



City of Calistoga
Planning Commission
Agenda Item Summary

DATE

January 27, 2016

ITEM

Draft Minutes of January 13, 2016 Meeting

RECOMMENDATION

Approve minutes with any necessary changes

MINUTES
CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION
January 13, 2016

1 The meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm.

2 **A. OATH OF OFFICE**

3 City Clerk Kathy Flamson administered the oath of office to new commissioners
4 Alissa McNair and Walter Abernathy.

5 **B. ROLL CALL**

6 Commissioners present: Paul Coates, Tim Wilkes, Scott Cooper, Alissa McNair,
7 Walter Abernathy. Absent: None. Staff present: Planning & Building Director Lynn
8 Goldberg, Senior Planner Erik Lundquist.

9 **C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

10 **D. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

11 Karen Chang, former City Green Committee Chair, would like to jump start some of
12 the items in the Calistoga Climate Action Plan. Calistoga was the first to adopt a
13 plastic bag ban, but since then, the City has not done much to implement the Plan.
14 She suggested that the Calistoga Senior Apartments project install a solar system
15 and that other projects incorporate solar energy, such as the Monhoff Recreation
16 Building and the Calistoga Boys and Girls Club.

17 **E. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA**

18 The meeting agenda of January 13, 2016 was accepted as modified. Item H was
19 moved before Item D.

20 **F. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

21 A letter from David and Susan Shaw regarding Item I.1. was distributed to the
22 Commission.

23 **G. CONSENT CALENDAR**

24 **1. Commission Minutes**

25 The minutes for the December 9, 2015 meeting were unanimously adopted as
26 presented.

27 **H. NEW BUSINESS**

28 **1. Election of 2016 Planning Commission Officers**

29 A motion by **Commissioner Wilkes** and seconded by **Commissioner Cooper** to
30 elect Paul Coates as Planning Commission Chair was approved unanimously by
31 his fellow commissioners. A motion by **Commissioner Cooper** and seconded by
32 **Commissioner Coates** to elect Tim Wilkes as Planning Commission Vice Chair
33 was approved unanimously by his fellow commissioners.

34 **I. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

35 **1. Calistoga Senior Apartments:** Consideration of 1) a design review application
36 (DR 2015-10) for a 30-unit apartment building and site improvements at 611
37 Washington Street, 2) a requested density bonus and affordable housing
38 concessions/incentives and 3) the vacation of right-of-way (SV 2015-1)

39 **Chair Coates** announced that he owns property within 300 feet of the project site
40 and stepped down from the dais. **Vice Chair Wilkes** assumed the chair.

41 Planning Director Goldberg presented the staff report for the item, describing the
42 proposed project improvements and the affordability targets for future residents.
43 The applicant is requesting a density bonus and several incentives in order to
44 offer affordable rents. The vacation of a half section of Fir Street and a small
45 portion of Washington Street would be required in order to develop the project.
46 An Initial Study identified potentially-significant environmental impacts associated
47 with the project and mitigation measures have been agreed to by the applicant
48 that would reduce them to less-than-significant. No comments were received
49 during the public review period. She reviewed the basis for making the required
50 findings for the requested approvals.

51 In response to a question by **Vice Chair Wilkes** about the wrought iron fence
52 and how it would interface with the adjoining fences on neighboring properties,
53 Ms. Goldberg suggested that the applicant respond to the question during his
54 presentation.

55 In response to a question by **Vice Chair Wilkes** about the Fire Department's
56 need for a ladder truck, Ms. Goldberg indicated the Fire Chief would require a
57 stand pipe to serve the project and does not require a ladder truck. She noted
58 that St. Helena Fire Department can provide a ladder truck through mutual aid.

59 In response to a question by **Commissioner McNair** about the minimum number
60 of units that would be allowed for the project by the state-mandated 35% density
61 bonus, Ms. Goldberg indicated that at least 23 units must be allowed.

62 **Vice Chair Wilkes** opened the public hearing.

63 **Justin Hardt**, Corporation for Better Housing (CBH), provided background
64 regarding their company and their recently-completed project at 1715
65 Washington Street. CBH approached the City over a year ago regarding the
66 City's housing needs and the City expressed a need for affordable senior
67 housing. The City and CBH have executed an exclusive negotiation agreement
68 for the development of the property and intend to execute a development
69 agreement for the project. He provided additional details regarding the project's
70 design, including exterior material samples.

