

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE



October 11, 2021

6:04 PM

In accordance with City policy, all Planning Commission meetings are recorded on audio and video in their entirety and are available for review in the Community Development Department (CDD). These minutes are a brief summary of action taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Jenni Veitch-Olson, Vice-Chair Veronica Dorantes-Pulido and Commissioners Ed Acosta, Gina Cole, Daniel Dodge, Anna Kammer, Lucy Rojas were present.

Staff members present were City Attorney Alan Smith, Community Development Director Suzi Merriam, Principal Planner Justin Meek, Principal Planner Matt Orbach, Associate Planner Sarah Wikle, Environmental Sustainability Manager Jackie McCloud, Environmental Projects Manager Alex Yasbek, City Interpreter Carlos Landaverry, Administrative Analyst Maria Elena Ortiz, and Executive Assistant Deborah Muniz.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Veitch-Olson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PRESENTATIONS & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

B. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Kammer shared that she attended the National Night Out event and thanked all those that participated. Additionally, she invited the public to participate in various art events such as the Open Studios Art Tour, Watsonville Brillante project in Muzzio Park, and the Pajaro Valley Art Gallery exhibits.

Commissioner Cole encouraged everyone to ride their bicycle and participate in a number of events being offered by Ecology Action as part of Biketober.

Commissioner Rojas announced a number of events for the public to attend, including the annual Our Lady of Fatima Festival, Evening with the Mayor and Friends of Watsonville Parks and Community Services Christmas Lights event.

Commissioner Dodge commented on a letter sent to the editor of the Register Pajaronian. He invited the public to continue having open discussions on issues such as racism, housing, and growth in the City.

Vice-Chair Dorantes-Pulido thanked those that attended Watsonville's first comic-con event and hopes to see more events like these in the future.

Chair Veitch-Olson shared that she attended the Dog Costume Nature Walk in the Struve Slough, and thanked all of the Commissioners for sharing all of the upcoming community events.

Commissioner Cole added that the Watsonville Nature Center will be hosting a Guided Wetlands Bike Ride on Sunday, October 24, 2021, and invited everyone to attend.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (APPLICATION NO. 2243) TO ALLOW FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ART GALLERY AND STUDIO IN AN EXISTING 1,183± COMMERCIAL TENANT SPACE LOCATED AT 430 MAIN STREET (APN 017-022-33)

1) Staff Report

The staff report was given by Associate Planner Sarah Wikle.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Associate Planner Wikle clarified that art studios fronting Main Street in the Central Commercial Core Area (CCA), are conditionally permitted, therefore, a Special Use Permit is required.

Associate Planner Wikle answered questions from Commissioner Rojas regarding the hours of operation and revisions to the conditions of approval.

3) Applicant Presentation

Judy Gittlesohn, applicant, introduced herself to the Planning Commission and recited a poem.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Cole thanked Ms. Gittlesohn for her poem and for bringing her business to Watsonville.

In response to Vice-Chair Dorantes-Pulido, Ms. Gittlesohn shared her recent art teaching experience.

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Ms. Gittlesohn spoke about her experience working with special needs children.

Commissioner Rojas thanked Ms. Gittlesohn for her art and poetry. She asked for further information on the three phases listed in her business plan, the projected timeline for each of those phases, and if children's art classes would be offered.

Ms. Gittlesohn described what she anticipates each phase to look like and shared that she does not teach children's art classes, but did not rule out the idea of it.

Commissioner Acosta thanked Ms. Gittlesohn for her work and looks forward to seeing this business in downtown.

In response to Chair Veitch-Olson, Ms. Gittlesohn replied that she still has preparations to work on before she opens her studio to the public.

5) Public Hearing

Chair Veitch-Olson opened the public hearing.

