



City of Calistoga Planning Commission Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE

January 14, 2009

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following items listed on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and action taken by the Planning Commission is by a single motion. Any member of the Planning Commission, staff or the public may request that an item listed on the Consent Calendar be moved and action taken separately. In the event that an item is removed from the consent calendar, it shall be consider after the last scheduled item under New Business.

1. Planning Commission Minutes of the Special meeting of October 13, 2008.

**CITY OF CALISTOGA
PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, October 13, 2008
5:30 PM
Calistoga Community Center
1307 Washington St., Calistoga, CA

Chairman Jeff Manfredi
Vice- Chairman Clayton Creager
Commissioner Carol Bush
Commissioner Paul Coates
Commissioner Nicholas Kite

“California Courts have consistently upheld that development is a privilege, not a right.”

Among the most cited cases for this proposition are Associated Home Builders, Inc. v. City of Walnut Creek, 4 Cal.3d633 (1971) (no right to subdivide), and Trent Meredith, Inc. v. City of Oxnard, 114 Cal. App. 3d 317 (1981) (development is a privilege).

1 **Vice-Chairman Creager** called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

2

3 **A. ROLL CALL**

4 **Present:** Vice-Chairman Clayton Creager, Commissioners Carol Bush, Nicholas Kite and Paul
5 Coates. **Absent:** Chairman Jeff Manfredi. **Staff Present:** Jim McCann, City Manager,
6 Charlene Gallina, Planning and Building Director, Ken MacNab, Senior Planner and Kathleen
7 Guill, Planning Commission Secretary. **Absent:** Erik Lundquist, Assistant Planner.

8

9 **B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

10

11 **C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

12 **Michael Quast**, 1300 Washington Street. commented regarding the Urban Design Plan and
13 shared his difficulty in trying to read and understand the changes between the previous review
14 and this Staff Report. He asked if staff could explain how the language changes would be
15 presented to provide better clarity of those changes.

16

17 **Vice-Chairman Creager** asked staff to address the question during their presentation.

18

19 **D. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA**

20 There was motion by **Commissioner Kite**, seconded by **Commissioner Coates** to approve the
21 agenda as submitted. **Motion carried: 4-0-1-0.**

22

23 **E. CONSENT CALENDAR**

24 Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes of September 15, 2008.

25 There was motion by **Commissioner Coates**, seconded by **Commissioner Kite**, to approve the
26 Minutes of September 15, 2008 as presented. **Motion carried: 4-0-1-0.**

27

28 **F. TOUR OF INSPECTION**

29

30 **G. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

31 **Vice-Chairman Creager** reported receipt of additional comments and correspondence including
32 additional comments from Kristin Casey.

33

34 **H. PUBLIC HEARING**

35 **Draft Urban Design Plan.** Initial presentation of the Draft Urban Design Plan (UDP) and
36 consideration of public comments received to date. The UDP is required by the General Plan and
37 is intended to articulate community expectations for future public and private improvement and

38 development efforts. The Draft UDP provides recommendations regarding land use, design,
39 circulation, development objectives and identifies key public improvements to support and
40 implement direction of the Calistoga General Plan. This proposed action is exempt from the
41 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15183, and Section 15262 of the
42 CEQA Guidelines.

43

44 **Vice-Chairman Creager** opened the public hearing asking the audience to please limit comments
45 to those issues that were unaddressed in the previous hearings and asked if their comment has
46 been provided to please move on. He stressed the need to get to deliberations during this
47 meeting and would appreciate everyone's cooperation.

48

49 **City Manager McCann** reported receipt of recommendations from the Oversight Committee as
50 well as a whole series of recommendations for modification provided from the community during
51 the September 15, 2008 Planning Commission meeting. He noted many speakers had stated
52 their appreciation for the changes, but concern still remained in three areas identified as 1)
53 potential conflicts and inconsistencies with relationship to the General Plan; 2) affected property
54 owners of properties on Lincoln Avenue shared concern with limitations in the Resort Area; and 3)
55 extension of Washington Street to Dunaweal, and the future roadway from Foothill to Grants
56 Street.

57

58 **City Manager McCann** provided an overview of the conformity matter acknowledging Kristin
59 Casey's comments and agreed there is a need to be careful not to have competing documents.
60 He stated the Urban Design Plan is a planning tool and needs to be consistent and without conflict
61 to the General Plan. Staff agrees the General Plan is the dominant document and is considered
62 the constitution or blue print. The idea behind the Urban Design Plan is to examine the broad
63 ideas through process, gain public input, measure new recommendations and move forward to
64 obtain agreement by City Council. What comes out of the report is direction to staff to make a
65 series of amendments to the General Plan. He reminded a text amendment to the 2003 General
66 Plan requires additional public hearings item by item for each individual plan amendment for
67 determination on if we should refine or amend the Plan. Some of those will be a simple language
68 change or addition to policies objectives, and others may be more significant. He clarified the
69 point is the UDP is the starting point and the direction document says go pursue these.

70

71 **City Manager McCann** responded regarding the Resort Character area on the western side of
72 Lincoln Avenue, stating concern is understandable with the current range of activities being very
73 broad, however due to recommendations during previous public meetings it was determined we
74 should not extend the downtown and there was significant concern about the amount of hotel
75 developments being allowed.

76

77 **City Manager McCann** responded to the last point regarding circulation stating there has been a
78 long standing recommendation for an extension of Washington Street to Dunaweal. Concerns
79 included suggestions there will be potential adjustments to the existing city limits and/or
80 acquisition of property currently within the County. He advised any change must be within the
81 current configuration of our boundaries and there is no suggestion to expand city boundaries. The
82 other circulation matter is strictly to establish connection of Foothill to Grant Street and showing
83 the idea for a future road connection has met with lots of opposition from that part of town. The
84 purpose is to establish a plan line for a long term expectation. Having said that this particular
85 connection from Foothill to Grant Street was reported to address circulation. We have very low
86 density for the land in this area and so much of the land is already developed. There is no

87 tremendous growth anticipated in that area and any road established will not address traffic
88 volume, but it has been identified to provide an alternate route. He reported further it is not
89 intended to be attractive to commute traffic and it will be designed accordingly. Should this not
90 move forward, it will not preclude the option to look at a connection with a future project and
91 pedestrian bridges. However it is helpful to include the language as an introduction to the
92 character areas, and he provided a draft of that in the Staff Report.

93
94 **City Manager McCann** stated the Urban Design Plan provides direction but is not a binding
95 document. The document will be used to prepare a work plan to bring forward amendments to the
96 General Plan. Identified errors and inconsistencies are going to be captured and corrected.

97
98 **City Manager McCann** wanted to address a flyer that had been included in the newspaper noting
99 the flyer suggests there are many things being proposed that are not consistent with the rural
100 character of Calistoga.

- 101 • 2000 new hotel rooms and hotels three stories in height.

102 The Urban Design Plan recommendations are based on the General Plan which states there will
103 be additional hotel rooms and it is likely there will be some located at the former Gliderport.

104 However he wouldn't suspect the number of rooms will not be anywhere near 2000. Even with
105 rose glasses he would only anticipate 300 rooms. He further noted the General Plan does allow
106 three stories but the Urban Design Plan suggests in some cases less.

- 107 • Parking structures

108 There are not multiple structures proposed, only one structure.

109 Development of the Gliderport

- 110 • Due to the importance and central location of this piece of land it may be broken out into its
111 own character area.

- 112 • County Agricultural Land

113 No County agricultural land shall be affected by the General Plan or the Urban Design Plan.

- 114 • Local Business on Lincoln Avenue.

115 It was suggested the Plan would force local business off Lincoln Avenue and that was incorrect.

116 The Urban Design Plan never suggested local business should be moved. However if new
117 business is proposed they should be active retail on the ground floor. That correction was actually
118 a recommendation within the September 15, 2008 Staff Report for the language to be dropped
119 out, no discussion on limiting local business or future business in the downtown.

- 120 • Roundabouts

121 Round-a-bouts were suggested at Petrified Forest, Lincoln at Foothill, and Silverado Trail.

122 Round-a-bouts will not be identified as a preferred measure nor will there be any emphasis given
123 to round-a-bouts.

- 124 • Spanish Version

125 Converting the Urban Design Plan into Spanish is being examined to determine the best way to
126 approach this, along with arrangements for an outreach meeting in Spanish with a translator.

127
128 **City Manager McCann** reported the preparation of the Urban Design Plan has been a
129 tremendous process, with examination of the General Plan, obtaining input, and fine tuning. It is a
130 testament that Calistogans remain engaged with continued involvement, thank you. It was staff's
131 recommendation to take additional testimony and Planning Commission recommendations to City
132 Council.

