

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
TRINIDAD PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, February 20, 2019**

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

Commissioners Present: Graves, Johnson, Stockness, Kelly
Commissioner Absent: Lake
City Planner Staff: Reese
City Staff: Zetter

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 19, 2018

Motion (Kelly/Johnson) to approve the minutes as submitted. (Passed 4-0)

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion (Johnson/Stockness) to approve the agenda. (Passed 4-0)

IV. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Commissioner Graves introduced the new protocols for the Planning Commission meetings. He also provided clarification regarding an issue over 2-1 votes. Graves provided an excerpt from the Brown Act and an excerpt from the League of California Cities, which advised that if there are three commissioners, and the vote is 2-1, the vote is valid. It would only be invalid if the vote is on a general plan amendment, which requires approval by a majority of the entire Board/Commission, not just a quorum.

City residents, L. Farrar and A. Grau, referenced and agreed with comments made by Commissioner Kelly at the January 16, 2019 meeting in regards to revising the vision statement in the draft general plan.

V. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Address by Mayor Ladwig regarding the purpose and expectations of the STR Committee.

Mayor Ladwig addressed the Commission and the public. He stated that at the last City Council meeting the Council discussed the purpose of the STR Committee, and at that time the Council voted to suspend the Committee. The Council decided to compose a formal resolution and discuss the resources that the City has to allocate to this endeavor. He clarified that the STR Committee is an advisory committee that is to meet quarterly. And the purpose of the Committee is to determine what is working and what is not, in regards to the STR ordinance. Ladwig advised that Council is meeting next

week to discuss a resolution, and it will be an agenda item. Mayor Ladwig advised that he is open to questions.

2. Van Wycke Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Project: Public hearing to accept public, Commissioner, and interested party comments on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study for this project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. *No action will be taken at this meeting.*

Commissioner Questions and Comment

Commissioner Graves clarified for the public that this meeting is not a hearing on the project, but only a discussion regarding the CEQA document. He stated that this meeting is to obtain public input during the comment period.

Planner Garry Reese, from SHN, stated that he is standing in for City Planner Trever Parker for this meeting, because she is on vacation. He stated that his role at the meeting is document public comment and that he will answer questions regarding the CEQA process and requirements. He provided a brief summary of the project, which is funded by a Caltrans grant.

Reese stated that there is a thirty-day public comment period on the Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, closing on March 20, 2019. Reese clarified that the final design, as well as permitting, will be completed after the CEQA document is approved.

Commissioner Stockness clarified to the public that she has visited the project sites to familiarize herself with the topic of discussion.

Commissioner Graves disclosed that he had ex-parte communication with Zuretti Goosby who was the first executive director of Yurok Tribe and worked for the California Legislature.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he found the document to be difficult to read and that it could benefit from a table of contents and a purpose statement. He noted that the attachments are not labeled correctly. He requested updated geological information.

Commissioner Kelly stated that the document would benefit from a clear purpose statement. Kelly requested clarification regarding dimensions on the project. Kelly stated that she would like to see a conceptual design and viewshed analysis.

Reese clarified that it is a preliminary design at this point, and that the grant funding for more detailed design work can't be accessed until the CEQA document is approved.

Commissioner Stockness advised that she read the purpose of the document in the project description. Stockness requested clarification on who is completing the final design. GHD representative Josh Wolfe confirmed that GHD is completing the final design after the CEQA document is completed and the next round of funding is obtained from Caltrans, which is expected in July.

Commissioner Stockness voiced her concern about the bluff and requested more information regarding discussions with uphill landowners to move the trail upslope. Wolfe confirmed that there have been positive discussions with adjacent property owners, but nothing is finalized. Stockness raised concern regarding the retaining wall and what alternatives might be available. Planner Reese advised that the CEQA document discusses alternatives. Commissioner Kelly opined that there needs to be clarification whether a retaining wall is an absolute necessity.

Commissioner Graves stated that the layout of the document was difficult to read. Graves requested clarity on the geological impacts as the data is out of date. Graves also stated that it wasn't until the end of the document that the reader becomes aware that the project is being objected to by tribal groups. He stated that there needs to be more information regarding that opposition and why the City is moving forward anyway, as the existing discussion feels like an afterthought. Commissioner Johnson agreed that more information regarding tribal cultural resources would be beneficial to the document.

