
PLUMAS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 19, 2019

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Vacant, (District 1)

Moorea Hoffman Stout, Commissioner (District 2)

Jeff Greening, Commissioner (District 3)

Larry Williams, Commissioner (District 4)

John Olofson, Vice-Chair (District 5)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice- Chair John Olofson calls the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Moorea Hoffman Stout (by teleconference), Larry Williams, John Olofson

Commissioners Absent: Jeff Greening

Also in attendance (Supervisors and staff)

Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director

Rebecca Herrin, Assistant Planning Director

Tim Evans, Associate Planner

Gretchen Stuhr, Deputy County Counsel

IV. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Items to be continued or withdrawn from the agenda: None.

B. Approval of minutes of the meetings of November 7, 2019 and November 21, 2019

M/S/C: Williams/Stout to approve the minutes of the meetings of November 7, 2019 and November 21, 2019. Ayes: Commissioners Stout, Williams, Olofson. Noes: None.

V. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS/COMMENTS:

Commissioner Larry Williams apologizes for the cancellation of the last Planning Commission meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Assessor Chuck Leonhardt has a commitment today but is interested in the presentation and will stay as long as he is able.

VII. PRESENTATION BY DENISE GEISSINGER AND FAMILY, KINSHIP RANCH, CROMBERG

Planning Director Tracey Ferguson, AICP, opens the meeting by explaining the handouts that have been presented to the Commission and the public; the zone/use matrix, the definition of "place of assembly" which is the definition that most closely fits commercial wedding venues.

"Place of Assembly" is not a permitted use in either the AP (Agricultural Preserve) or the GA (General Agriculture) zones.

Denise Geissinger, owner of the Kinship Ranch in Cromberg gives a presentation to the Planning Commission regarding the history of the acquisition of the property and the plans to operate a wedding venue on the site. The owners were unaware that the use was not permitted by the zoning until they applied for permits from the Department of Environmental Health. At that time, after consultation with Planning, it was determined that the use was not permitted in the AP (Agricultural Preserve) zoning. It is also not permitted under the existing Williamson Act Contract. There is a need for this service and for the expansion of farm-based tourism. No additional agricultural land will be converted; the existing footprint will be maintained. The family has undertaken community outreach and there is much community support for the wedding venue. There is an economic benefit because many businesses will profit from the operation. She requests that weddings be added as a compatible use in the agricultural zones.

Kevin Cook speaks to the Commission. He and his wife are also owners. They want to revive and preserve the ranch. His wife has built relationships with local businesses and has developed local vendor lists. They have already booked several weddings for next year.

Mike Geissinger speaks next. The ranch is not sustainable solely as an agricultural operation. A new source of income is needed. Cattle ranching will continue along with the wedding venue operation.

Chuck Leonhardt, Assessor, explains how the Land Conservation Act works. Properties are valued based on the agricultural use. He anticipates issues may concern sanitation, traffic, parking. His office can work with Planning on this issue.

Michele Cruz, Quincy Chamber of Commerce, is in support of the proposed business. Donna Mills, of the Lost Sierra Chamber and Visitors Center explains that venues are difficult to find in Plumas County. Many people want an outdoor wedding experience. Activity of this sort results in an increase in TOT (Transient Occupancy Tax) for the County.

Tracy Schohr, Butte Sierra Plumas U.C. Davis Agricultural Extension, is in favor of the proposed operation and diversification of agriculture. As the profit margin in livestock production is growing smaller and smaller, there is a real need for this type of diversification. She is willing to be at the table for the discussion of compatibility issues.

Jerry Sipe, Director of Environmental Health, introduces himself to the Geissingers. He is supportive of their efforts.

Several others have submitted letters and expressed support.

Commissioner Stout requests that the easiest, simplest, quickest way forward to permit wedding venues in the agricultural zones be taken. Commissioner Williams thanks the family for a very good presentation. Planning Director Ferguson suggests that the Planning Commission make a recommendation for a Resolution of Intention to be put on the agenda of the Board of Supervisors in January.

VIII. DISCUSSION: PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW OF THE 2035 GENERAL PLAN:

A. Introduction to the General Plan

Ferguson provides analysis of the Introduction and discusses the handout provided. She discusses community plans and master plans.

Vice-Chair Olofson discusses items he has highlighted in the Introduction and reads those highlights. He reiterates that he would like to see a grant-funded project to inventory natural resources and recreation facilities in order to develop a recreation master plan.

IX. DISCUSSION: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEM

At the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors on December 10, 2019, the agenda item "Direct the Planning Commission to consider whether or not to allow cultivation of industrial hemp in Zones R-10 and R-20, including agricultural processing of industrial hemp" was discussed and the Board took action by a unanimous motion to "Not make any changes to cultivation of industrial hemp in Zones R-10 and R-20, including agricultural processing of industrial hemp."

Ferguson explains the action taken by the Board of Supervisors.

X. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/ON-GOING PROJECT UPDATES

No discussion

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

There is no correspondence.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Ferguson states that the Resolution of Intention to add wedding venues as a permitted use in the agricultural zones of AP (Agricultural Preserve) and GA (General Agriculture) will be brought to the Commission in the near future, as well as more proposed zoning code amendments, and the Annual Report draft in January. As well as ongoing discussion of the General Plan Land Use Element.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

M/S/C: Williams/Stout/3-0 to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be January 2, 2020.



John Olofson, Vice-Chair
Plumas County Planning Commission



Rebecca Herrin, Clerk of the Planning Commission