

MINUTES
CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION
August 12, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

A. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Chair Jeff Manfredi, Paul Coates, Tim Wilkes, Scott Cooper. Absent: Vice Chair Carol Bush (excused). Staff present: Planning & Building Director Lynn Goldberg, Senior Planner Erik Lundquist, Public Works Director Mike Kirn.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kathleen Meyer, 1341 Berry Street, is concerned about the distraction created by the electronic sign in front of the school. If a mural is going to be included on the new Berry Street Bridge, that will cause a further distraction, and she is concerned about student safety. In response to questions from Ms. Meyer, Senior Planner Lundquist confirmed that a second public hearing notice for Item G.1. was not sent after the May notice, and that the notice was not sent in Spanish.

D. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA

The meeting agenda of August 12, 2015 was accepted as presented.

E. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

None.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Commission Minutes

The minutes for the July 22, 2015 meeting were unanimously adopted as presented.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact for the Berry Street Bridge Project

Senior Planner Lundquist presented the staff report for the item. The Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Berry Street Bridge Project identifies potentially-significant impacts and mitigation measures intended to minimize them.

Zach Siviglia of Mark Thomas & Company, reviewed the need for the project and some of its details. As a result of concerns expressed at a community meeting, a temporary 10-foot wide pedestrian and cyclist bridge over the river will be installed and remain open during project construction.

In response to questions from **Commissioner Wilkes**, Mr. Siviglia explained that they haven't yet submitted an Army Corps permit application for the project but have had some preliminary consultations with the agency. He agreed that there is an inconsistency in the Biological Assessment's compensation measures for riparian habitat removal that needs to be reconciled.

Commissioner Wilkes noted that given that the replacement bridge will provide a considerably wider cross-section, the velocity of the river will be less and there will be impacts on sediment transport and scour that have not been discussed in MND. He is concerned that the MND doesn't discuss the potential impacts of neighborhood traffic, which would normally use the bridge, turning from Cedar or Myrtle onto Lincoln Avenue and the addition of traffic on Lincoln. He is also concerned about student pedestrians and how they will travel safely between the end of the bridge and the school, adjacent to the construction site. There is no analysis or recognition of this potential impact.

Chair Manfredi opened the public hearing.

Kathleen Meyer is amazed at how many people do not understand that Berry Street is the only other river crossing besides Lincoln Avenue. The traffic impacts are going to hurt businesses on Lincoln. She thinks notices need to be sent out in Spanish as well as English.

Scott LeStrange, 1328 Berry Street property owner, adjoining the proposed temporary pedestrian and cyclist bridge, is concerned about the impacts of the project on the safety of children. The City has not asked him for an access easement across his property to accommodate the temporary bridge and he is concerned about the liability if someone is injured using it. He questions whether the temporary crossing is needed. He is also concerned about two oaks that will be removed from the river bank and the potential for erosion of the adjoining river bank.

Chair Manfredi closed the public hearing.

In response to questions from **Commissioner Coates**, Public Works Director Kirn explained that it would not be feasible to maintain an open lane on the bridge during construction due to its narrowness. The temporary pedestrian/cyclist bridge is the best alternative for providing access over the river during construction. Federal law requires the City to serve disadvantaged populations, and many of the students and their families walk to school. Requiring a one-mile detour on foot would risk running afoul of the Federal tenet. They looked at all options and the location was selected because it avoids a detour, takes advantage of a property that the City already owns and only requires an easement across one private property.

In response to questions from **Commissioner Wilkes** about the feasibility of a temporary bridge between Pioneer Park and the Police Station or at Oak Street, Mr. Kirn explained that mitigation measures need to be proximate to the project

and Caltrans would not pay for a longer bridge because it would be considered a community enhancement not covered by the grant. The City will continue to work with the school on mitigating project impacts as much as possible, including the possibility of busing students residing north of the river and an additional crossing guard on Berry Street.

Mr. Siviglia observed that the City cannot negotiate with a property owner regarding a possible easement for the temporary bridge until the environmental document has been completed.

Commissioner Coates hopes that every effort will be made to avoid impacts on the LeStrange property. He asked if consideration had been given to disposing excavated dirt from the project in another manner besides sending it to the landfill, such as offering it to local contractors? Mr. Siviglia explained that all disposal sites have to be included in the environmental document and they may not be available at the time of project construction. Mr. Kirn further explained that the project's contractor will be responsible for disposing material; generally contractors are resourceful and will seek to maximize their profits, which may include other disposal sites for the soil. The simplest alternative at this point is to evaluate its disposal at the landfill.

