


COUNTY OF PLUMAS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

DATE: April 17, 2025
TIME: 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Plumas County Courthouse Building
Board of Supervisors Chambers
Room 308
520 Main Street
Quincy, CA 95971

THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE VIRTUALLY AS FOLLOWS

Zoom Meeting / View and Verbal Public Comment Opportunity:

Members of the public who wish to watch live and provide public comment on any item on the agenda can join via the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/92668567598?pwd=T21qNFFGem1PWXBIUFFZSnJwZEIKdz09>

Call: 1-669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 926 6856 7598

Passcode: 461910

Written Public Comment Opportunity:

Members of the public may submit written comments on any matter within the Commission's subject matter jurisdiction (Plumas County Code Title 2, Chapter 2, Article 1, Sec. 2-2.107 – Duties), regardless of whether the matter is on the agenda for Commission consideration or action. Comments will be entered into the administrative record of the meeting. Members of the public are strongly encouraged to submit their comments on agenda and non-agenda items before and/or during the Planning Commission meeting, using e-mail address publicplanningcommission@countyofplumas.com

www.countyofplumas.com

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS



In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Planning Commission Clerk at 530-283-6207. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the County to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility. Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities.

Note: A majority of the Board of Supervisors may be present and may participate in discussion.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Jack Montgomery, Chris Spencer, Dayne Lewis

Absent: Harvey West

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Interim County Counsel Brechtel stated Plumas County has sent out a request for qualifications and proposals for appraisal services. He stated the County is looking for a company to appraise excess properties and assist in their auction, sale, or disposal. He stated the County is looking for a team to work with on future real estate matters. Brechtel stated additional information is available on the Plumas County website. Commissioner Montgomery asked if this team would be working with the Assessor's office. Brechtel stated they would not, the team would be an outside entity to appraise property. Commissioner Lewis asked if the properties being sold were County owned. Brechtel responded, "yes."

V. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Items to be continued or withdrawn from the agenda

Add Item VII – Planning Commissioners’ Reports/Comments

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2025.

Motion: Approval of the Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2025, as amended.

Moved by Jack Montgomery, ***Seconded by*** Dayne Lewis

Vote: Motion carried.

Yes: Lewis, Montgomery, Spencer

Absent: Harvey West

VI. 2021 WILDFIRES LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLAN STANDING UPDATE

Planning Director Tracey Ferguson stated that the Greenville Saturday Community Meeting was held on April 12, 2025 at the Greenville Elementary School Library at 11:00 am. She stated that the American Planning Association, California Chapter, Community Planning Assistance Team (CPAT) attended and presented the report they prepared entitled 2021 Dixie Fire Implementation Strategy for the Recovery & Rebuilding of the Town of Greenville and Canyon Dam.

Ferguson stated the California Planning Roundtable is hosting a webinar on April 18, 2025 at 1:00 pm. She informed the Commissioners she is one of the panel members, along with the CPAT, presenting the 2021 Dixie Fire Implementation Strategy lessons learned in relation to Los Angeles Wildfire recovery efforts. Continuing, Ferguson reflected on the aid Plumas County received from Butte County and the Town of Paradise during the 2021 Dixie Fire and stated this webinar is an opportunity to give back.

Ferguson presented the Commissioners a handout with the twenty projects under the Plumas County 2021 Wildfires Long-Term Recovery Plan. She stated staff would continue meeting and working with the Dixie Fire Collaborative to prepare the public review draft of the Long-Term Recovery Plan by Summer 2025. Ferguson stated each project was assigned a Project Champion. She noted Plumas County was the assigned champion for several projects. Josh Brechtel inquired whether the incoming Disaster Recovery Coordinator position would lead the implementation of the Long-Term Recovery Plan projects. Ferguson confirmed, stating the position has been flown and the first round of applications are being accepted through April 30, 2025, with interviews thereafter, with the application period open until filled.

Commissioner Spencer inquired about the presence of a new staff member. Ferguson introduced the new Assistant Planner, Amanda Harmon, to the Planning Commission.

Spencer pointed out that Item VII Planning Commissioners’ Reports/Comments was missing from the meeting agenda. Ferguson stated it was an oversight and would be added to the agenda.

VII. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS’ REPORTS/COMMENTS

Spencer thanked Associate Planner Marco Velazquez for the quality of Planning Commission meeting minutes produced. Velazquez acknowledged the collaborative efforts with Ferguson on producing the minutes.

