
PLUMAS COUNTY
PLANNING DIRECTOR MEETING
Minutes of the Special Hearing of November 4, 2024

The Planning Director convenes a special hearing on Monday, November 4, at 3:03 p.m. in the Permit Center Conference Room, Quincy. Planning Director, Tracey Ferguson, presiding. Senior Planner-Extra Help, Tim Evans, is in attendance.

I. AGENDA

The agenda is approved as submitted.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

No public comment presented.

III. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING - CONSIDERATION OF BUILDING PERMIT 23-812 FOR THE DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS AT "WALKER MINE"; ATLANTIC RICHFIELD COMPANY (applicant) / JONATHAN LEE (owner); APN 009-100-009; T.24N/R.12E/S.5,6,7,8 MDM

As continued from September 16, 2024, the consideration of building permit #23-812 for the demolition of mill site buildings and building remains on property zoned Rural (R-10) and Special Plan Historic Building (SP-HB), located at 12000 Walker Mine Road, Genesee, is presented. Pursuant to Plumas County Code Sec. 9-2.3703(b)(3), "Special Plan reviews for historical buildings shall be the consideration of the value of public interest prior to the approval of a building permit to demolish a historical building."

Tim Evans, Senior Planner-Extra Help, gives a presentation as reflected in the staff report. Regarding Tribal consultation, Evans points out that consultation was proactive as opposed to a requirement of CEQA. Additionally, Evans states the Class III Inventory/Phase I Survey and NRHP/CRHR Eligibility Site Evaluation for the Walker Mine project specifically states, "No Native American archaeological resources were identified during the Class III inventory/Phase I survey." Based on the evaluation's review, Planning staff is recommending two conditions of approval that require the applicant to submit a site plan that includes a note addressing the inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources. Tracey Ferguson, Planning Director, requests clarification of the two proposed conditions of approval. Planner Evans responds that one of the conditions addresses human remains, while the other is in relation to cultural resources, for example burnt animal bone, midden soils, projectile points, or historic artifacts.

A member of the public, Gordon Keller, questions the historic significance of the structures bordering on 100 years old and finding the project categorically exempt under CEQA. Ferguson states the exemption is for the demolition of the mill site buildings and building remains. Evans explains that when Planning received the demolition permit, staff reviewed to see if the mill site buildings and building remains proposed for demolition were designated historic under the County's General Plan. Planning staff determined the Walker Mine parcel as a whole is designated historic, which then required the project to go through the public hearing process for the consideration of the value of the public interest. Part of that process is requesting an evaluation from the applicant and having a third party look at the historical significance of what is proposed for demolition. Planner Evans explains the evaluation sets forth the mill site buildings and building remains were in such a dilapidated state because of fires and everything else that has happened over the last one hundred years that there is nothing historically significant remaining.

Ferguson adds that this public hearing process is focused on the thirteen concrete structural remains proposed to be demolished and within previous staff reports for the hearing process, and included in the evaluation are photographs and other documentation that illustrate and describe the thirteen concrete structural remains not having state or national historical significance.

Keller states his only interest is that the information is recorded for posterity and beyond that the County can move on and do what needs to be done.

Ron Halsey, Vice President for Atlantic Richfield, thanks County staff for processing the review and they look forward to moving forward.

There being no further comments, the public hearing is closed at 3:13 p.m.

Ferguson notes that Mooretown Rancheria was sent notice of the November 4, 2024, public hearing. Planner Evans states that the County exhausted remedies to contact Mooretown Rancheria for Tribal consultation noting again that it was a proactive consultation based on the comment from a member of the public at the June 20, 2024, public hearing to reach out to Tribes that may be culturally affiliated with the area. Continuing, Planner Evans reiterates the County has recommended two conditions of approval under the demolition permit to address the discovery of human remains, including Native American remains, and cultural resources or artifacts due to the earth disturbing activities. Keller questions Mooretown Rancheria's interest as compared to the local Plumas County Mountain Maidu. Ferguson responds that it is her understanding that Mooretown Rancheria is in Butte County in the vicinity of Oroville, although there are tribal members of Mooretown Rancheria living in Plumas County.

Ferguson states she will be delaying her decision because she needs time to prepare the findings. The decision will be made by Thursday, November 7, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at which time it will be emailed to the applicant and owner and be posted on the Planning Department website at <https://www.plumascounty.us/89/Planning-Department>.

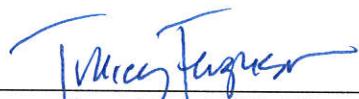
Once the applicant has received the decision with the findings and conditions, any comments or questions can be addressed by staff.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourns at 3:16 p.m.



Heidi Wightman, Department Fiscal Officer II



Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director