71 **Commissioner Cooper** thanked the applicant for their willingness to adjust the
72 project in response to comments provided by some of the commissioners on the
73 preliminary project design. He sees the need for senior housing.

74 In response to questions from **Commissioner McNair** about how the proposed
75 unit sizes were determined and the project's accessibility features, Mr. Hardt
76 explained that a quarter of CBH's developments are senior projects and that the
77 sizes of the proposed units were derived from their experience. Many seniors
78 need to down-size and are looking for efficiency units around 500 square feet.
79 The units meet design, aesthetic and functionality needs. He also reviewed the
80 disabled accessibility features of the proposed design and explained that all units
81 will be disabled-adaptable. They attempt to meet the seven elements of wellness
82 for the residents of their projects by building a community within a community.

83 In response to a question from **Commissioner Abernathy**, Mr. Hardt indicated
84 this was the first step in the development approval process, with the next step
85 being City Council approval of a development agreement. They will then seek
86 funding, with the hope of commencing construction by the beginning of next year.

87 In response to a question from **Vice Chair Wilkes**, Mr. Hardt explained the green
88 elements to be incorporated into the design including insulation with a higher R-
89 value than required by state code, energy-efficient windows, Energy Star
90 appliances, and high efficiency water heaters and air conditioners.

91 **Larry Kromann**, Calistoga Affordable Housing and President of the Senior
92 Mobilehome Parks Coalition Committee, expressed strong support for the
93 project. The project needs to meet the needs of fragile and disabled seniors.
94 There is also a need for a local senior center. He is concerned about the ability of
95 the City to ensure that the developer actually constructs what is approved and
96 whether adequate construction funding can be obtained.

97 **Barbara Hill**, 106 Ivy Lane, supports the project and sees the need for affordable
98 senior housing.

99 **David Moon-Wainwright**, 1210 Pine Street, thanked CBH for bringing the
100 project forward and wishes even more units could be constructed. The City
101 needs to think outside the box and consider the need for additional units. He
102 hopes that the bicycle storage area can accommodate tricycles. He would like to
103 see the incorporation of high tech features, such as the ability to remotely turn off
104 all the electricity to a unit.

105 **Leslie Wilkes**, 1517 Cedar Street, asked if the applicant is required to improve
106 the sidewalks from the project site to the downtown. Ms. Goldberg indicated that
107 the sidewalks along the project frontage and the ADA curb ramps across the
108 street would be improved by the project, but no other improvements would be
109 required.

110 **Linda Watson**, 81 Iris Drive, asked about the developer's partnership with the
111 City for this project. Ms. Goldberg responded that the City will have the ability to
112 control the project's occupancy and operations through its development
113 agreement with the developer.

114 **Mr. Hardt** described the resident services that are planned for the community
115 room. It would be a flexible space that can accommodate a variety of uses. They
116 are willing to make the facility available as a resource to the local senior
117 community.

118 **Vice Chair Wilkes** closed the public hearing and asked for thoughts and
119 comments from the commissioners.

120 **Commissioner McNair** is concerned about the requested side yard setback
121 reduction for the three-story building, considering the single-story multi-family
122 units that adjoin the project site to the east.

123 **Commissioner Cooper** sees the high number of units as necessary to make the
124 project economical.

125 **Vice Chair Wilkes** acknowledged concerns about the building's height, but
126 believes that higher density and taller buildings are necessary due to the lack of
127 available land within the City.

128 A motion by **Commissioner McNair** to adopt the project's Mitigated Negative
129 Declaration was seconded by **Commissioner Abernathy** and approved by a
130 unanimous vote.

131 A motion by **Commissioner Cooper** to approve design review application DR
132 2015-10 was seconded by **Vice Chair Wilkes** and approved by a unanimous
133 vote.

134 A motion by **Commissioner Abernathy** to approve the requested density bonus
135 and affordable housing concessions was seconded by **Commissioner Cooper**
136 and approved by a unanimous vote.

137 A motion by **Commissioner Cooper** to recommend the vacation of the Fir Street
138 and Washington Street rights-of-way was seconded by **Commissioner McNair**
139 and approved by a unanimous vote.

140 **Vice Chair Wilkes** advised that the Commission's actions could be appealed to
141 the City Council within 10 days.

142 **J. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSIONERS**

143 **Chair Coates** returned to the dais and welcomed the new commissioners.

144 **K. DIRECTOR REPORT**

145 Ms. Goldberg advised the Commission about the next meeting's agenda.

146 **L. ADJOURNMENT**

147 The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Lynn Goldberg, Secretary