

COUNTY OF INYO PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF JULY 6, 2011 MEETING

COMMISSIONERS:

WILLIAM STOLL	FIRST DISTRICT	Inyo County Planning Commission
CYNTHIA LITTLE	SECOND DISTRICT (VICE-CHAIR)	Post Office Drawer L
SAM WASSON	THIRD DISTRICT (CHAIR)	Independence, CA 93526
RICHARD WHITE	FOURTH DISTRICT	(760) 878-0263 / (760) 872-2706
PAUL PAYNE	FIFTH DISTRICT	(760) 872-0382 FAX

STAFF:

JOSHUA HART	PLANNING DIRECTOR
DOUG WILSON	INTERIM PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
KEVIN CARUNCHIO	COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
TANDA GRETZ	SENIOR PLANNER
ADENA FANSLER	ASSOCIATE PLANNER
CATHREEN RICHARDS	ASSOCIATE PLANNER
DAN STEWART	PLANNING COORDINATOR
DANA CROM	COUNTY COUNSEL

The Inyo County Planning Commission met in special session on Wednesday, July 6, 2011, in the Administration Building, in Independence, California. Commissioner Wasson opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

ITEM 1: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Wasson at 10:00.

ITEM 2: ROLL CALL - Commissioners: Bill Stoll, Paul Payne, Sam Wasson, and Cindy Little.

Also present were: Josh Hart, Planning Director; Dana Crom, County Counsel; and Dan Stewart, Planning Coordinator.

Absent:

- Richard White, Commissioner
- Kevin Carunchio, County Administrator
- Doug Wilson, Interim Public Works Director
- Adena Fansler, Associate Planner
- Cathreen Richards, Associate Planner
- Tanda Gretz, Senior Planner

ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – This is the opportunity to address the Planning Commission on any planning subject that is not scheduled on the Agenda.

There was no one from the public wishing to comment.

ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Action Item) – Approval of Minutes from June 1, 2011.

Mr. Josh Hart, Planning Director, commented that there were typographical corrections to the minutes, and those errors would be corrected.

MOTION: Moved by Commissioner Stoll and seconded by Commissioner Payne to approve the Minutes from June 1, 2011 as amended.

The Motion passed unanimously, with Commissioner White Absent.

ITEM 5: ZONING CODE UPDATE #2- The County is working on an update to the Zoning Code as follow-up to the 2001 General Plan. Chapter 8 (General Development Standards), 9 (Specific Development Standards), and 11 (Sign Regulation) are being presented to the Planning Commission for review and recommendations.

Mr. Hart presented the Staff Report to the Commission, and requested feedback from the Commission. Staff has been working with County consultant Willdan Engineering to prepare updated Zoning Code sections, the second batch of which was provided for the Commission's review and input. Staff will incorporate various stakeholders' feedback into a comprehensive Zoning Code update.

Accessory Structure Encroachments- A different set of regulations is proposed for residential and non-residential districts. In the non-residential districts, no encroachments are permitted. In residential districts staff plans to identify encroachments that may be permitted, similar to the existing code.

Commissioner Little voiced that she agreed that residential and non-residential accessory structure encroachments should be similar. The Commission generally agreed with staff plans.

Fences and Walls- The consultant has recommended regulating barbed-wire fences, and including permitting fences above six feet in commercial districts with a CUP. The current code seems to limit fences, walls, and hedges to six feet, even outside of yards; the proposed Code eliminates this inferred height limit.

Commissioner Stoll commented that recently he witnessed a deck in a neighboring yard that was elevated 3 feet, and from that height the neighbor could easily see into the other neighbor's windows. Commissioner Stoll suggested that permitted fence heights be increased under the new Code.

Dana Crom, Assistant County Counsel, warned against "spite" fencing. Discussion continued about the pros and cons of increasing the fence height.

Chair Wasson urged Mr. Hart to recommend deleting the regulation of barbed wire fences due to the numerous instances in the County where residential areas abut agricultural areas.

Lighting- Interest has also been expressed in protecting dark night skies. The consultant has provided draft language to address lighting, which staff recommended replacing with language similar to the General Plan's guidance.

The Commission generally agreed with making the Code consistent with the General Plan.

Keeping of Animals- Staff recommends that the existing Code's animal maintenance procedures be carried forward. Staff has received complaints about animal keeping from in-town locations, so a distance requirement to residential (R) zoning could be considered.

Mr. Bill Mitchel addressed the Commission. Mr. Mitchel commented that a neighbor that keeps a cow close to their shared property line. Mr. Mitchel expressed a dislike for the smell of the animal. He then suggested that the Commission consider a relief distance. The Commission then had various inquiries for Mr. Mitchel regarding the code and future improvements to the code. Ms. Crom suggested that Inyo-Mono Agricultural Commissioner George Milovich be consulted.

The Commission suggested an exemption should be considered for 4-H and FFA animals.

ITEM 6: CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) WORKSHOP- The Commission will receive a presentation on the California Environmental Quality Act.

Ms. Dana Crom gave a presentation to the Commission on various aspects of the Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Commission thanked Ms. Crom for her educational presentation.

COMMISSIONS' REPORTS/COMMENTS- Commissioner Stoll inquired about actions that the Planning Department could potentially take to prevent the further deterioration of "The Arbors" on the corner of US Highway 395 and Barlow Lane. Mr. Hart replied that code enforcement is limited.

Ms. Crom stated that the Renewable Energy General Plan Overlay lawsuit is in the initial settlement stages and is still pending. Ms. Crom also informed the Commission Mr. Schnieder submitted an appeal to the Board of Supervisors appealing the Commission's decision to deny Appeal #2011-01/Schnider, which was an appeal of CUP #2007-03/Coso.

ADJOURNMENT - With no further business, Chair Wasson adjourned the meeting at 12:37 P.M. to reconvene in Regular Session on Wednesday, August 24th at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors Room, Administrative Center, Independence, California.

Prepared by:
Dan Stewart, Planning Coordinator
Inyo County Planning Department