

MINUTES OF THE SPECIALLY-SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
TRINIDAD PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, January 31, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL (6:00pm)

Commissioners Present: Braziel, Hedrick, Johnson, Scott, Stockness
Commissioners Absent: none
Staff: Parker; Caldwell

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

***Motion (Johnson/Stockness) to approve the agenda.
Passed unanimously (5-0).***

III. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

K. Lake (435 Ocean) speaks about her appeal that was denied in by the Planning Commission. She has questions about STRs exemptions. The renewals are completed and she thought renewals would come back to the Commission. She also wants to know when the Commission reviews the exemptions since the Commission asked for them at several meetings.

Planner Parker clarifies that although several Commissioners mentioned that they would like to review exemptions, it was never voted on and is not a requirement of the regulations. License and exception information is available in City Hall.

T. Davies (435 Ocean) states that he heard the Commission say they wanted to look at the General Plan in pieces, yet the Agenda doesn't reflect that; it is too general. There is a large binder of current draft general plan elements to review. The public would like to know more specifically what is to be discussed, because it is difficult to comment on so much material.

Do. Cox (436 Ocean) notes that encroachments into Ocean Avenue are causing a bottleneck. It was particularly apparent during the recent Clam Beach Run. She gives examples of dangerous situations due to traffic and the crowding on the street. She would like the City to address the issue and will continue to comment on this item at meetings until it is resolved.

L. Farrar (433 Ewing) would like all Planning Commissioners and City Council members to have @trinidad.ca.gov emails. She would like all meetings to be noticed using the City's email listserve.

V. AGENDA ITEMS

1. **General Plan Update:** Discussion regarding the current draft (all elements); discussion to focus on internal consistency, updating policies to be consistent with current information and trends, and the draft Community Design Element.

Commissioner Comments

Planner Parker notes that the General Plan is on the agenda as a whole because she didn't receive direction from the Commission to focus on a specific Element. And she did not want to unnecessarily limit the discussion by making the agenda item too specific. The focus for this meeting is the Community Design Element, which has not been approved by the Planning Commission yet. Parker notes that community design can be a controversial and difficult topic. The current Design Review criteria are subjective and the Planning Commission has talked about setting more objective policies in the past. But Trinidad also has a history of reviewing projects on a case by case basis.

Commissioner Stockness feels that the City needs to have set standards, because the current guidelines are not cutting it. She would like to use some of the criteria developed for the Views and Vegetation Ordinance as a model. View blocking vegetation is still an issue; she would like to see all trees below the rooflines.

Planner Parker notes that setting a height standard is really more of a regulatory standard than a General Plan policy. Trees are also part of the vista and can enhance viewsheds. The Coastal Commission only protects public views, where Trinidad also protects private views. She suggests reviewing the Views and Vegetation Ordinance for the next discussion about this element. She clarifies that the Views and Vegetation Ordinance is not part of the General Plan but rather the municipal code. It is also not part of the certified LCP.

Changes to the Community Design Element directed by the Commission included:

- A. Purpose and Background:
 - Rewording in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.
- B. Community Design and The Coastal Act:
 - Strike quiet of "quiet harbor."
 - Move last sentence of second paragraph to the end of the first.
- C. Design Review
 - Commissioners Stockness and Scott want to strike small projects from the last sentence. (An example of a small project is a deck expansion which is exempt from a CDP.)
- D. Community Design
 - There is not a Figure 19. (This depends on the wording of policies.)
 - Program CD-1.1.1 e. The Commissioners note that Murphy's sign does not meet this.
 - Program CD-1.1.1 f. Was considered for removal.
 - Planner Parker defined "appropriate" in Program 1.1.1g.
 - Program CD-1.2.1 reference the View Protection Criteria of the Zoning Ordinance
 - CD-1.4 add trails, Pacific Street and possibly Wagner Street.
 - CD-1.5 conflicts with native and drought-resistant vegetation. Add view corridors to Figure 10.
 - CD-1.6 Commissioner Stockness is very supportive of a vegetation management policy.
 - Change plan to policies.
 - Include priorities for removal, such as pampas grass.

Commissioner Johnson notes that there are many, many programs. He would like to look at all of them together to understand what the City is committing itself to; there are probably over 100.

- CD-2.5 Add in the TMP, land transfers.
- CD-2.7 is 2.6. Planner Parker will fix the numbering at the end.
- CD-2.7 add “and compatible with community character.” Planner Parker will look into additions not having to match.
- CD-2.10 may be overlapped in the Conservation policies.

Add a program to adopt a plant list.

- Goal 3D-3 add “compatibility with.”
- CD-3.2 - CD3.4 condense into one.
- Programs CD-3.4.1 & 2 are policies.

Review consistency between what are policies and programs.

- CD-3.5 Strike
- Program CD-3.5.1 Strike
- CD-3.9 Discussion regarding roofline vs roof shape.
- CD-9.7 Replace neighborhood with community.
- CD-4.1 & 4.2 Combine and add signs for visitor services, emergency services, public facilities.
- CD-4.3 A Commissioner would like to strike all language after “signs.”
- CD-4.2, 4.6 & 4.8 overlap.
- Move CD-4.8.4 to CD-4.4 & note overlap.
- CD-4.8.4 Planner Parker thought she had 8-10’ and Commissioner Scott wants them reduced to a pedestrian level of 4’ and thinks they should go through an application procedure for an exception.