133
134 **Vice-Chairman Creager** asked in what form the document would be forwarded to Council.
135

136 **City Manager McCann** reported once Planning Commission recommendations were concluded
137 Staff will integrate those with the changes from the September 15th meeting into one text only
138 document, with strike out/replacement tracking.

139
140 **Vice-Chairman Creager** asked the Commission and Staff if they had any comments to add
141 before opening the public hearing.

142
143 **Commissioner Coates** stated the Urban Design Plan was weak from the stand point of
144 encouragement, suggesting there should be some mechanism to help existing local business and
145 property owners. We need more open dialogue with these people and this could be the tool to do
146 it. More emphasis should be on giving assistance to existing property owners that want to expand
147 because they have demonstrated to us they have an investment in Calistoga.

148
149 **Commissioner Bush** shared her concern that they were being asked to approve the document
150 without seeing the final draft they were approving.

151
152 **Commissioner Kite** reported the process has appeared as a situation of them verses us, and he
153 hoped we could make this "us and us". He reminded ideas change but this needs to create the
154 best anchor for whole community.

155
156 **Vice-Chairman Creager** reported his involvement in the process since visioning in 1995-1996.
157 Starting with an informal ad hoc group (a citizens grass roots effort), through planning concepts
158 that were reviewed by the General Plan advisory committee, and then on the Planning
159 Commission. He reported he has done this because he cares about this town although he has no
160 business affiliation in this town. He asked for clarification related to the proposed northern
161 crossing, suggesting for now the intention was to remove the northern crossing language.

162
163 **City Manager McCann** stated a need for a recommendation to amend the language to have that
164 removed.

165
166 **Vice-Chairman Creager** asked if there was a need for additional input related to the northern
167 crossing across Napa River from Foothill to Grant Street for a meandering road.

168
169 **Commissioner Kite** stated the language is soft, establishing only a plan line and described it as
170 unthreatening.

171
172 **City Manager McCann** noted a plan line is a formal articulation of our intent, that means there will
173 be a road in the future.

174
175 **Commissioner Kite** asked if a need would have to be demonstrated before there was
176 consideration for a roadway.

177
178 **Vice-Chairman Creager** stated what he has heard is if a project comes forward that clearly
179 requires circulation on the north side there should be consideration, however it is highly unlikely.
180 The Commissioners concurred.

181
182 **City Manager McCann** stated today the General Plan does not have a plan line and presents no
183 expectation. If there were a plan line, he would be inconsistent with the General Plan, if the
184 thought is we may desire that in the future we need to make it clear.

185 **Commissioner Kite** questioned how likely a large development would be considered to the north
186 of the river, therefore if there is no such plan development why put the plan line in.
187

188 **City Manager McCann** stated the City would always look at project merits, so if there is a desire
189 for the road we should make folks aware of that, reminding that the nature of the development
190 anticipated in the area would not create traffic volume, it would address circulation.
191

192 **Vice-Chairman Creager** stated the Commission was in agreement they were not comfortable
193 with the north crossing.
194

195 **Commissioner Kite** suggested language for some other form of a pedestrian or bike crossing.
196

197 **Vice-Chairman Creager** opened the public portion of the hearing at 6:15 PM, asking comments
198 be limited to discussion of items that have not already been addressed.
199

200 **Kristin Casey**, 1132 Denise, although the plan line does not need to be addressed, she
201 confirmed a plan line still means something will happen. Referencing the road extension
202 Washington to Dunaweal Road, she said when looking at the map you can see it will be very hard
203 to use the roadway for truck passage, and she is very fond of the open space and the wildlife you
204 see from the bike path. (see attachment 1)
205

206 **Whitney Fisher**, 1501 Cedar St., noted although the roadway from Washington to Dunaweal has
207 been in the plan for over 20 years she didn't think property owners have had their voices heard.
208 She requested an opportunity to have landowners come together for review on the need. Ms.
209 Fisher reported the general nature of a public roadway through that area would inherently create a
210 sphere of influence issue to those there, and that would be contrary to the Resolution on Sphere
211 of Influence.
212

213 **Christopher Layton**, 1010 Foothill, reported submission of a letter provided with the Staff Report,
214 but hearing comment from Commissioner Coates he wanted to comment further. Mr. Layton
215 stated the suggestion for consideration to be given to assist existing property owners wanting to
216 expand is appropriate. He reported their desire to build a small swimming pool as an
217 improvement to his business and has met with some obstacles.
218

219 **City Manager McCann** reported Mr. Layton's suggestion was specific to the Lincoln/Foothill
220 gateway area, the property is on a boundary and his suggestion is the property should be included
221 in the area to allow two properties to retain the residential, commercial and outdoor space.
222

223 **Don Scott**, 4281 Scott Way, lived near the Washington Street extension area, stated he was
224 opposed to the extension for a lot of reasons. He reported riding his bicycle on the path, stating it
225 is beautiful and to remove and replace it with a street is bad idea. He reported an insufficient
226 right-of-way where it goes in front of the Tofanelli property, and looking at severance damage it is
227 very expensive. He shared concern for the impact to the residents and their proximity to the street
228 and in his opinion would render the residence unusable.
229

230 **Vince Tofanelli**, Ida Clayton Road, provided written comments, (see attachment 2). He reported
231 last meeting there had been a request for specifications of the proposed roadway.
232

233 **City Manager McCann** reported there is no design detail at this level, this is about an existing
234 plan line and questioning if it should remain in the plan.
235

236 **Vince Tofanelli** stated the issue is the creation of a truck route to Dunaweal Road right in front of
237 his childhood home. He reported during review of the proposed bike path the question was
238 asked, is this just phase one of a future plan for a roadway and they were told no. However
239 indeed this appears to have become phase one of future roadway development. Mr. Tofanelli
240 stated familiarity of the area at the last quarter mile, noting there are seventy five trees in the area
241 and asked how a roadway could be put in without encroaching on agricultural land. He asked the
242 Commission to pull back and look closely at the greater impacts as a whole. He asked if there is
243 enough water and sewer capacity to build out the plan. He recommended the Commissioners
244 vote against approval of the Urban Design Plan and elect to require more study.
245

246 **Dennis Kelly**, Silverado Trail, shared his concern declaring we have a water problem and now we
247 have a tax problem. He suggested the plan is directed toward how to create more taxes and pay
248 the City more.
249

250 **Andrew D'Anneo**, 1085 Dunaweal, stated he opposed the extension of Washington Street
251 because it will not provide a benefit. He suggested rerouting the truck traffic from Lincoln Avenue
252 will probably only benefit Crystal Geysers. Mr. D'Anneo stated while it is awkward for large trucks,
253 it is only one turn from Lincoln Avenue. Dunaweal will require three turns and given the little
254 demand for travel except for Crystal Geysers it seems out of proportion. He believed to move the
255 bike path for a roadway will condemn the adjacent property. He asked the City to consider the
256 expense required when developing a roadway and he did not believe this will reduce Lincoln
257 Avenue traffic, in fact it may cause the opposite and will destroy the character and charm of
258 community. (see attachment 3)
259

260 **Arminee Chahbazian** provided a statement (attachment 4) stating all we need for revitalization is
261 self confidence. Calistoga has a drop dead gorgeous backdrop, a historic centralized town center,
262 a diverse friendly population, and a large pool of talent. We need inspiring events to compliment
263 the towns natural unforced and unpretentiousness. Ms. Chahbazian stated having the Urban
264 Design Plan identify an increase in spa accommodations was unnecessary. She believed in self
265 sustainability, and would rather tap home grown talent to promote existing versions of our town.
266 Ms. Chahbazian stated if the Commission fails to listen they are not doing their job. She believed
267 there is overwhelming discontent and asked the Commission to slow it down.
268

269 **Norma Tofanelli** noted she has listened to comments and has also watched the news, and she
270 believed the Urban Design Plan was geared to a boom cycle and was disingenuous because
271 people cannot expand, rebuild or obtain a loan. Referencing Dunaweal Lane she reported the
272 area is a natural area with lots of wildlife and after measuring she believes there is not enough
273 room for a two lane road unless the City takes out trees, plans to redo the sewer ponds, or as an
274 alternative takes out her mothers house or agricultural land, and there is no economic justification
275 to do that. Ms. Tofanelli stated it would be a premature motion if the Commissioners were to send
276 this to the Council.
277

278 **Michael Quast**, 1300 Washington Street, stated he too would like to see all the amendments
279 come back in one document to be able to see it clearly. Mr. Quast stated parking is a problem for
280 all businesses. He asked the Commission to direct Staff to use flexibility when looking at parking.