Commissioner Cooper believes that it's critical that future notices regarding the project be sent in Spanish and that the Hispanic community is included in the process. He would like to see the cost of the project reduced, however, he supports it.

Further responding to questions and issues raised by the Commissioners, Mr. Kirn explained that there would not be an appreciable change in sediment transport because of the project, which is indicated in its no-rise in flood levels design. Regarding the addition of traffic to the Cedar and Lincoln intersection, the City will include additional red zones on Cedar Street to improve sight distances. They considered installing a temporary four-way stop at the Cedar/Lincoln intersection, but Caltrans would not accept it given adverse impacts on Foothill/Lincoln intersection from vehicle queues. He anticipates that it will be initially chaotic, but over time, people will figure out the best ways to accommodate the bridge closure. They will post the official detour to the Foothill and Lincoln intersection; if the turn onto Lincoln is too difficult from Cedar, drivers will use that intersection. The City may encourage residents to use Silver Street and other access points onto Foothill Boulevard instead of Berry Street. He thinks the traffic will work itself out in a matter of weeks. All construction activities will be strictly contained within the construction zone to maximize pedestrian safety. He reiterated that one of the proposed mitigation measures is to consult with the school and the City's intent is to continue to work with them to minimize impacts.

Chair Manfredi believes that a mid-block crosswalk on Berry Street away from the construction site and an additional crossing guard should be considered, as

well as looking into the possibility of shuttling students. The City should send out notices to the neighborhood regarding possible alternate routes.

Planning Director Goldberg suggested that Mitigation Measure TR-3 can be expanded to incorporate the additional protective measures for pedestrians and cyclists supported by the Commission.

Commissioner Wilkes opined that the City's commitment to working with the school and staying on top of detoured traffic in the area south of the river gives the Commission the ability to move forward with adopting the MND.

A motion by **Commissioner Wilkes** and seconded by **Commissioner Cooper** to approve a resolution adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Berry Street Bridge Project, with appropriate revisions related to mitigation measures dealing with pedestrian safety, was approved unanimously.

H. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Consideration of a recommendation to the City Council regarding potential limitations on downtown wine tasting facilities

Planning Director Goldberg presented the staff report, advising the Commission that the Council directed staff to look into what similar communities have done to regulate tasting rooms, and potential regulatory options, with the Planning Commission's input. She reviewed the approaches taken by Yountville and Healdsburg, and presented a number of options for the Commission's consideration.

Chair Manfredi and **Commissioners Cooper and Wilkes** like the idea of including a secondary retail use as part of wine tasting facilities.

Commissioner Wilkes noted that there seems to be a recent acceleration in the establishment of wine tasting facilities. However, the City relies on visitors to support its commercial core; residents can't support it alone because of the availability of goods and services in close proximity. He doesn't currently see a problem with the number of wine tasting facilities, although it could arise in the future. If there is a problem, the Council could enact a moratorium fairly quickly. He doesn't recommend taking any action at this time.

Commissioner Cooper believes that incorporating secondary retail into wine tasting facilities would result in a more diverse downtown retail that would be more attractive to a wider range of visitors. More diversity that increases visitor traffic would also be beneficial to existing downtown businesses.

Commissioner Coates agrees with Commissioners Cooper and Wilkes. More diversity would slow pedestrian visitors and benefit all businesses.

Commissioner Wilkes doesn't believe that the inclusion of secondary retail should be required for every tasting room. Although diversity is a good idea, it should be evaluated on a case-by-case.

Planning Director Goldberg noted that some facilities are small and out of the way. Therefore, it may be appropriate to require secondary retail only for larger facilities that front on Lincoln Avenue.

Chair Manfredi thinks that potential new wine tasting facilities should be advised that the Commission may require the setting aside a portion of their floor area to secondary retail. However, he doesn't feel that the number of existing facilities in the downtown is a problem.

It was the consensus of the Commission that wine tasting facilities are not currently overrepresented in the downtown. However, it expressed support for a policy that would encourage the inclusion of unrelated retail in larger facilities fronting Lincoln Avenue in order to provide diversity in the downtown.

I. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSIONERS

None

J. DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Goldberg noted that three of the Commissioner terms expire at the end of the year and that those Commissioners should submit an application to the City Clerk if they would like to be considered for re-appointment.

She also advised the Commission that the only item publicly noticed for their August 26th meeting needs to be tabled, and therefore requested that the Commission cancel the meeting. The Commission concurred.

K. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.


Lynn Goldberg, Secretary