Planner Parker would like the Commission to think about whether a policy on murals is necessary.

- CD-5.1 should be streamlined. Lights should be pointed down. Possibly add “not to exceed a distance of ... (height of the sign) or not to exceed the boundary of the sign”
- CD-5.4 replace desirable with acceptable

Residential vs. commercial lighting needs addressed.

- CD-7.2 add “public *right-of-way* landscaping”
- CD-7.6 replace “is consistent with” with “as defined by.” Also check to determine when this is relevant.

Add a policy or program to encourage the City to reduce permitting costs for art

installations in public places.

- Program CD-8.1.1 Replace “outdoor sculpture” with “outdoor art.” Include public property as a location.
- CD-8.2 Strike
- CD-8.3 reword “public open spaces.”
- Program CD-9.2.2 Strike “Consider” and add roadways.
- CD-9.4 Generalize this policy.

Public Comment

Do. Cox (436 Ocean) notes that she had to split a bill with the City to cut a tree down that was affecting the right-of-way. Others just ignore the City. There are enforcement issues and not everyone does their part; it’s not fair to those who do.

K. Lake (435 Ocean) hands out examples of issues and goals related to community design and character from the City of Carmel’s General Plan. She also suggests reviewing the results of Trinidad’s 2015 community goals meeting and survey. She proposes distributing a General Plan questionnaire for the community and gives an example. She thinks there should be more resident-serving uses in town.

T. Davies (435 Ocean) refers to the 2002 meeting minutes regarding size, scale and bulk that were provided in the packet; he had a question about standards, such as the one requiring at least a 1,500 square foot house.

Planner Parker clarifies, stating that a 1,500 square foot house is a guaranteed minimum for a vacant parcel, but not a required, or absolute minimum. She pointed out that numerical standards are usually too specific for the General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs (discussed in Chapter 1 of the General Plan). For example, a policy would ensure that mansionization does not happen and the zoning regulations would include the maximum height and size standards.

L. Farrar (433 Ewing) states that trees provide privacy and beauty and that cutting all the trees to roofline height would be a dramatic change. A total priority on views is a problem. Commissioner Johnson notes that CD1-5 attempts to balance trees and views.

Farrar continues that trees also provide habitat and carbon storage. She thinks it is okay to continue to review projects on a case-by-case basis rather than trying to make a bunch of specific standards, because there are so few vacant lots left in town. Banks do not like to loan on small houses; don’t limit residents’ ability to do things.

S. Laos (Trinidad Rancheria) gets verification that if there is a City name in parentheses at the end of a policy, then it is a reference to where the policy came from.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Henrick is concerned about ensuring policies have teeth. He has seen property owners do whatever they like to their properties with no consequence. Planner

Parker notes that enforcement is expensive. The County has a code enforcement department, but still has to prioritize things. The City has a robust nuisance abatement ordinance, and she directs Commissioner Henrick to the Municipal Code (Title 8.12).

Commissioner Johnson refers to the 2002 minutes in the packet, which reference a recommendation to be made by the Commission to the City Council; he asks where that went. Planner Parker responded that the main issue brought up by the public at the following meeting was view-blocking-vegetation, and so the Planning Commission recommendation was to develop the Views and Vegetation Ordinance, which the Council then authorized.

Floor-to-lot area ratios and setbacks are discussed. Planner Parker provides an example from Arcata, where the further the structure is from the property line, the taller it can be.

Commissioner Scott reads the definition of mansionization from the 2002 minutes and stresses that in addition, they change the character of the community resulting in displacement of poorer residents.

Commissioner Braziel talks about gentrification and that she thinks it is worth considering for addition in the General Plan since it is already occurring. She wants to clarify that the General Plan has both residents and visitors in mind, but that residents make up the community. Planner Parker notes that policies and programs addressing affordable and fair housing are in the Housing Element.

Commissioner Stockness again raises her concerns about blockage of views. Planner Parker points out that Trinidad is one of only a few cities that protect private views, but the Coastal Act protects public views. Trinidad's LCP was the 1st in the State to be approved following the Coastal Act, and so private view protection is in there, but maybe should not be part of the certified LCP, since it is not a Coastal Act issue.

Commissioner Johnson brings up low impact development and whether it needs to be addressed in terms of aesthetics. Planner Parker states that it does fall under landscaping and is addressed in the Circulation Element. Some policies may overlap; she will check for related policies.

The Commissioners voice some other concerns such as stormwater drain maintenance, suggesting that the Planner develop or identify a plant list (guidelines) for the City, and that views from the Wagner Street trail are blocked.

VI. CITY COUNCIL REPORT

None.

VII. STAFF REPORT

Planner Parker will put the General Plan Land Use Element update on the agenda for the next meeting but doesn't foresee getting to spend a lot of time on it. The Fulkerson view

restoration permit will be on the upcoming agenda. No action on that project will be taken during the meeting, but it will be an opportunity to review the project and request additional information from the applicants.

It is suggested that the meeting date and times be included in the email list and in the Mad River Union and that the General Plan be made available at the library.

Commissioner Braziel would like to go over the glossary during each section as applicable.

Commissioner Johnson wants to make sure the policies are consistent in each element.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Submitted by:

Sarah Caldwell

Secretary to Planning Commission

Approved by:

Laura Scott

Planning Commission Chair