281 He asked they look at what is in the local community for parking, noting staff does not wish to
282 acknowledge things like traffic turnover and this doesn't create vibrancy.
283

284 **Donna Mathews**, 26 View Road, stated she was concerned about the land behind View Road
285 and the proximity of the Spa Zone to their backyards. Ms. Mathews stated she did have an issue
286 before when the Hemberger's tried to develop their property on Lincoln and would like to see
287 moderate density residential in the area since it backs up to a residential neighborhood, or even a
288 green zone. She reported she did not support a round-a-bout at Silverado Trail because the
289 traffic is never backed up there and noted accidents decreased at that corner when they installed
290 the four way stop sign.

291
292 **Clarence Luvisi**, 285 Rosedale Road, stated he understands the difficulty of translating
293 documents into Spanish, but stated he was insulted that consideration was only for one meeting
294 to be scheduled with a translator.
295

296 Mr. Luvisi read aloud a letter from Jim Fredianni. (see attachment 5) Mr. Fredianni commented
297 on the downtown local serving businesses, rerouting the highway, resort zoning concern, and
298 roadway extensions.
299

300 **Diane Barrett**, 1567 Centennial Circle, referenced comments provided at the September 15
301 meeting, (Minutes, lines 243 and 244) sharing concern that she had not made herself clear that
302 her concern was not having commercial in the Washington area, but was related to so much
303 mixed use required (page 92, Urban Design Plan) with the requirement of two land uses on a
304 property. Ms. Barrett asked if they felt all those mixed use parcels were needed.
305

306 **Vice-Chairman Creager** stated the side streets would primarily be residential and would not
307 require a commercial use.
308

309 **Diane Barrett** referenced the term "funky" and presented an article, dated October 1978, from the
310 San Francisco Examiner regarding tourism, noting they were the ones that came up with "funky",
311 and described the beauty of Calistoga is it brings us all out and it is known what the community
312 means to all of us. We were called unpretentious, anything but glamorous, and that is how we
313 want to remain. Also described as off beat, odd or quirky, unconventionally stylish. (see
314 attachment 6)
315

316 **Donna Fisher** drew attention to parking garages stating we do not want them in our town and
317 noted it is not needed in a small quaint town and it invites crime. She referenced the security
318 issue of a parking plaza and the idea of what parking garages can bring. She noted the parking at
319 Cal Mart and Ace Hardware was safe. Ms. Fisher pleaded not to make us a Windsor or
320 Yountville and shared concern with development of the Merchant property noting it should not
321 redirect business from Lincoln Avenue. Ms. Fisher asked who will pay for these improvements
322 and suggested any change should be to the benefit of the local homeowners.
323

324 **Ann Scott**, Scott Way stated now is a good time to remove the Washington extension from the
325 General Plan and the Urban Design Plan.
326

327 **Vice-Chairman Creager** called for a five minute recess at 7:12 PM; and reconvened at 7:18 PM.
328 He then closed the public portion of the hearing and opened discussion to the Commissioners.
329

330 **Commissioner Kite** pointed out the Urban Design Plan is a driver of change, the economics of
331 change. He stated change will occur with the town and the economics and tide is occurring. The
332 Urban Design Plan is an attempt to shore the banks and give us direction. He noted it is
333 important to get this across because without this, the change will occur one change at a time
334 when someone has some money, and it will occur here and there. We need to do better than just
335 what comes along to make things better for all of us. Referencing specifics of the plan he
336 provided the following comments.

- 337 • Stated the UDP promoted pushing our local serving business off of Lincoln and Washington,
338 he noted the economic tide at some point may make Lincoln Avenue unaffordable to local serving
339 business.
- 340 • Referencing a suggested conspiracy for the City to get more Transient Occupancy Taxes
341 maybe it is a dream, but the reality is the City doesn't have the power to bring in hotels to do this.
- 342 • We do need something to get development coordinated and still retain funky elements.
- 343 • The UDP introduction should frame the document and state this is not the driver of change but
344 it is an attempt to manage change that will occur.
- 345 • We have got to change from broad objectives;
- 346 • Look at intersections, the broad objective is faster, less ugly, and safer. No objections, but
347 when well thought out think clear objective is safer, prettier, faster.
- 348 • Another example, general idea, need better parking with one idea a multi-story parking lot.
349 We need a better objective to address the more parking idea.
- 350 • Less trucks on Lincoln Avenue, one idea is the long standing truck route from Washington to
351 Dunawear, a lot of people think that is an awful idea. The UDP isn't saying it will happen, it is an
352 idea. Idea the mineral water company should put in a pipeline. Distinguish the broad idea for
353 consensus. In similar, I want to see all the changes called out before we provide a
354 recommendation to council. We need to know what changes the UDP drives, verses the ideas in
355 place for consideration. Be clear what is necessary and serves a purpose.

356
357 **Commissioner Coates** provided the following comments.

- 358 • Shared his concern with the pictures in the UDP, compared with the funky, special, unique that
359 has been described, and he asked if that is what we are going to try to support.
- 360 • There have been and will be different people with different ideas, and that is eclectic and that
361 is Calistoga.
- 362 • Suggested the UDP may limit the ability for development to choose.
- 363 • Further noted what he has not heard is support for the way the UDP is written, and he would
364 not endorse the UDP the way it is written. Although he acknowledged it does have some
365 things that will work.
- 366 • He questioned if the UDP is just another level of bureaucracy.

367
368 **Commissioner Bush** provided the following comments.

- 369 • The extension of Washington to Dunawear is a bad idea.
- 370 • She likes Calistoga the way it is.
- 371 • Noted she understands we need to make decisions, but we need to nurture and encourage
372 business that is here.
- 373 • Referencing page 92, related to parcel specific mixed use development that is required in
374 lower Washington and stated she would like to see it changed to recommended, not required
375 to leave room for flexibility,
- 376 • Does not see side streets developed with mixed use.

377 • Noted it seemed the only place new visitor accommodation zoning will be allowed would
378 basically be the Gliderport, and questioned why it would be deleted out of the western Lincoln
379 area and the Cal Min property.
380

381 **City Manager McCann** provided an overview of the Resort designation in town at Silverado
382 Trail/Lincoln Avenue noting there will be the redevelopment of the Calistoga Village Inn and Spa.
383 The Capri Development and Hemberger properties would not be designated with a Resort
384 designation. The Cal Min parcels have a split designation with the back portion, community
385 commercial. The direction was to reduce/limit the extent of land designated for hotel
386 development. Indian Springs, Brannan's, Solage, Silver Rose, and the Patel property exists.
387 The land behind Cal Beverage is not Resort. The only new Resort area designation of land within
388 the new suggestions would be the former Gliderport.
389

390 **Vice-Chairman Creager** asked what the rationale was for removing visitor accommodation
391 designation from Cal Min.
392

393 **City Manager McCann** reported the Cal Min properties have two designations, light industrial and
394 Community Commercial. The thought was to refine that to make the range more limited and it
395 was a reaction to previous community input to limit those and emphasizing redevelopment.
396

397 **Commissioner Bush** recommended Cal Beverage be given the designation to allow for the
398 flexibility to do whatever is needed to remain viable as a business.
399

400 **City Manager McCann** noted the property is currently not consistent with today's General Plan. It
401 is not industrial and with the new UDP the same hurdle of a zone change would be required.
402

403 **Commissioner Bush** stated she did not think they should be precluded from the process.
404

405 **City Manager McCann** stated present land use has few sites designated as industrial. We don't
406 have heavy commercial light industrial. This plan may add opportunities particularly in lower
407 Washington. We encourage mixed use to further that to accommodate a variety of business.
408

409 **Commissioner Bush** suggested parcel specific mixed use, limiting the ability for light industry.
410

411 **City Manager McCann** as we move forward there will be amendments to the General Plan,
412 amendments to Zoning, these are generally recommended or someone can come forward with a
413 requested use on a case by case basis. More clarity could be built into it if not firm enough,
414

415 **Commissioner Kite** stated if we are too specific it would make it less flexible. As explained it
416 doesn't remove flexibility. Keep in mind change will come, however we don't know if industrial is
417 part of what is coming. Historically industry is leaving town.
418

419 **Commissioner Bush** stated she didn't think we should preclude or make it difficult for them.
420

421 **Commissioner Coates** noted this is a proposal to draft policies and questioned how Staff saw
422 this working and how fast.
423

424 **Director Gallina** implementation recommendations after we go through the UDP process is to
425 identify what changes to the Land Use and Zoning maps are needed and what policies need to be

426 included in the General Plan. This effort would commence as soon as Council takes action on the
427 Urban Design Plan. There will be a series of amendments to both the General Plan and the
428 Zoning Ordinance. The changes will be presented for public hearings, and some will require
429 environmental documentation. There may be a series of changes brought at once or for the more
430 controversial items it would come forward one topic at a time.