Hearing no comment, Chair Veitch-Olson closed the public hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Kammer, seconded by Commissioner Dodge, to approve the following resolution, and remove Condition of Approval No. 11 regarding the Hours of Operation and No. 16 regarding Sewer Lateral Inspection:

RESOLUTION NO. 13-21 (PC):

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT (APPLICATION NO. 2243) TO ALLOW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ART GALLERY AND STUDIO IN AN EXISTING 1,183± SQUARE FOOT COMMERCIAL TENNANT SPACE LOCATED AT 430 MAIN STREET, WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA (APN 017-022-33)

Project Specific Conditions:

~~**11. Hours of Operation.** The hours of operation for Why Watsonville shall be Tuesday through Saturday from 12:00PM to 5:00PM, with extended hours to be considered for special events through the granting of a Temporary Use Permit from the Community Development Department. (CDD-P)~~

Building and Engineering-related Conditions:

~~**16. Sewer Lateral Inspection.** Within 90 days of approval of this Use Permit, the application shall obtain a permit to conduct a video sewer lateral inspection~~

~~to verify that the sewer lateral meets the City of Watsonville's Public Improvement Standards. WMC §6-3.506. (CDD-E, PW)~~

7) Deliberation

None

8) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: The above motion carried by the following vote:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Acosta, Cole, Dodge, Dorantes-Pulido, Kammer, Rojas, Veitch-Olson
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	None

B. RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL ON THE CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION PLAN (CAAP) AND AMENDMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CHAPTER OF THE GENERAL PLAN TO INCLUDE THE CAAP

1) Staff Report

The staff report was given by Environmental Projects Manager Alex Yasbek and Principal Planner Justin Meek.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In response to Commissioner Dodge, Environmental Projects Manager Yasbek and Principal Planner Meek, clarified that the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) replaces the existing Climate Action Plan.

Principal Planner Meek also clarified that language for the proposed text amendment in the 2005 General Plan, was derived from policy language included in the 2030 General Plan, which was rescinded in the past.

In answering Commissioner Dodge regarding greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transportation sector and housing, Manager Yasbek went over the various ways they are working to meet the City's goal to reduce GHG emissions by 2030, including a transition to all-electric buildings.

Commissioner Kammer expressed support for the goals, measures and supporting efforts listed in the CAAP. She suggested a number of strategies she would like to see included as part of the CAAP, including bicycle/pedestrian improvements in the middle of the City in order to reach trails at the periphery of the City.

In response to Vice-Chair Dorantes-Pulido's comments regarding organic food waste, Manager Yasbek shared that the City is working to create programs

aimed to meet the State mandates. Additionally, he shared that the Public Works outreach team is actively looking for ways to disseminate the information and keep the community engaged on these issues. Principal Planner Meek added that City staff has met with youth groups and high school students as part of outreach efforts on environmental issues to help further educate on ways to reduce GHG emissions.

Commissioner Rojas asked if the City has received any Federal or State support; and if the City currently requires that all new constructions and remodels incorporate all-electric components.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Manager Yasbek stated that they are looking into State programs to help fund some of the costs associated with transitioning to energy efficient. He added that the City currently does not require new construction or remodels to incorporate an energy efficient component, but hopes to emulate what other cities are doing and introduce an ordinance to the City Council.

3) Public Hearing

Chair Veitch-Olson opened the public hearing.

Watsonville resident Judy Gittlesohn asked staff if the passenger rail service would reduce emissions, and if by adopting the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, funds could be acquired from the State.

In addressing Ms. Gittlesohn's questions, Principal Planner Meek mentioned that although the City passed two resolutions in support of the passenger rail service, it is under ownership of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and not the City.

Hearing no further comment, Chair Veitch-Olson closed the public hearing.

4) Appropriate Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Vice-Chair Dorantes-Pulido, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 14-21 (PC):

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO ADOPT THE INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION PLAN – SEPTEMBER 2021, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) AND CEQA GUIDELINES

RESOLUTION NO. 15-21 (PC):

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL

TO ADOPT THE DRAFT CITY OF WATSONVILLE CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION PLAN- SEPTEMBER 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 16-21 (PC):

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO ADOPT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH (27TH) AMENDMENT TO THE WATSONVILLE 2005 GENERAL PLAN AMENDING CHAPTER 9 (ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT) TO INCLUDE THE CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION PLAN

5) Deliberation

In answering Commissioner Kammer's inquiry regarding the public comment period for the Initial Study/Negative Declaration, Principal Planner Meek stated that the commenting period was available for 45 days, commencing in September, and commenting for the CEQA document is still available through October 18, 2021.

6) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Acosta, Cole, Dodge, Dorantes-Pulido, Kammer, Rojas, Veitch-Olson
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	None

5. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Community Development Director Suzi Merriam gave the report.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Veitch-Olson adjourned the meeting at 7:43 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 2, 2021, at 6:00 PM.

Suzi Merriam, Secretary
Planning Commission

Jenni Veitch-Olson, Chair
Planning Commission