



**BENICIA PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, June 12, 2008**

**7:00 P.M.**

**I. OPENING OF MEETING**

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

Present: Commissioners Richard Bortolazzo, Rick Ernst, Dan Healy, Rod Sherry,  
Lee Syracuse, and Chair Fred Railsback

Absent: Commissioner Brad Thomas (excused)  
Commissioner Richard Bortolazzo (excused)

Staff Present: Damon Golubics, Principal Planner  
Kat Wellman, Contract Attorney  
Terry Baldwin, Senior Administrative Clerk

- 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. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION**

No agenda changes.

**III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. WRITTEN**

None

- B. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**IV. CONSENT CALENDAR**

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

Ayes: Commissioners Rick Ernst, Dan Healy, Rod Sherry, Lee Syracuse, and  
Chair Fred Railsback  
Noes: none  
Absent: Commissioners Thomas, Bortolazzo  
Abstain: none

- A. Approval of Agenda**
- B. Planning Commission Minutes of May 8, 2008**

**V. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. LOWER ARSENAL MIXED USE SPECIFIC PLAN – DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR) – PUBLIC COMMENT ON RECIRCULATED SECTIONS:  
(1) HAZARD AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND (2) CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

**PROJECT LOCATION:**

The project site is located in the City of Benicia in Solano County. The project site consists of approximately 50 acres east of Downtown Benicia, and is a portion of Benicia’s former Arsenal known as the Lower Arsenal. The site is generally bounded by lands adjoining I-780 on the north, lands adjoining I-680 on the east, Port of Benicia land and the Carquinez Strait on the south, and residential neighborhoods extending into downtown Benicia on the west.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:**

The proposed project includes implementation of a Specific Plan for the Lower Arsenal site, which is designated for mixed uses in the Benicia General Plan. The Specific Plan covers four distinct zones, each of which exhibits a unique physical character. The Specific Plan would implement a form-based code to shape future development on the project site, with primary emphasis on the physical form and character of new development. After build-out of the Specific Plan, the area would contain approximately 741,865 square feet of mixed uses, 22 residential units, and 6.39 acres of open space. The Specific Plan area currently contains approximately 525,000 square feet of mixed uses.

The Draft Specific Plan is available for public review on the City’s website (<http://www.ci.benicia.ca.us/downtown-arsenalimprovements.php>) or at the City’s Community Development Department.

**Recommendation:** The City of Benicia is requesting that reviewers limit their comments to the recirculated materials, consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15088.5(f)(2). Comments on the DEIR should focus on the sufficiency of the DEIR in discussing possible impacts on the environment, ways in which adverse effects might be minimized, and alternatives to the project. Comments may be made at the public hearing

described above, or in writing. There is no fee for commenting, and all comments received will be considered by the City prior to finalizing the EIR and making a decision on the project.

Principal Planner Damon Golubics gave a brief overview of the project and then introduced Adam Weinstein from LSA Associates.

Mr. Weinstein explained the new impacts to the project that have been added to the DEIR. The DEIR is being recirculated and the new items identified to have impact on the project include (1) hazard and hazardous materials and (2) cultural and paleontological resources.

Chair Railsback asked for questions on the process from commissioners to which there were none.

Damon Golubics mentioned that new correspondence was received by the Department and copies were provided for the Commissioners.

Commissioners discussed the monitoring process, inspections and remediation and related costs. Adam Weinstein explained that the project will be monitored by an independent monitor and cost to be worked out between the City and developer.

The public hearing was opened.

Kitty Griffin commented on the contents of two new sections of the DEIR. She expressed concerns regarding the significant and unavoidable impact this project will have.

Belinda Smith stated that she is concerned about statements in the cultural section being adequate. She will submit all of her comments in writing.

Don Dean spoke regarding the project and agreed with Belinda Smith's comments.

Dana Dean stated that she feels this is a first draft of many to come. She expressed concern with some of the language in new sections.

Marilyn Bardet stated that she will be submitting another letter addressing her concerns to the DEIR. She has concerns that LSA has not properly been informed by Staff.

Commission Comments:

Chair Railsback stated that this meeting was for public comment and that no action would be taken by the Commission.

Commissioners discussed the EIR process. Adam Weinstein gave an overview of the project and the EIR process. Staff will confirm that the new commissioners have all documents pertaining to this project.

Damon Golubics stated that August 14, 2008 is the deadline for the Final EIR Response to Comments for final consideration and recommendation to send project to City Council.

**VI. COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF**

Damon Golubics mentioned that the July 10, 2008 meeting will be dedicated to the Valero Improvement Project. Commissioners should have received the original EIR and the new addendum.

**VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

The Commission requested a discussion item in July or August regarding the Seeno/Benicia Business Park project, specifically the traffic study required for City Council review on October 7, 2008.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Railsback adjourned the meeting at 8:08pm