431
432 **Commissioner Coates** stated the UDP is too restrictive, noting there is a need for the ability to
433 have input where it needs to be.

434
435 **Vice-Chairman Creager** noted this is a balancing act, we initiated the process with a community
436 presentation in October of 2006, we have had six community presentations, and 100 meetings
437 with various stake holders and property owners. The request for this plan came from residents
438 concerned about Calistoga's vitality. There is a need for a guide for development, remember Rite
439 Aid, there are not practical guidelines for the gateways, but anybody looking can see the value if
440 they open the UDP by character area, look at photos and look to see if their project is in the
441 ballpark. If we had this we could have avoided proposals that are not consistent with what we
442 value in the community. I think what I've captured is we do have something to work with, although
443 we are not ready to pass this on tonight because we would like an opportunity to participate in the
444 review of the tracked changes from the feedback received and integrated.

445
446 **Commissioner Kite** agreed staff needs to provide a rewrite. We have touched on the idea we
447 would like the public to be involved in the editing process. Make changes to reflect some things
448 are just ideas and some will cause definite change to occur. There is a mechanism to post the
449 draft on the web site and have the community respond. Until we get to a point of reasonable
450 common ground. Then all directives and ideas would be subject to further public processes.

451
452 **Commissioner Coates** noted we need to have focus with the community as a whole.

453
454 **Vice-Chairman Creager** reminded under direction of City Council Staff has been directed to get
455 this done as soon as possible and we are going to intervene and play a larger role in shaping the
456 draft.

457
458 **City Manager McCann** stated that would be appropriate. This plan should make people much
459 more comfortable and he was not hearing disagreement, just concern with a few issues. Points
460 he heard from Commissioners Coates and Bush include the desire for flexibility down the road,
461 and give a preview of that. This is not to be a developer's blueprint, it is a community retaining a
462 history of welcoming visitors and providing direction to property owners. The idea from
463 Commissioner Kite to include a greater introduction showing the why and an explanation of timing
464 to address and reduce concerns. Staff will take the comments and make the changes and bring
465 the text to the subcommittee, then to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will
466 have a greater role in this. We want this document to be well accepted. When we achieve this is
467 not the most important, getting the audience to applaud the document is.

468
469 **Commissioner Kite** requested the cycle of time between those changes not be another six
470 months and wanted progress to be posted.

471
472 **City Manager McCann** noted Clarence Luvisi has suggested outreach communications when
473 trying to respond to suggestions.

475 **Commissioner Kite** suggested putting in a directory that links to the web site.

476

477 **Vice-Chairman Creager** understood the anxiety, but suggested build out will not necessarily
478 happen because we have resource management in place, and as time goes on water/wastewater
479 will be a scarcer commodity, so proposals do not mean an allocation. He asked if anyone has sat
480 down and generated a report of complete build out, for water and wastewater. Vice-Chairman
481 Creager stated it is quite an exercise, modeling instead of working on a case by case resource
482 system. Each proposal weighted against resources of the time.

483

484 **City Manager McCann**, stated the Urban Design Plan is not a stand alone document. Property
485 within Calistoga has development potential and a huge range of commercial activities doesn't
486 change that. It is correct the General Plan has a policy for controlled managed growth, the
487 Growth Management Allocation program meters out a ticket that allows for a development
488 application. Process governs that. There is an infrastructure long range plan and we are working
489 to improve those things planned for certain growth, including the capacity of water/wastewater and
490 how to improve that.

491

492 **Commissioner Kite** noted concentrating on the General Plan there are some quick wins, such as
493 signage and improving pedestrian access and we don't need General Plan amendments to obtain
494 those, we shouldn't loose site of those things.

495

496 **Vice-Chairman Creager** addressed the Washington Street extension topic stating it is one of
497 those things that seems to be an intractable problem. Washington Street is more and more a part
498 of the community as development has occurred and he has heard repeatedly from business
499 owners get trucks off of Lincoln Avenue. It is tough, traffic studies reflect over burdened
500 Highways 28/129 at the intersections at Lincoln. It is difficult and has been thought through as an
501 issue for 20 years for a good reason. We are still stuck on how to get better access to that part of
502 the community. Something needs to be done, but he agreed we should not encroach on the
503 agricultural area.

504

505 **Commissioner Kite** noted a roadway extension is a big and costly thing, therefore it needs big
506 benefits to match. He was not sure the extent of the problem is of that magnitude.

507

508 **City Manager McCann** noted the idea is not solely a truck route, the purpose is to provide an
509 alternate means of ingress/egress for everybody. The original objective is to address
510 circulation/alternate routes. The General Plan states there is a problem that needs to be resolved.
511 Consideration of Fairway or Washington to the Bounsall property or to Dunaweal. These are
512 alternatives that could help solve the issue. There is no conclusion known yet, it needs to be
513 addressed with a comprehensive study before we go forward. The concern is a lack of trust, and
514 he wanted to make it clear there are a lot of steps that will need to take place.

515

516 **Vice-Chairman Creager** provided the following comments.

517

- 518 • He stated the Washington area is growing and there will be more mixed use in the area, it
519 will be more dense, there are a lot of children currently in the area, and it is over burdened
- 520 • Parking. He reported that virtually with every proposal the most difficult issue is parking
521 and how to address it.
- 522 • He commends the UDP team for thinking about parking. Calistoga is suffering death by
523 car, through traffic. The UDP is a contingency for things already occurring. Parking

524 garages can be designed and integrated into the landscape and solve problems we face
525 already today. Please keep an open mind.

526
527 **Commissioner Kite** stated the consensus is parking needs to be addressed, idea's need to be
528 considered for structures. Adoption of the UDP doesn't say here's the building and it shall stand
529 there.

530
531 **Vice-Chairman Creager** directed attention to next steps and how to integrate comments, and
532 work with staff to prepare the amended draft.

533
534 **Commissioner Kite** suggested moving forward with content changes. Staff should retain the
535 main editorial writing responsibility, as drafts come through just post them on web, with a
536 mechanism as produced so the public can have access to the drafts.

537
538 **Vice-Chairman Creager** stated we could post a draft in word document form. Could the public
539 post and change if we provide general specific editing directions. Public comments would need to
540 include information on what they don't like, why, and a recommendation for a specific change.
541 We would need a subcommittee to compile and integrate information.

542
543 **City Manager McCann** recommended the Oversight Committee be included.

544
545 **Vice-Chairman Creager** agreed there should be one of the members of the Oversight
546 Committee, and appointed Commissioner Kite to the committee.

547
548 **City Manager McCann** noted to date there was not an established date to bring the UDP back.
549 However once a date has been set notification will be distributed and noticed in the newspaper.
550 At the minimum we are looking at a month or more.

551
552 **Vice-Chairman Creager** referenced Clarence Luvisi's comment on the need to engage the
553 Hispanic community. He agreed it is a problem the City wrestles with and it is something we need
554 to get better at. However, it is difficult due to language and economic reasons, we should work at
555 it, but he realistically wouldn't expect a huge turn out due to other obstacles. Translation of the
556 document by a translator is expensive, so he suggested preparation of an executive summary
557 instead of the entire document.

558
559 **Vice-Chairman Creager** reopened the public comment portion of the hearing at 8:25 PM.

560
561 **Dieter Deiss** stated this could be put on the Web site in blocks, if we approach it as six proposed
562 character areas, and 4 pages of visions, anyone could agree or disagree and provide a comment.
563 This could be an asset as a town, getting the ground response. Macro Vision is a tool available
564 right now..

565
566 **Vice-Chairman Creager** stated that was a great suggestion and you are on the subcommittee.

567
568 **Clarence Luvisi** reported over the years he has attended a limited number of Planning
569 Commission meetings, however if you attend you would never question the Commissioners have
570 the best interest of this town at heart, as this has been demonstrated in a really clear decisive
571 way. He stated he loved the idea to allow the public to make positive specific suggestions.
572

573 **Michael Quast** commended Commissioner Kite and his request that when the UDP comes out
574 before it comes back it should be made clear what an action is and what is a suggestion. That will
575 be very helpful and was an insightful request.

576
577 **Doug Cook**, 1009 Wappo, suggested putting a delta to the analysis with a dedicated area to
578 resorts. He noted much of the zoning allows resorts so is there a gain by making the change.

