

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MONTHLY MEETING OF THE**  
**TRINIDAD PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2014**

**I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL (6:02pm)**

Commissioners Present: Becker, Johnson, Pinske, Vanderpool, Stockness (arrives 6:06pm)  
Commissioners Absent: none  
Staff: Parker, Caldwell

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*February 19, 2013*

***Motion (Johnson/Becker) to approve the minutes.***

***Passed unanimously (4-0)***

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***Motion (Becker/Johnson) to approve the agenda.***

***Passed unanimously (5-0)***

**IV. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR**

None.

**V. AGENDA ITEMS**

1. **Reinman 2013-11**: After-the-fact Design Review and Coastal Development Permit to establish home office space in an unpermitted 650 s.f. accessory dwelling unit converted from a pre-existing 1070 s.f. detached garage. Located at 407 Ocean Avenue; APN: 042-062-12.

Planner Parker explains that two noticing issues were brought to light by the public. The City's Zoning Ordinance requires notices to be posted within 7 calendar days prior to the hearing. However, the ones in the mail were not postmarked until 6 days before the meeting. In addition, it was found that, heretofore unknown to staff, the Building Ordinance also has a noticing standard for Design Review that conflicts with the Zoning Ordinance, requiring a 10 working day notice period. Since there are conflicting noticing requirements and this project falls under the requirements of the Building Ordinance—needing a 10-day noticing period—Staff must recommend continuing the project. The City will now comply with the Building Ordinance guidelines and perform 10-day noticing for this and other projects.

*Public Comment*

None.

*Commissioner Comments*

In response to an inquiry, Planner Parker explains that voting “no” on the project will result in the requirement for the building to be returned to its existing condition; this would mean removing

the interior and exterior modifications to the extent that they would not have required planning approval to the satisfaction of the Building Official.

As addition, background, Parker explains that the structure was illegally converted into a second unit. However, around the time, the City began drafting an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance that may have allowed the conversion, so enforcement was postponed. Currently, an ADU Ordinance has been approved by the City, but approval from the Coastal Commission may or may not be forthcoming. Regardless, the City's ADU ordinance requires the property owner to live on-site; so even if the Ordinance is certified, this project would no longer qualify. The City has also continued to receive complaints about the property. Planner Parker also notes that although the remodel has already occurred, this project should be reviewed as if it is in the design phase and had not already been constructed.

***Motion (Becker/Stockness) to continue the project until the next Planning Commission meeting (April 16, 2014).  
Passed unanimously (5-0)***

**2. General Plan Update:** Community Design Element continued discussion on draft, figures, background information.

Planner Parker explains that the new version of the Community Design Element has been reorganized with new goals, and has incorporated many of the categorized sample policies, while eliminated some of the repetitive policies. The goals are also very general, so community input should define them further.

Commissioner Johnson reveals that Mayor Julie Fulkerson amassed data from an informal City survey about living in Trinidad and the qualities of the City that people appreciate or would like to change. Many of the 2014 comments are actually similar to some of the language included in the 1978 General Plan. He will send the report to Planner Parker as possible material for use in the General Plan update.

Commissioner Becker does not approve of the sappy, subjective language of the 1979 General Plan. She agrees with the current Vision Statement, but would prefer to simplify the policy language.

Planner Parker notes that the Community Design Element should have a narrative that explains what is important to the community, thus explaining why that Element is necessary. This can include views, design, lighting, signs, etc; she agrees to draft something.

The Commission discusses the Element:

A. Purpose

- make minor grammar changes
- reference Native American history in the second paragraph

B. Community Design & Coastal Act

- include landscape or landscaping in visual resource degradation
- various editing for clarification
- reference the Views and Vegetation Ordinance and add that it will continue to be an important component of Trinidad's Land Use
- reference the Tsurai Management Plan (TMP) and discuss management if the Tsurai Study Area

C. Design Review

- suggestion: minor modifications could fall under an administrative process

- suggestion: very specific exemptions can exclude projects from Design Review
- need to define “visually degraded area” as “areas where views have been compromised” and add “where feasible to restore”
- 1.1.1 F: suggestion: Scenic view corridors can be defined and mapped
- 1.2: define what identifies a key public view point (Conservation and Open Space Figure 10: Recreation and Trails shows 3 vista points)
- 1.5: consider defining the size/height of “low growing canopies” in the Design Review guidelines
- Include Policy that encourages the City to develop a Vegetation Management Plan consistent with the TMP
- 2.2, 2.3: redundant
- 2.4, 2.6, 2.7: combine
- 2.7: inconsistent. Define and include “project-specific”
- 2.2.5: Reword to “...from further structural development and restored to a natural state.”
- 2.9: define “native vegetation”
- 2.10 reword to include language regarding soil disturbance and bluff stability

Commissioner Pinske researched undergrounding utilities through PG&E. Under Rule 20A, undergrounding utilities must serve a public, not private interest, explaining why the main streets are undergrounded based on the substantial effect on public views. Funding for this project was provided by PG&E and County and City funds. The cost is \$300/ft of undergrounded utility line, which is prohibitively expensive. Planner Parker suggests that people walk all over town so the entirety of Trinidad could be considered as having public views. But the cost of this project would still be a major hurdle. Commissioner Pinske has already identified utility pole locations within the City, but priority poles for undergrounding, such as those near coastal access and public trails, have not been identified; that would be a good first step in obtaining funding.

Planner Parker notes that the TMP shall be referenced in the narrative to avoid referencing throughout the element. Commissioner Stockness would like language that encourages tribal cooperation and coordination with the City.

The Commission will continue the discussion during a Special Planning Commission Meeting for the General Plan update. It is tentatively scheduled for 4pm, March 26, but Planner Parker will email the Commission and coordinate.

### **3. General Plan Update: Discussion and consideration of options and strategies for a Historic Element of the Trinidad General Plan.**

After researching the components of a Historic Element, Planner Parker feels that the City does not have enough information to make specific policies. She suggests including a Historic section or goal under either the Community Design or the Design Review Element. A policy recommendation would include encouraging a historic survey of Trinidad. Commissioner Becker suggests researching the implications of a survey based on historic property owners’ issues in Eureka.

Johnson tried to log on to the City’s wi-fi, but can not due to a lack of password.

**VI. CITY COUNCIL & STAFF REPORT**

There were no Planning Commission issues on the last agenda. The City Council will begin discussing the City's budget and the Vacation Dwelling Unit Ordinance was put on hold for the time being.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 7:41pm.

**Submitted by:**

**Sarah Caldwell**

Secretary to Planning Commission

**Approved by:**

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**Michael Pinske**

Planning Commission Chair