Ferguson stated an agenda item regarding gray wolves in Plumas County was a part of the Board of Supervisors meeting on April 15, 2025. Ferguson stated the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution declaring a local state of emergency due to the presence and impact of gray wolves in Plumas County. She also stated a letter was approved by the Board to be sent to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Director Chuck Bonham describing the urgent need for local public safety response with gray wolf management. Continuing, Ferguson stated Sheriff Todd Johns had called in to the Board of Supervisors meeting expressing support for the resolution and the letter, also requesting the letter go to California Governor, Gavin Newsom. Brechtel stated there has been no action or discussion by the board to send the letter to the governor.

Commissioner Montgomery referenced the Dixie Fire Collaborative Greenville Saturday Community Meeting, stating he noticed a big difference in economic drivers among wildfire recovery plans. He stated the discussion reiterated to him the importance of keeping in mind the distinct nature of Plumas County

economies. Ferguson stated two planning studies, a housing study and an economic development study, will be performed through a 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) secured by Plumas County. She stated CPAT recommends a facility needs assessment in recovering communities to determine what services can be supported by the local population. She stated CPAT has recommended evaluating the potential success of businesses and not promoting a business that cannot be supported by the local population, resulting in closure.

Montgomery stated he was excited to see Seneca Hospital had begun construction. He stated they are expecting approximately 150 workers to stay in workforce housing as part of the project. Ferguson stated the anticipated opening is Spring of 2027.

Commissioner Lewis reported he and Ferguson met with the Recreational Economy for Rural Communities (RERC) committee to discuss the housing component of the plan. He stated a USDA Rural Housing representative from the Oroville office was present to discuss available loan programs including the 502 Direct for purchase and construction.

Ferguson stated the USDA rep is going to inquire about Plumas County submitting preapproved ADU plans through the USDA process to the Division of the State Architect through the 502 Direct Loan program. Ferguson stated the goal is to advertise a free, preapproved engineering plan set in conjunction with the 502 Direct Loan. Montgomery asked if the USDA representative represents the Farm Home Administration (FmHA) as well. Lewis stated he did not believe so. Montgomery stated that FmHA loans would be another avenue for low to very low financing options in Plumas County.

Montgomery stated that Dan Efseaff from Paradise Recreation and Park District would be an asset in utilizing available funding to grow the parks program and to further community health and integration efforts.

Lewis discussed the USDA 504 Home Repair Loan Program. He stated the program has an income threshold, but participants can apply for funding to repair existing homes and improve home efficiency.

Lewis reported he spoke with Clint Koble about the 'Move-In' package being put together to encourage individuals to relocate to Plumas County through incentives like downpayment assistance. Lewis stated Koble anticipates presenting at the Board of Supervisors meeting on May 6, 2025. Lewis brought up the possibility of the Planning Commission drafting a letter of support for the 'Move-In' package, stating he sees value in encouraging relocation to Plumas County. Spencer asked how the plan addressed employment opportunities. Lewis stated much of the plan was based on targeting remote workers. Ferguson stated the Lost Sierra Chamber of Commerce is partnering with Indian Valley Innovation Hub on the 'Move-In' initiative. She stated the Planning Commission could discuss the proposal further following the presentation at the Board of Supervisors meeting. Ferguson confirmed a labor component is included in the initiative. Spencer then stated technology in Plumas County would need to be able to support the incoming population. Ferguson stated that chambers of commerce are incentivizing relocation nationwide with packages up to a cumulative \$20k. She said these packages usually come with requirements to live in the area for a predetermined amount of time. She posed the question "what are the incentives Plumas County can offer as local government?" Lewis stated the nationwide program is called 'Make My Move.' He said individuals can enter specific criteria to be matched with a compatible community. Lewis stated the Plumas County local incentives would likely be starting with a \$5k move-in bonus to the first ten verified families, in addition to offering local Plumas community perks.

Spencer asked Ferguson to report what could be done to ask the Board of Supervisors to continue discussing the 'Move-In' package in Plumas County. Ferguson stated the Board of Supervisors along with the Planning Commission could evaluate the Housing Element programs and the integration of jobs and housing at the policy level.

VIII. CONTINUED FROM THE REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 20, 2025 – 2024-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP #3 (Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director)

Ferguson stated she sent a letter to the Department of Housing and Community Development's Proactive Housing Accountability Senior Manager, Fidel Herrera on April 16, 2025, regarding the late submission of the 7th cycle (2024-2029) Housing Element Update.