579
580 **Vice-Chairman Creager** closed the public hearing at 8:35 PM.

581
582 **I. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSIONERS**

583
584 **Commissioner Kite** requested staff address City water capacity. He keeps hearing there is more
585 than enough, but hears the public stating they don't believe there is enough. He would like to get
586 facts. In similar vain he would like information related to reported boron water polluting water
587 illegally.

588
589 **Director Gallina** reported she would ask the Public Works Director to respond to these issues, as
590 a topic.

591
592 **Commissioner Coates** requested staff look at alternative affordable housing programs, noting he
593 has investigated options and we have the necessary ability. Commissioner Coates stated he
594 would be glad to volunteer his services if needed.

595
596 **City Manager McCann** stated the City Council has created a goal to address existing affordable
597 housing policies and Planner MacNab and Director Gallina will be revisiting the housing element.
598 This will be a matter brought to the Commission early next year. We need to determine what the
599 most important needs are, for sale, rehabilitating, etc.

600
601 **Commissioner Coates** suggested this was a delay tactic and was like waiting for a bus that is not
602 coming. An inventory had been previously requested and it seems nothing ever happened here.
603 He repeatedly expressed he would like to see it accelerated/expedited.

604
605 **City Manager McCann** understands the request and acknowledged it is also the desire of the
606 Council to get this accomplished.

607
608 **Vice-Chairman Creager** suggested Commissioner Coates provide the information he has
609 obtained to the team that has been identified.

610
611 **City Manager McCann** reported work will be done in the 2008/2009 this fiscal year.

612
613 **J. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS/PROJECT STATUS**

614
615 **Director Gallina** reported this meeting will be broadcast on Channel 28 on Tuesday at 2:00 PM,
616 Thursday at 7:00 PM and Saturday at 5:00 PM.

617
618 **K. ADJOURNMENT**

619
620 There was motion by **Commissioner Bush** seconded by **Commissioner Kite** to adjourn the
621 meeting. **Motion carried: 4-0-1-0.**

622

623 The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

624

625 The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission was scheduled for Wednesday, October
626 22, 2008 at 5:30 PM.

627

628

629

630 Kathleen Guill,
631 Secretary to the Planning Commission

632

633 Attachments

URBAN DESIGN PLAN COMMENTS
For Planning Commission Meeting

October 13, 2008
Kristin Casey

What Was the General Plan's Mandate In Relation To the Urban Design Plan?

I continue to appreciate the work done by the Committee appointed to draft an Urban Design Plan, and I have supported many suggestions; in addition, I am glad about various changes to be made in response to recently-expressed citizen concerns.

However, I must point out that the UDP has far exceeded the General Plan's mandate, and has in fact over-reached. Let's look at what the UDP says it is, what Staff Reports say it is, and what the General Plan said it was to be.

There are many nice words used in the UDP itself in regard to its mission, such as the following statements: **(1)** The UDP "is intended to insure that the character of Calistoga is retained and in fact enhanced." (page 8); **(2)** "The UDP allows the City Council to articulate the expectations of the community." (page 8); **(3)** "The UDP provides a refined set of development objectives from those broadly established in the General Plan for key areas." (page 9). **(4)** "The UDP is, at its core, a consensus statement by the policy makers of Calistoga reflecting the wishes of the community regarding the future character of Calistoga." (page 10). **(5)** "Improvements which occur must respect the scale and character of the community." (page 10).

Staff Reports have described the UDP as a document "based upon the General Plan," and one that "supports the General Plan." In the September 15, 2008 Staff Report, it says that "the Urban Design Plan follows directly from the General Plan and is intended to address Goal CI-1 of the Community Identity Element of the General Plan," that is to "**Maintain and enhance Calistoga's small-town character.**" The September 15th Staff Report assures us that "the UDP has considered the land use designations established in our 2003 General Plan...to insure that the development which would follow from these existing designations and land use policies would best address the above goal." In the current Staff Report for October 13, it is noted that "the Plan is intended to serve as a report summarizing recommendations for change and amendment to the General Plan and regulatory codes."

Now let's find the General Plan mandate that put all of this work into action. It can be found at page 23 of the Community Identity Element. It is an "action" located beneath Goal #1 (stated above as maintenance and enhancement of our small-town character) and it is beneath the second Community Identity Objective for this Goal [which is to "**Maintain and enhance the urban design quality of the downtown and other commercial areas**"]. Following several Policy statements regarding Community

The General Plan states, in the Community Identity Element at page 3, that “the rural quality of highways entering the city is an important aspect of local community character.” The Entry Corridor where this new street is proposed is primarily agricultural, and forms one of our prettiest entrances to town. Future development of this rural property should not be defined by a through street cutting it in half, but rather by its innate rural character.

This proposal is inconsistent with the General Plan and is opposed by many citizens. It should be deleted from the Urban Design Plan.

A Couple of Other Continued Concerns

- At page 50 of the UDP, the lot behind Riverlea Square on Mitzi Drive is characterized as “high density residential,” but the General Plan Land Use Map clearly designates this “Medium Density Residential,” in order to be consistent with its surrounding neighborhoods and in consideration of the fact that this area is at the edge of town and not close to the center of town. This is inconsistent with the General Plan and needs to be corrected before the UDP is adopted. Although Staff has agreed with me on this point, I see nothing in the Staff Report about it being corrected.
- We should preserve the current open space where our new bike path takes many of us from the end of Lower Washington Street down to Dunaweal Lane. This path gives us, locals and tourists alike, a peaceful and lovely place to take a breath and view incredible wildlife without the noise and distraction of the urban world. To turn it into a truck route would destroy this local treasure. I don’t see how the space owned by the City down near Dunaweal Lane could possibly accommodate a street for large trucks, without encroaching on private agricultural land.
- I agree with other commentators that the same generalized verbiage about considering all possible safety improvements at intersections, and not specifying only one (the roundabout option), should extend to the discussions relating to all intersections leading into town.

Identity in commercial areas, Action A-1 states, "Prepare an Urban Design Plan for central Calistoga."

The UDP is not mandated in the Land Use Element, although the UDP attempts to say this is so (page 7). The UDP is not, as asserted in Staff Reports, mandated by the General Plan to "provide refinement and guidance on goals, objectives, and policies of the Land Use Element, the Circulation Element, the Housing Element, the Geothermal Element, the Open Space Element, the Conservation Element, and the Economic Development Element." It simply asks, in the Community Identity Element, that we clarify the urban design of commercial areas.

Why Is A Through Street Still Being Recommended Just North of Mitzi Drive?

One proposal in the UDP which has come out of left field and bears no resemblance whatsoever to any recommendations in our 2003 General Plan, is the suggestion of requiring a thoroughfare through the rural residential property just north of Mitzi Drive, from Grant Street over to Highway 128.

It makes no difference if the Committee and Staff want to refer to this as an innocuous "plan line." If it were to be included in the UDP, it would send the message to future Planners and citizens that the community agreed on the goal of having a through street here. Further, it would necessarily bind any future development of this Rural Residential property to such a cut-through. It would dictate an amendment to the General Plan Circulation Element which we do not want.

The continuing support of this recommendation by the Committee flies in the face of major opposition by many Calistoga citizens who would be directly affected by its implementation.

This proposed street would disgorge traffic approximately one-tenth of a mile north of the Petrified Forest intersection. This area is too close to the incredibly congested traffic areas of the Petrified Forest Road intersection, Mitzi Drive, and the ingress/egress road for the subdivision on the west side of 128. A through street at this point would add an unacceptable level of traffic to an already dangerous and problematic stretch of road.

The 2003 General Plan envisioned no such cross street. The Land Use Map in the General Plan designated this rural area as Rural Residential, without any suggestion that it would be used as a cut-through. The General Plan's Circulation Element, at page CIR-25, states its first Objective as follows: "Develop Calistoga's street network of arterials, collectors, primary local and local streets as discussed in Section C of this Circulation Element and shown in Figure CIR-4." Neither Section C of the Circulation Element nor Figure CIR-4 (which shows "Existing and Planned Street Classifications") includes any suggestion of a through street at this location. In addition Figure CIR-5 ("Street Improvements") does not include this proposed new street.

10/13/08

October 13, 2008

Page 1

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

In regards to the Urban Design Plan, I'm reminded of the movie, Field of Dreams. "BUILD IT, AND THEY WILL COME", seems to be the mantra of the supporters. Where is the oversight, the traffic studies, the E.I.R., the water and sewer studies, to back up such a grandiose plan? What are the impacts on local inhabitants? I see none of this in the plan you are being asked to approve.

