

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE
TRINIDAD PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, December 18th, 2013

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL (6:03pm)

Commissioners Present: Pinske, Stockness, Vanderpool

Commissioners Absent: Becker, Johnson

Staff: Parker, Caldwell

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 20, 2013

There is not a quorum to approve these minutes based on present attendance.

Approval of minutes is continued to January meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion (Vanderpool/Stockness) to approve the agenda.

Passed unanimously.

IV. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

none.

V. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Introduction and Welcome to newly appointed Commissioner Stockness.

The Commission welcomes Commissioner Stockness and thanks her for her service.

2. **Trinidad 2013-09:** Grading Permit, Design Review and Coastal Development Permit for the City of Trinidad Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) Stormwater Improvement project. The project has been designed to collect, treat, and infiltrate City stormwater runoff, thus reducing pollutants entering Trinidad Bay. This will be accomplished by modernizing the City's stormwater system through incorporation of Low Impact Development Best Management Practices (LID/BMPs). Improvements consist of underground infiltration basins, sediment catchments, bioswales and a rain gardens. Located within City rights-of-way west of Highway 101 in Trinidad, east of Underwood Drive, and north of Edwards Street with improvements on Trinity, Ocean, View, East, West, Parker and Hector.

Planner Parker introduces the project, explaining the purpose and details and summarizing the staff report. She notes changes to the project since the staff report was written which includes the elimination of the bioswale on Parker Street and a few other minor adjustments to assure a 25-foot distance between bioswales and leachfields.

Commissioner Comments

In response to Commissioner Stockness's request for clarification, City Engineer's office / GHD representative Steve Allen states that the drainage pipes vary in size. GHD representative Rebecca Crow adds that the infiltrators will be immediately adjacent to the street, won't alter topography by more than a foot and will be surfaced with permeable material, such as grass. No cherry trees, parking or pavement are slated for removal. Commissioner Stockness notes that

View Street is very busy, with large trucks, and is concerned about the project interfering with traffic. She is also concerned about debris, leaves and roots conflicting with the new drainage system. Rebecca Crow assures her that the system is across the street from cherry trees and the system is designed so people can park on the bioswales and to handle debris. There will be no reduction in the size of the road or available parking, and construction will be timed and organized such that access is maintained at all times. In response to additional Commissioner questions, Rebecca Crow explains that the project will go out to bid in the spring and construction should occur in the summer of 2014.

The Commission discusses whether a conflict of interest exists for two of the three present Commissioners (a total of 3 of the 5-member Commission live within 300 ft. of some component of the project); Parker explains the FPPC rules and options. Commissioner Vanderpool states that he will not be financially impacted any differently than his neighbors or the public in general, if at all, noting that a dip in the road already exists where the bioswale in front of his house is proposed. Commissioner Stockness states that her questions were answered and that she agrees with Vanderpool, that she will be no more affected by the project than her neighbors. She also thinks that stormwater needs to be collected and project is important.

Public Comment

Stan Binnie (487 View) asks about the mitigation / conditions of approval included for the project and Planner Parker lists off the requirements. S. Binnie would like to add invasive plant removal and undergrounding of utilities on View Street to the conditions of approval. Planner Parker advises him that this would not be the appropriate venue to include such requirements because there is no real nexus between the proposed project and those requests; she notes that this is a grant-funded project with a limited budget and specific tasks and project elements have already been agreed upon. His requests should be taken up with the City Council.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Pinske explains how the procedure for undergrounding utilities occurred in the past, and that due to the expense, only the most scenic areas of town of have been undergrounded.

Commissioner Stockness agrees with the public comment that the utility lines are an eyesore. She also discusses overgrown vegetation on the streets. She inquires if vegetation maintenance can occur but Planner Parker, resolves that this is a separate project / issue from the stormwater improvements. She advises the Commission that they could make a recommendation to the City Council to considering funding / taking action regarding vegetation clean-up, invasive specie removal or undergrounding utilities either in conjunction with the grant tasks during construction or as separate projects.

In response to Commissioner Vanderpool's inquiry, Planner Parker explains that there is a Phase II of the stormwater project planned that would address drainage in the lower and more bluff-side portions of the City (southern and western), but that it is still in the planning stage and funding has not been secured for it.

In response to Commissioner Pinske's inquiries, Planner Parker discusses the City's cultural monitoring policies and the cultural investigation that was done for this project. She explained that the original intent was to include both phases of the project in this one CEQA document, but because Phase II was still too speculative, it was removed; therefore, this CEQA document only addresses Phase I. Phase I of the project is well over 100 ft. from the Tsurai Study Area and other known cultural resources; the cultural resource investigation was done specifically for Phase II. As a condition of approval and CEQA mitigation, a cultural monitor will be required to be onsite during ground-disturbing activities related to this project. The City's policy is to require

a trained and qualified monitor, but it is the contractor's duty to choose and hire the monitor. The City doesn't have a list of qualified monitors but rather a list of what qualifications that must be met. Commissioner Stockness suggests that the City have a list.

Commissioner Vanderpool verifies that the rain garden will have native plants.

Motion (Pinske/Stockness) to adopt and approve the project as conditioned in the staff report.

Passed unanimously.

2. General Plan Update: Community Design Element continued discussion (*please see/bring materials from the last meeting*).

Planner Parker explains that there have been several Planning Commissions meetings to discuss community design issues in the past, and there was a significant amount of community input.

The Cultural and Historic Element is the other general plan element that still needs review. Planner Parker will send out reminders to tribal entities for input soon, but expects that this will be a slow process.

Planner Parker has asked Gabe to provide the Planning Commissioner's Handbook and previous General Plan Elements to Commissioner Stockness for reference. Commissioner Stockness is also concerned with the height of vegetation and how it impacts views. Planner Parker that that would be something that could be addressed in the Community Design Element, and that the City adopted a Views and Vegetation Ordinance a few years ago in response to similar public comments.

Parker reports that the City Council has made completing the General Plan a priority. They have reviewed the previous six elements drafted by staff and the Planning Commission and will be hearing the Housing Element soon. Eventually all the elements will be packaged together and reviewed as one General Plan document before being submitted to the Coastal Commission along with the Zoning, Grading and Subdivision Ordinances for eventual certification.

VI. COUNCIL & STAFF REPORT

Parker is expecting two applications to be on the agenda next month along with continued discussion of the General Plan.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:19 pm.

Submitted by:

Sarah Caldwell

Secretary to Planning Commission

Approved by:

Richard Johnson

Planning Commission Chair