Public Comment

City resident, J. Cuthbertson, states that the trail was well used by the public, there are multiple uses, which should be considered the baseline. He notes that there have been numerous discussions at the City Council level. Cuthbertson stated that during those discussions there wasn't a single complaint from the tribes.

City resident, D. Grover, stated that he has 35 plus years of construction experience and has worked on cliff side projects. He advised that there are multiple ways to preserve the area and he would like to help with the planning and design.

Resident, D. Cox, requested clarification as to how far east the project goes.

Greater Trinidad area resident, Ro. Johnson, disclosed that he is a geologist and has ties to SHN, but is retired. He stated that the basis of the document is out of date, as the geologic information is from 2011. He advised that currently there is a stormwater drainage system in the vicinity of the trail, but it is not properly addressed in the CEQA document. Johnson also discussed how stabilization in the area could be an issue and that the project might not be feasible. He stated that the Yurok Cultural Committee

requested the project be revised. He doesn't think the Tsurai Ancestral Society are aware of the storm drain.

City resident, J. Cuthbertson, stated that the storm drain pipe is working and that the City needs more information regarding drainage.

City resident, L. Farrar, stated that the original goal was to repair the Van Wycke Trail, but now the project has expanded. Farrar wants clarification as to why the scope of work has expanded. She stated that it feels aggressive for such a small community.

City resident, A. Grau, stated his concern about the expansion of the project and that it is unnecessary for the size of Trinidad.

Written communication was received from 3 sources in opposition: Tsurai Ancestral Society, Kimberly Tays, and Leslie Farrar

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioner Johnson made a general comment stating that a minor design or photo mock-up of where the retaining wall is estimated to be would be beneficial, as it will help people understand the scope of the project. Commissioner Johnson also stated that the document lacks clarity and needs a substantial amount of work. Johnson wouldn't feel comfortable approving the project at this point.

*Motion (Johnson/Stockness) to continue the discussion at the March 20th meeting.
(Passed 4-0)*

VI. COUNCIL REPORT

Commissioner Stockness stated that the Council has been conducting interviews for a new City Manager.

VII. STAFF REPORT

Commissioner Graves disclosed ex parte communication email exchange between Commissioners. Graves addressed Brown Act training, problems with minutes, and the new meeting protocols.

He explained that he and the City Clerk met with Access Humboldt to discuss the potential of video recording meetings, which would allow the staff to move to shorter "action minutes." Graves advised the final decision would be made by the City Council. Commissioner Stockness stated that she is not in favor of video recording, as it is

individuals' civic duty to come to the meetings. She wants people to be informed, but she doesn't want to be recorded.

Commissioner Kelly stated that she found a video training on the Brown Act, and she sent it to Mayor Ladwig, because she found several examples helpful.

Commissioner Graves provided a new mock-up of the proposed Trinidad Rancheria hotel. Kelly is underwhelmed by the design. Commissioner Johnson states that another issue with the hotel project is the interchange, which would likely come to the Planning Commission in some form, as modifications would need to be made to Scenic Drive.

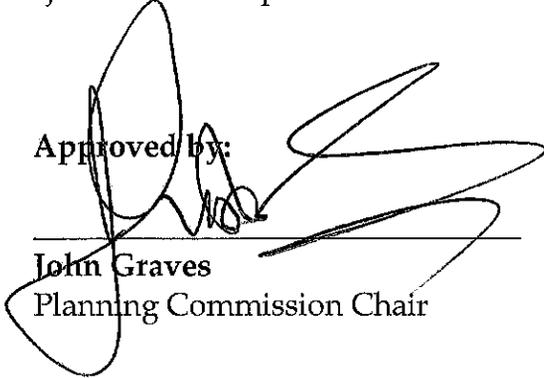
VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Van Wycke Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Project

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Next meeting is March 20th. Meeting has been adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Submitted by:
Angela Zetter
Administrative Assistant

Approved by: 

John Graves
Planning Commission Chair