Of course, the issue nearest and dearest to me is the proposed "truck route" to Dunaweal Lane. This road will literally be in the front yard of my childhood home. When I asked City Council two years ago if the proposed Bike Path was phase one of this Truck Route, I was told emphatically, NO!

Indeed, the Bike Path has become Phase One, and, at best, will be a sorely compromised bike path to make room for the Truck Route to Dunaweal.

We are now being told that this new Road will be just a truck route. Just a Truck route? Now, I ask the question; is the proposed Truck Route Phase One for a new general traffic route into Calistoga? Perhaps to our "new Downtown" on the Airport property? Excuse me for my lack of trust in the collected voice of our officials.

As they say, once bitten, twice shy.

I could go on about the traffic congestion, the egress/ingress at the Dunaweal/HWY29 intersection, etc. etc. But that is something you should be discussing for a Traffic EIR.

Instead, I would like to pull back and look at even greater impacts for the community as a whole:

Let's just look at water/sewer. City staff tells us that we have enough water/sewer for build out of this plan. On Monday morning of Labor day weekend, I had the unfortunate experience of being within a moderate distance of the Sewer Treatment Plant. To describe the smell, I would have you imagine a High school locker room of about 1,400 students taking a shower at the same time. That would capture the smell that was emanating from Calistoga's Plant.

Much of the smell, no doubt, came from visitors taking care of their business in rooms that they paid dearly for. Now, anyone staying in a \$200 to \$400 room is entitled to take as long of a shower as they desire and water conservation is not a priority for them at that time. To imagine the smell after build out of the UDP is unimaginable.

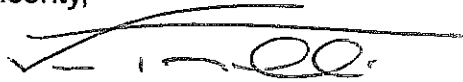
Let's visit the water situation briefly, since this is a complex, vastly important issue that demands a full scale investigation. In California, we are in the second year of a moderate drought cycle. This fall, over 20 wells in the upper Napa Valley failed in a two week period (a few calls to local well drillers should confirm this). It is my understanding that Calistoga, along with other cities in the Valley are trying to obtain more water from the North Bay Aqueduct System. N.B.A.S. is telling us there is not enough water, given the drought cycle, to supply 100% allocation to both cities and fisheries .

Is Calistoga involved in a Lawsuit regarding this?

In any case, I find it difficult to fathom that we have enough *guaranteed* water to supply future build out of this extensive make-over of our Town.

In conclusion,
it is my understanding that Planning Staff is recommending your approval of this project. I am here tonight to implore you, to beg you, to vote against this Urban Design Plan. If that is not possible please elect to send it back for more study. I ask you not just for myself, but for all our locals that want to continue a life here in a real town. Not one re-manufactured for the tourist trade.

With utmost sincerity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vince Tofanelli". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish above the name.

Vince Tofanelli

10/13/08

Andrew H. D'Anneo
1085 Dunaweal Lane
Calistoga CA 94515
Tel. (707) 942-4230
audanneo@napanet.net

13 October 2008

To The Planning Department of the City Of Calistoga:

RE URBAN DESIGN PLAN

I have lived on Dunaweal Lane since 1974. Besides being a long term resident at the above address, I have a special feeling for Calistoga, which derives in part from learning that my maternal great-grandfather, Hugh Hillis Dobbins, an ordained Presbyterian minister, came here in the 1880s to establish a Presbyterian community and church. He stayed about five years before going to the San Joaquin valley to form another community.

I ~~am~~ oppose extending Washington Street to Dunaweal Lane as proposed in the Plan, both in my own interest and because it will not achieve the "benefits" desired by the Urban Design Plan to reroute much of the existing traffic, importantly truck traffic from along Lincoln Avenue. I'm addressing that issue.

Proponents of lower Washington Street extension maintain that truck traffic now going through town and clogging Lincoln Avenue would instead use Dunaweal Lane and the Washington extension to reach central Calistoga. In fact, most of the truck traffic going on Hwy #29 in the direction of Lake county presently uses Dunaweal Lane and does not even enter Calistoga. Living on Dunaweal Lane, I can testify that a minimum of five large diesels, some with trailers, go nightly through Dunaweal to the Silverado Trail and do not even see Calistoga. More go through during the day, which I don't keep track of.

I often use the bike path to walk from Dunaweal Lane into town and back along lower Washington St. Aside from pickups, the only large trucks I ever see, on or parked along Washington Street below Lincoln, are those hauling tank trailers destined to the Crystal Geyser water bottling plant. Of necessity, those trucks, must use Washington St. to deliver their cargo. Were there a Washington extension, those trucks would probably use it from Dunaweal Lane to avoid Calistoga traffic and congestion. But from what I have seen, they would be the only ones to benefit and reduce Lincoln Avenue traffic.

Other traffic going into Calistoga by Highway 29 would not use the extension because their destination would probably be in town or along Lincoln Ave, and go by way of the intersection with Lincoln Ave. To get directly to their in-town destination. The

awkward large trucks would have to make only make one turn, at the signal from Hwy 29. To use the proposed Washington extension route would require them and other traffic to make three turns to get onto Lincoln Ave.: right onto Dunaweal, left onto lower Washington St., and right or left again onto Lincoln Ave. You can bet the diesels and semis wouldn't do that.

Given there would be little demand for travel on an eventual lower Washington Street: except for Crystal Geyser trucks, does not the cost to benefit relationship of developing lower Washington St. seem out of proportion:

To develop lower Washington St. one must:

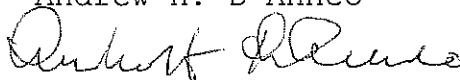
- Move the Bike path;
- Condemn existing vineyard and private property
- Move and re-establish the waste water treatment plant, and its ponds,
- Move the city dump along with concurrent expenses
- Pave a new road extension.

All this must happen to get a new route to a destination, down-town Calistoga, which is more easily and efficiently reached by the existing one change of direction and turn into Calistoga at the intersection of Lincoln and Hwy 29? The expenses for all the changes required to develop roadway along lower Washington St. necessarily contemplate recruitment of businesses to locate there, and sale or lease of existing properties along the new roadway, to increase the tax base and create revenues to reimburse the city for the development. How much will be necessary and how long it will take to repay the as yet unknown costs? No one knows. Moreover, if the aim of the plan is to reduce traffic, developing lower Washington St. will have the opposite result of more, not less, traffic, but not truck traffic, and it will likely originate from in town to go to the new businesses, rather than from Dunaweal Lane.

In previous meetings it has been said, and not denied, that no reliable statistics have been developed to measure the flow of traffic that will be affected by the proposed "improvement". My guess is that also no one knows how much the extension will cost and projections as to how it will be paid for. These data and more must be developed before undertaking to spend the amount of money and effort that will be necessary.

I will let others argue against the effect that parking garages, relocating businesses that serve the community, and so forth, will have in destroying the character and charm of our community. I urge you not to approve the Urban Design Plan.

Andrew H. D'Anneo



10/13/08

12 October, 2008

City of Calistoga

Re: Urban Design Plan

To whom it may concern:

It is my belief that the Urban Design Plan for Calistoga is, at its core, deeply flawed and should not be pursued. When I ask myself why this plan was drafted in the first place, the only explanation I can muster is that the city is seeking ways to increase tax revenue or that Calistoga is feeling left behind and aspires to some re-vitalization. In either case, I ask you to please pause and look closer. All that Calistoga needs is an injection of self-confidence. Everything required to make and keep this town a vibrant and self-sustaining community, both for its residents and visitors, is already in place. Why change what already so clearly defines this unique place? Here's my short list of Calistoga's existing assets:

- the drop-dead gorgeous physical backdrop
- walkability and bicycle-friendly approach, good not only for getting around but for getting exercise
- an historic, centralized town center where the community comes together
- a diverse and friendly population which welcomes visitors
- a variety of restaurants and shops, successfully serving the locals and visitors alike
- a large pool of talented, creative and even eccentric citizens who bring thoughtful ideas to the table
- role as host of traditional, inspiring events (parades, fair, music, art & wine events, car races)
- the town's natural, unforced, and unpretentious charm for which there is no formula

The UDP, with its emphasis on

- increasing visitor accommodations, which is disproportionate to improving services for locals
- re-locating the town center, thus isolating local serving businesses (the Hispanic community in particular), and ultimately segregating locals from visitors

and

- unnecessarily re-routing traffic by extending roads (Washington to Dunaweal in particular), which seriously compromises dedicated ag land, the revered bike path and open space in the process

all seriously threaten the life blood of what makes Calistoga the charming, desirable place it is, *while also insulting the individuals who have proudly built this community from the ground up.*

Alternatively, by studying and reporting on ways to address critical infrastructure issues such as responsible water sourcing, waste treatment, and the improvement of existing roads (with an emphasis on self-sustainability rather than reliance on outside sources), I believe the city would be showing to its citizens that it aims to take care of and further nurture what is already here. Let's tap some home-grown talent and create incentives for local businesses to thrive and for vacancies to fill up. Let's aggressively promote the *existing* virtues of this town. Attempts to re-design the look and feel of a city not only cost many, many precious dollars, they also historically tend to replace self-sown character with plugged-in, meaningless facades. Please look deeper at who inhabits this wonderful town and give these individuals some credit for defining Calistoga as it has grown thus far. Allow it to continue to grow naturally, from within. Trust this to work.

