requirements/procedures for centralized tanks have not been prepared as part of this ordinance update. Staff is aware that 2500 gallons is not adequate for structural fire protection.

Chief Cassou explains that the 2500 gallon requirement was adopted based on an average as per federal regulations but only provides about 125 gallons per minute. A structure of about 1500 square feet with a fully involved fire requires about 1000 gallons per minute. The Pizza Factory fire used about 1.7 million gallons of water.

Commissioner Olofson suggests a place holder for emergency water until such time is available to develop joint water systems. Staff needs enough time to shape up the ordinance.

M/S/C to leave the requirement for 2500 gallons per dwelling emergency water in the ordinance: Olofson/Abbott/4-0.

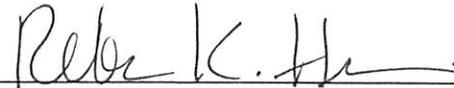
M/S/C for the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing on the proposed ordinance on September 1, 2016: Olofson/Abbott/4-0.

Commissioner Olofson requests that, during the Planning Commissioners' reports at the July 21, 2016 meeting, he would like to discuss two topics; one, a possible General Plan Update involving modification and review of the General Plan and report to the Board of Supervisors. Olofson adds that this might be an action item. Two, a report on the Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) state commission meeting. Wilson adds that there is ongoing discussion at the Plumas County Coordinating Council on the OHV projects and issues.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion is made by Dr. Abbott, seconded by Dr. Rossington, with a unanimous affirmative vote recorded, to adjourn the meeting of July 7, 2016, at 11:03 a.m. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting is set for July 21, 2016, at 10:00 a.m., in the Permit Center conference room.


Larry Williams, Chair
Plumas County Planning Commission


Rebecca Herrin, Senior Planner