Ferguson stated the previous schedule determined the Housing Element (HE) would be delivered on April 14, 2025. Ferguson stated she called Housing Policy Analyst Dexter Egleston regarding the late submission. Ferguson informed Egleston of progress being made, including increased staff capacity, but communicated staff have not been able to complete all tasks. Ferguson detailed previous and upcoming HE workshops in her letter. Ferguson reiterated the goal to bring the HE plan to the public in a timely manner to comply with state requirements. She stated the plan would circulate for public comment on June 27, 2025. Ferguson stated that the HE needs to be discussed at every Planning Commission meeting, that Plumas Housing Council staff should be invited to future HE workshops, and that Planning Commission staff may attend Plumas Housing Council meetings to meet the deadline. Ferguson stated that following the HE circulating for public comment, the HE will be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in early August 2025. Ferguson stated following the review cycle, a compliance letter from the state could be expected in April 2026. Ferguson stated HE updates typically take twelve to eighteen months, and the Planning Commission has been working since January of 2024 when Velazquez began pulling demographic information for Plumas County.

Ferguson stated that at the previous workshop on April 3, 2025, the Planning Commission looked at Sierra County as an example and subsequent edits were made. HE Program #1 was discussed with the Inclusionary Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Ferguson asked if the Planning Commission would prefer to continue working on the HE Goals, Policies, Action/Programs or move on to Vacant and Underutilized Inventory and Analysis. Lewis proposed to begin working on the HE narrative. Montgomery asked for clarification on the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) drafted April 3, 2025.

Ferguson pointed to the RHNA target of 154 units at Very Low to Above Moderate-income levels needed to be compliant with state requirements. She stated Plumas County has vacant and underutilized land in inventory. She stated, per state law, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) built in the previous planning cycle can be applied to the Very Low income group. Ferguson stated the state wants reports of properties without constraints preventing habitation. She explained that the County can shoot for 133% of the RHNA requirements – approximately 206 units. Ferguson explained there are 498 units as shown on the Draft Inventory List. She stated the goal is to identify 206 viable units through collaborative efforts.

Montgomery asked if Planning Commissioners were expected to evaluate whether properties in their districts and determine potential issues. Ferguson explained that due to the concentration of viable parcels in Districts 2, 3, and 4, all commissioners are asked to evaluate site constraints to determine realistic capacity. Ferguson explained the state requirement for multi-family residential (M-R) zones in rural communities is a minimum of 10 units per acre. She explained that the maximum density in Plumas County M-R zones is 21.8 units per acre. Montgomery asked if that number accounted for setbacks and zoning requirements. Ferguson said it only accounts for density. Lewis asked if the Density Program Bonus applied to parcels with more than 12 units per acre. Ferguson clarified the program was for parcels building more than 21.8 units per acre. Montgomery asked if a property determined to hold only 12 units per acre would be classified as underutilized. Ferguson explained that vacant means there is nothing on the property and underutilized means there is an existing structure or structures on the property that are not achieving maximum residential unit capacity potential.

Montgomery asked how Ferguson divided parcels into the Very Low- or Low-income groups. Ferguson explained that parcels with greater potential residence capacity could fall into the Very Low income groups.

Spencer asked if the Commissioners wanted to continue discussing the RHNA Draft with limited meeting time left. Montgomery stated he would like to know exactly what was expected of him. Ferguson explained that the Commissioners are asked to help determine realistic residential capacity by visiting parcels in person or discussing them with the Planning Department. She stated some parcels may have plans to build, which would provide realistic capacity. Ferguson asked Commissioners to determine the most viable parcels to count toward the 206 units needed. Montgomery asked about the subjectivity of determining parcel viability. Ferguson stated the criteria for viability are site constraints and proximity to services. She explained some parcels had been crossed off the list due to nonviability. Spencer proposed related Commissioner Lewis and Commissioner Montgomery schedule an appointment with Ferguson to discuss the sites and unit potential. Ferguson noted that most parcels in the Moderate to Above Moderate-

income groups fall within Commissioner West's district. Ferguson stated the County needs 63 Above Moderate units. She suggested bringing the list back during workshop #4.

Spencer directed the conversation HE 7th Cycle (2024-2029) Goals, Policies, and Actions/Programs. She asked if the Planning Commission had sent a comment of support for the Plumas Housing Council. Ferguson stated none had been drafted yet by Planning staff and addressed Brechtel explaining the Planning Commission desires to formally acknowledge the Plumas Housing Council with a recommended resolution to the Board of Supervisors. Brechtel agreed and stated the goal of establishing the Planning Commission was to address such matters in detail and present the resulting opinion to the Board of Supervisors.