Any commission or council that fails to listen to the voices of its citizens is not doing a proper job. After having attended several public meetings on this subject, and hearing overwhelming discontent from concerned citizens, I feel it is the city's responsibility to slow down, respond accordingly and scrap the Urban Design Plan. The best thing that has resulted from its creation is to rally a consensus of opposition. Let's use the momentum of this energy wisely.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arminée Chahbazian". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

10/13/08 KJ

October 13, 2008

City of Calistoga
Planning Commission
1232 Washington St.
Calistoga, Calif.-94515

Honorable Members:

I don't go to a lot of these meetings. I get up and say something at even less. I've always believed that if I take care of my business, and let other people take care of their business, a whole lot more gets done with less fuss. Unfortunately, saying nothing now means I can't say anything later, and as other people have used this Urban Design Plan to change the Calistoga my neighbors and I live and work in into something they would like to see, I guess I'm going to have to say something about it now.

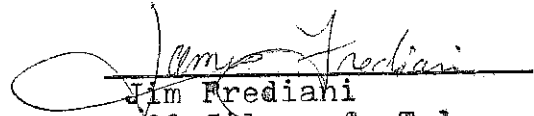
The short version: take that UDP and recycle it.

1. Changing zoning downtown and sticking "non-conforming use" tags on the businesses there that serve the community has to be the idea of someone who doesn't live here. Downtown should be about serving the community, not serving the tourists.
2. Re-routing trucks to Tubbs Lane via Foothill. I'm not a truckdriver, just a farmer with a Class "A". I guarantee you'd never take Tubbs Lane to go to Lake County unless I didn't have a choice. I'd take Dunaweal to the Trail. And you know what? A good number of them already do.
3. Resort zoning. The current UD P has essentially made a large donut of resorts around the mobile home park. Does anyone currently living in those two parks believe that a bunch of tourists are going to want to pay \$500. to \$1000. a night to look at mobile homes? Somewhere down the road, they are going to want to rezone the parks too.
4. New streets. Servicing what: Dunaweal to lower Washington to service one company? Silverado Trail to the above mentioned extension servicing what exactly? The City spray fields? My vineyards? There is nothing there. There won't be anything there that would require a new street so long as our family continues to farm that property. A street from Myrtledale to Hwy. 128? Wouldn't that add to the congestion at the Petrified Forest Rd. and Foothill Blvd intersection?

Now, a lot of nice people have been telling me that I really shouldn't get too bothered about this. Nothing is going to happen immediately, if ever. Its just making plans for what a committee or three think Calistoga should look like. Nothing is likely to change in my lifetime, and they may be right. Then again, I remember hearing, at one of these meetings, that the bike path to Dunaweal was never going to be transformed into a street' Now we read differently, that it has always been part of the General Plan to extend Washington to Dunaweal. So I guess what people tell you doesn't count if you can manufacture a legal document saying something else. If adopted, this Urban Design Plan becomes a legal document.

In my opinion, this document should not be adopted. It should be replaced by one that services the community. You know the people who live here, not those who are just passing through.

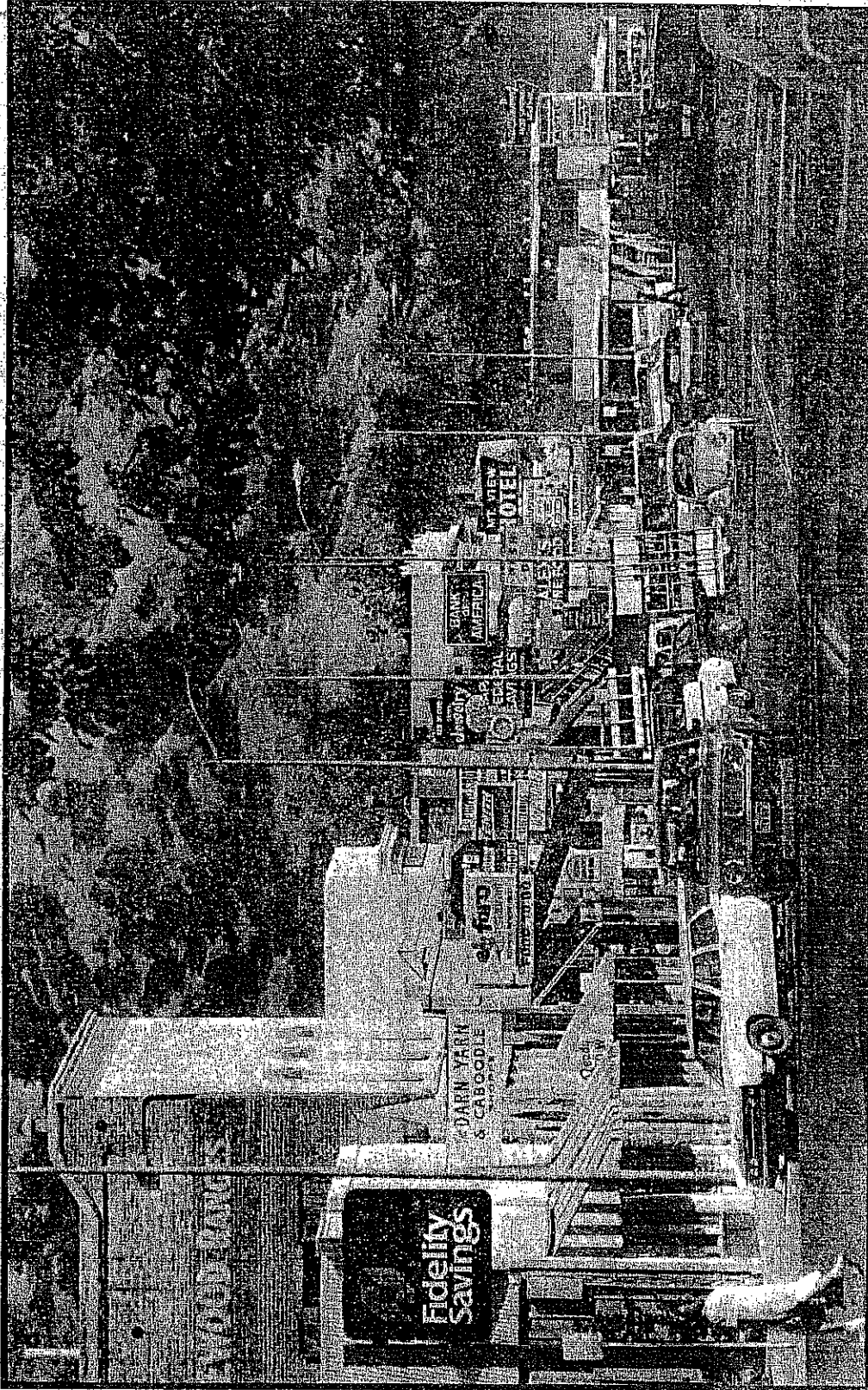
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Frediani", is written over a horizontal line.

Jim Frediani
100 Silverado Trl.
Calistoga, Ca. 94515

Scene/Arts

San Francisco Examiner
Oct. 29, 1978 Scene Page 1
A section of the San Francisco
Sunday Examiner and Chronicle



A report by Bea Pixa

Examiner photos by Paul Gaines

Calistoga

It's fun if you approach it in a certain way

SOME COMMUNITIES are known for their elegance, their charm, their natural beauty and their cultural offerings — the features that attract visitors year after year.

Calistoga, a Napa Valley town that's about a two-hour drive from San Francisco, is different. Unlike the other picture postcard towns of the valley, it is neither gorgeous nor culture-oriented. It is certainly not elegant, nor, for the most part, is it charming.

Located at the foot of Mt. St. Helena, what Calistoga really is, is funky. In fact, it's the kind of place that has raised funkiness to a high art — and inherent in "funky" is "fun," which is something else Calistoga provides, when approached with a properly funk-oriented frame of mind.

