



**BENICIA PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, March 11, 2010
7:00 P.M.**

I. OPENING OF MEETING

- A. Pledge of Allegiance**
- B. Roll Call of Commissioners**

Present: Commissioners Don Dean, Rick Ernst, Rod Sherry, Lee Syracuse, Brad Thomas and Chair Healy
Absent: Richard Bortolazzo

Staff Present: Lisa Porras, Senior Planner
Kat Wellman, Contract Attorney
Kathy Trinke, Administrative Secretary

- C. Reference to Fundamental Rights of Public** - A plaque stating the Fundamental Rights of each member of the public is posted at the entrance to this meeting room per Section 4.04.030 of the City of Benicia's Open Government Ordinance.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

On motion of Commissioner Sherry, seconded by Commissioner Dean, the agenda was adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dean, Ernst, Sherry, Syracuse, Thomas, and Chair Healy
Noes: None
Absent: Richard Bortolazzo
Abstain: None

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. WRITTEN**
None.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Commissioner Sherry, seconded by Commissioner Dean, the Consent Calendar was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dean, Ernst, Sherry, Syracuse, Thomas, and Chair Healy
Noes: None
Absent: Bortolazzo
Abstain: None

A. Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2010

V. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. COMMISSION PRIORITY DISCUSSION ITEM #4, CONTINUED.

Staff followed up on the Commission’s February 11th discussion on Gateways. Follow up topics included: Caltrans’ Standard Encroachment Permit process, funding status, summary of Commission’s comments, and staff’s suggested next steps, including establishing a list of principles to forward to the City Council for future gateway planning. Staff recommended that the Planning Commission review the first draft of the Planning Commission’s Principles for Gateway Priorities, Components, and Process.

Lisa Porras, Senior Planner, gave an overview of the report contained in the packet. This item was continued from the February 11 meeting to respond to questions raised by the Planning Commission and to memorialize and organize the prior meeting comments into a format for future reference. This is an opportunity for the Planning Commission to make any corrections or changes to the summary report. Staff will bring this item back to the Planning Commission at a future meeting to take action and forward it as a recommendation to the City Council. Implementation will require funding and direction from Council to become part of staff’s work plan.

Questions:

On page 3(f) should it say, “tree city”?

Lisa responded that the idea here was creating a “city tree.”

Commission discussion followed concerning utilizing a tree as part of the gateway logo, incorporating trees into the landscaping around the gateway features, etc.

Question: Why aren’t we considering E 2nd Street and 780 as a major interchange for gateway treatment?

Lisa responded that this area is not on the list contained in the General Plan, but that it is referenced under the “internal” gateway category.

Question concerning the comment on page 2 about gateways being listed in the Capital Improvement Program for \$450,000 over 3 years, but no funds are identified? How often is the list put together?

Lisa responded that is correct. The Capital Improvement Project is forecasted over 20 years and indicates which projects have a funding source. This one does not. The CIP is part of the 2-year budget cycle. The next budget cycle will start in 2011.

Public Comment:

Steve Goetz of 347 Goldenslopes commented that the Highway 20 Statue at the Napa Valley and the C&H Sugar sign in Crockett are good examples of gateways. He suggests that staff is directed to look into funding partners for this work; add any other interested organizations in the City to artists on the list; consider implementing art fees that could help fund the project; check into Caltrans’ landscape architecture pages on-line for helpful information (gave copies to staff).

Dana Dean, business address 835 First Street. She is representing her client, CC Meyers who have submitted an application on the Pine Lake Area. Ms. Dean reminded the Commission to be sensitive to Pine Lake being categorized as a gateway, because it is different from those called out in the General Plan. Ms. Dean has met with Fred Railsback to review their plans. She’s working on producing a quality landscape plan. Ms. Dean asked the Commission to respect and remember the difference between Pine Lake and other gateways mentioned in the General Plan.

Discussion occurred between the Commission and Dana Dean clarifying her comments.

Kat Wellman cautioned the Commission that because this is a private project not on the agenda and because proper public notice has not occurred, further discussion is not appropriate.

Commission ended their discussion with comments and concern about moving this program forward. They discussed process ideas involving public workshops and charettes. Would like to see this happen soon and asked if staff had time to work on this.

Lisa responded that she’s hearing additional things from the Commission tonight. Keep in mind that we have no funding for this work. Will pass along your message to the Director. We will come back next month in a format ready for the Planning Commission to recommend to City Council.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

A. COMMISSION PRIORITY DISCUSSION ITEM #5: REGULATIONS FOR SIDEWALK TABLE SERVICE, RESTAURANTS, BARS, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, AND ALCOHOL BEVERAGE SERVICE

Staff will transmit information to the Planning Commission to review in preparation for discussion at the next Planning Commission hearing on April 8, 2010.

Lisa Porras, Senior Planner, gave an overview of the materials contained in the Commission’s packet, including relevant General Plan policy language, use regulations outside the Downtown Mixed Use Master Plan area, BMC Title 17 Zoning Regulations Use Definitions, use regulations inside the Downtown Mixed Use Master Plan area, Sidewalk Table Permit Application, BMC Chapter 9.04 Alcoholic Beverage Consumption and sample Conditions of Approval taken from previous use permit requests.

This information is provided for the Planning Commission’s review, and to have the tools necessary for a valuable discussion. It is not a guarantee that this item will come back at the April meeting because other projects may need to come first. This item is not before you for action or discussion tonight. Please point out if anything is missing or if you have questions.

Questions – none.

Public Comment:

Chuck Maddox of 126 East D Street is concerned about noise in his neighborhood. Lives close to various businesses, bars, and restaurants with live entertainment. Wants the City to enforce noise issues if these businesses violate conditions of approval. Make sure the Police know what the rules are for each business because it’s different for each one.

Committee Chair thanked Lisa for bringing this information forward. He wants consistency, simplicity and transparency for these issues. He wants businesses to know what the rules are ahead of time. If a business is issued a use permit and there are violations, the City has the means to withdraw that use permit. Noise and alcohol violations are public violations handled by the Police Department. We want to make this easy to enforce, while trying to create an atmosphere for business to succeed.

B. INTERIM PLANNING COMMISSION SECRETARY ASSIGNMENT

Lisa Porras reviewed the memo contained in the packet regarding the interim Planning Commission Secretary assignment, due to Damon Golubic’s resignation. Charlie Knox has recommended to City Council on their March 16th agenda to consider hiring a Land Use and Engineering Manager and fill the Associate Planner position. Staff will keep you informed about any further staff changes.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Lee Syracuse referenced a letter the Planning Commission received from the Benicia Historical Society in their packet. The Commission would like an update on this matter placed on the next agenda.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Healy adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.