Spencer stated it was important to establish if the Planning Commission was working with the Plumas Housing Council because they are referenced several times in the HE 7th Cycle draft programs. Ferguson stated County support would be needed to tie a responsible agency to the program. Montgomery stated the primary focus of the Plumas Housing Council has been on fire recovery. He asked if the scope of the Plumas Housing Council would need to be expanded to address all housing in Plumas County in perpetuity. Ferguson explained a governance structure must first be established, but the goal of the Plumas Housing Council to exist in perpetuity. She stated it is important to ensure the Plumas Housing Council is a sustainable agency prior to including as a responsible agency in the HE 7th Cycle draft programs.

Lewis stated the Planning Commission should explore drafting a letter of acknowledgement on the 'Move-In' package. He stated the package ties directly into the Housing Element goals. Montogomery stated he believes the 'Move-In' package would be more involved with the Plumas Housing Council. Ferguson stated naming the package in a program could be considered. She suggested Clint Koble present to the Planning Commission discussing the connection to the Housing Element programs. She stated she was uncertain if acknowledgement by the Planning Commission would be required. Lewis stated Koble had asked him personally for endorsement. He stated he was unsure if it would be appropriate for him to provide one, and that it would be more appropriate and powerful coming from the Planning Commission. Lewis reiterated it ties into Policy HE 3 – Maintain a continuing program for first time homebuyers. Lewis stated most of the first-time homebuyers he has recently consulted with are also relocating to Plumas County.

Ferguson stated the Commission had previously gone through Policies HE 1 and 2. She asked at what threshold Policy HE 2 regarding an inclusionary housing ordinance would be triggered and whether the measure is more prohibitive than helpful. Spencer questioned County Counsel about what opportunities there are with Policy HE 2. Ferguson stated inclusionary housing in the context of the state checklist requires Plumas County to support affordable housing. She stated Policy HE 2 allows the County to collect revenue from development projects and establish a fund to support affordable housing efforts. Montgomery asked how the HE 7th Cycle (2024-2029) would satisfy the state checklist. Ferguson stated that, to her knowledge, inclusionary housing programs are not currently required by the state or local government. She stated the inclusionary housing program would be a proactive measure by Plumas County.

Ferguson asked what number of units would be appropriate to trigger a potential requirement that 10% of units be considered affordable. Lewis stated the goal is to encourage developers to build housing in Plumas County. He expressed concern that an inclusionary housing program may discourage developers due to a potential decrease in profits. He agreed with placing the threshold at a high number of units. He stated that when moderate and above-moderate-income housing is developed, that potentially creates vacancies in lower income housing developments. Ferguson expressed the need for balanced policy so as not to discourage developers while simultaneously supplying a funding stream for affordable housing in Plumas County. Spencer stated that the current language is soft and suggested continuing the conversation. Ferguson stated the Commission can move forward with the initiative as proposed, decline to move forward with the initiative, or find a middle ground considering economic feasibility.

Ferguson stated staff will work on advancing recommendations on programs. She asked Commissioners Montogomery and Lewis to cooperatively evaluate Greenville properties listed on the RHNA. Montgomery stated the need for an itemized timeline to complete the HE 7th Cycle (2024-2029) to meet the June 27, 2025 deadline for public circulation.

Ferguson stated staff will prepare a timeline. She informed commissioners that special meetings of the Planning Commission may be held to complete all tasks.

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS/ON-GOING PROJECT UPDATES

Ferguson stated the Staniger Zone Change was presented to the Board of Supervisors on April 1, 2025, and on April 8, 2025. Ferguson stated no decision has been made. She stated staff are investigating if the buffer could be increased, at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, subsequently decreasing available acreage and reducing animal carrying capacity. Ferguson stated she will be working with the applicant. She stated she has a scheduled site visit. The application will be brought back before the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 2025. Commissioner Spencer stated her appreciation for the Board of Supervisors attempt at achieving compromise in the matter of the Staniger Zone Change. She stated the discussion seemed primarily concerned with social and economic compatibility whereas the application is concerned with environmental compatibility. Ferguson stated the applicant has been working to communicate with neighbors. She stated the Board of Supervisors intent is to reach a compromise between the applicant and the neighbors.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. 2024-2029 Housing Element Update Public Workshop
2. Amendments to the Resolution Establishing the Rules of Conduct of Business of the Plumas County Planning Commission
3. Discussion of Agriculture and Forestry Element of the 2035 Plumas County General Plan
4. Brown Act Training for Planning Commissioners
5. Draft a Planning Commission resolution to the Board of Supervisors recommending to officially recognize the Plumas Housing Counsel

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Adjourn to the regular meeting scheduled on May 1, 2025.

Moved by Jack Montgomery ***Seconded by*** Dayne Lewis

Vote: Motion carried.

Yes: Montgomery, Spencer, Lewis

Absent: Harvey West