And what makes Calistoga especially funky? The list is actually quite long, but for starters:

- The crypt intended for the remains of the town founder, Sam Brannan, is just behind the Jolly Cone Drive-in Restaurant on Highway 29/128. The remains are really in Southern California, although local boosters hope to get them back to their rightful resting place some day.

- At the end of the airstrip, where one would expect to find a control tower, is a laundromat.

- One of the town's popular restaurants is housed in an old filling station, the exterior given a newly sophisticated lease on life with wood siding. Beneath the grape arbor that hangs over two outdoor tables, is a washing machine.

- The chamber of commerce office is located improbably in the Darn Yarn and Caboodle Shoppe, an emporium specializing in knitting supplies and assorted oddments.

- The main street, Lincoln Avenue, features a menswear, boyswear, and dry cleaning store called L. Funke & Son, no pun intended.

Monday through Thursday, Calistoga, if not actually fast asleep, enjoys a nice doze. It's a town where storekeepers are willing to sit down and have a long chat, where they might leave their shops unattended to run errands confident that nothing will be amiss when they return, where motorists park and leave car doors open, and where everybody is pretty well informed about everybody's goings on. In general, the atmosphere is relaxed — to the point where some business signs inform visitors that the shops keep "fairly regular hours."

Starting Thursday evening, the migration of young trendies with sleek, aerobically conditioned bodies, and elder arthritics with aching bones and joints start filling up the town's 10 motels. Calistoga also attracts its share of "weekend cowboys" who arrive in pickup trucks, inspiring some of the old timers to nickname the place, "Dodge."

Lincoln Avenue can be traversed in about 15 minutes. The ambience is quiet and respectable, although during the '50s, the town enjoyed brief notoriety for some not-quite-legal gambling operations.

The prime attraction is the variety of spas, with mineral water springs hot enough to boil an egg. The area is volcanic and was active as recent as 2½ million years ago. Now the sulfurous-smelling water bubbles out of the earth, providing surcease from sorrows of muscular aches and pains, relaxation, and in a few

cases, natural, inexpensive heating for the houses that have piped it in.

Visitors turn up the year around, rain or shine. Summer visitors apparently don't mind soaking in 105-degree mineral water, when outdoor temperatures often range in the 100s. For many, fall and winter with their crisp, clean air are the ideal times to plan a trip.

In the past, visiting luminaries have included fire buff and San Francisco socialite Lillie Hitchcock Coit and author Robert Louis Stevenson, who immortalized the area in his book, "The Silverado Squatters."

More recently, the Atlanta Braves, actress Lesley Ann Warren, conductor Antonia Brico, and entertainer Nancy Bleiweiss and the Beach Blanket Babylon cast have turned up for long soaks, while author Richard ("Jonathan Livingston Seagull") Bach, actor Bob Cummings, and TV personality Hugh Downs have viewed the area from the Soaring Center.

Calistoga also claims to be the birthplace of such athletic titans as Giants pitcher Bob Knepper and Philadelphia Eagles coach Dick Vermeil. For a town

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TAKING THE WATERS" is a Calistoga tradition that goes back to the town's founding as a posh resort in the late 1880s. It evolved into a middle class vacation mecca, ultimately grew out of fashion, and is just now in the midst of a renaissance.

Local lore has it that the place was named by Sam



A hot mud bath is a prime attraction at several

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with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, it is surprisingly rich in historical lore, and takes pride in a newly published history, "The Brannan Saga," written by local historian Kay Archuleta.

The very famous have died or moved on to bigger watering holes. Those who remain these days are a mix of older, retired, churchgoing folk who like things pretty much as they are, and a relatively recent influx of young, ambitious settlers who see great economic possibilities for the town.

Four years ago, a luckless entrepreneur opened the only bookstore in town, but went out of business. Now another bookshop is about to open, and with a younger, book-oriented population, success is predicted.

The population of Calistoga, according to the last count, is 3,800. The plaque at the town's entrance, slightly out of date, lists it at 2,600. The future of the place remains uncertain. One resident complains that "the people from Marin are coming in and bringing their sickness with them." Another joyously envisions the town as "another Sausalito."

In an ambiguous move in April, the city council

opted for neither no-growth nor fast growth, but rather, endorsed a move for slow growth by limiting expansion to four building permits a month.

Ethnically, Calistoga has a substantial Mexican population, made of mostly migrant workers, and a Russian immigrant colony numbering about 400 refugees who gravitated to the area after the 1905 Russian revolution, attracted by the rural ambiance and the promise of relaxing mineral baths. Many of the townsfolk are also of Italian extraction, as is common to the Napa Valley.

A candidate for public office had campaign literature printed in the Cyrillic alphabet, and even today, Czarist sentiments run strong and deep. For example, last year, Natasha Merkuloff, an associate editor of *The Weekly Calistogan*, was rewarded for her good work with a trip to the USSR, and given a mission to find a sister city for Calistoga. On the face of it, it seemed a harmless enough goodwill tour, but when a photo of Natasha and her two dogs, Lady and Czar, ran in the paper announcing the trip, there was a local revolution of sorts.

Unfortunately, the caption waggishly identified Merkuloff's pets as Alexandra and Nicholas, after the pre-revolutionary rulers. Since Czar Nicholas and Czarina Alexandra were considered spiritual leaders in the Russian Orthodox Church, and since they were murdered during the Bolshevik Revolution, the photograph did little to cement relations between Calistoga, Merkuloff, and any "sister city" she might have found. A protest was organized. And the chamber of commerce withdrew its support of the project. Merkuloff went anyway, and reports that she had a wonderful time.

A very funky tempest? Perhaps. But that's Calistoga.

he Calistoga of Sarafornia'

Brannan, millionaire newspaper publisher with a reputation as a promoter, rake and rogue. Supposedly a great admirer of Saratoga, the fashionable eastern spa, Brannan yearned to create his own luxurious resort in California. After an evening of too much merriment, he reportedly described his plans, saying, "I want it to be the Calistoga of Sarafornia." The spoonerism stuck.

Brannan built his resort on a grand scale, covering

over 2,000 acres with such amenities as a race track, a winery, a sawmill and a grist mill. He also brought in mulberry trees, envisioning a silk industry, and a herd of Merino sheep from England.

The resort attracted the social lions and scions of the Bay Area. In time, other spas were built to compete with Brannan's. Ultimately, fire destroyed most of his dream. The spa called Pachetau's on Lincoln Avenue is all that remains of the original spread.

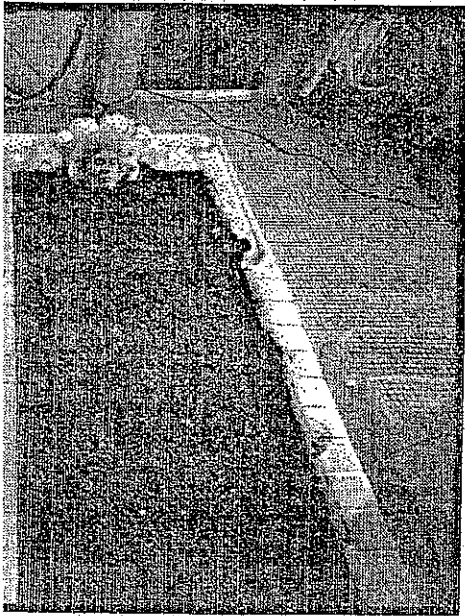
It would be unfair to compare Calistoga with Baden Baden in Germany, the Golden Door in Southern California, or Maine Chance in Arizona. As spas go, Calistoga is unpretentious and anything but glamorous. Facilities are more practical than elegant, and accommodations are priced accordingly. Pleasant double rooms generally are in the \$20-\$30 range.

Many of the motel rooms come with kitchenettes. The reason for this amenity becomes clear soon after one's first mineral bath. After a long, hot soak, stepping out on the town loses much of its appeal. Far preferable is a light snack and a long nap.

The spas are definitely not geared toward couples interested in trysting midst steamroom vapors. Except for mineral bathing pools, used by both sexes, appropriately garbed in swimwear, spa facilities are rigidly segregated. One exception is the Golden Haven Spa, which offers private jacuzzis and bears the additional distinction of staying open till 9 p.m. (Most other spas close at 3 p.m. or shortly thereafter). Eight of the 10 motels in the town center offer mineral baths of some sort, and four — Pachetau's, the Calistoga Spa, Nance's Hot Springs, and Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs — feature mud bathing as well. The mud, which makes for a warm, relaxing, porcine wallow, is actually volcanic ash mixed with heated mineral water, and it showers off easily.

The object is to lie in a tubful of the mixture for

—See Page 3, Col. 1



Calistoga spas