

**CITY OF SONOMA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West  
September 12, 2013  
MINUTES**

I hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the agenda for this meeting was posted on Friday, September 6, 2013, on the bulletin board outside the front of Sonoma City Hall, No. 1 the Plaza, Sonoma, California. Vice Chair Tippell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Vice Chair Tippell, Comms. Edwards, Felder, Willers, Howarth , Cribb  
(Alternate)  
Absent: Comm. Henevald, Chair Roberson  
Others Planning Director Goodison, Administrative Assistant Morris  
Present:

Vice Chair Tippell stated that no new items would be heard after 10:30 p.m. unless the Planning Commission so decides. Any decisions made tonight can be appealed within 15 days to the City Council. He reminded everyone to turn off cell phones and pagers. Comm. Edwards led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chair Tippell welcomed the new Planning Commission Alternate James Cribb and looks forward to working with him.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: No Public Comments**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Comm. Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes of August 8, 2013. Comm. Felder seconded. Approved by Comms. Willers, Felder, and Edwards (Vice Chair Tippell, Howarth, Cribb abstained, Comm. Henevald and Chair Roberson absent) unanimously approved but no quorum (the motion did not pass). Minutes will be postponed until 10-10-13.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Late mail regarding Item # 2.

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**Item #1 – Discussion- City Engineer update on municipal water issues.**

Dan Takasugi, City Engineer/Public Works Director, discussed the water issues facing the community. Planning Director Goodison thanked City Engineer Takasugi for coming and providing an overview of City groundwater water issues and regional challenges. The presentation by the City Engineer addressed the following topics:

- Overview of Water System Operations
- Groundwater supply
- Water Conservation
- Capital Improvement Projects
- Sonoma Valley Water: Regional Threats

- Upcoming Water Rate Analysis
- Water Supply Strategy

The City water system provides 4,300 water connections and 6 water tanks (an ample amount of storage for a City of Sonoma's size). 670 million gallons of water went to customers in 2012 during a peak low use month. In 2011, 286 acre-feet came from groundwater wells. In 2012, 2,100 acre-feet of water was delivered. The City participates in regional boards and commissions. The Water division currently employs six people that are cross functionally trained. The Public Works operation shares resources and equipment to make the water utility services department work. There is a water tank above the Montini Preserve and at Norrbom, Thornsberry and East Napa Streets. These City facilities augment the water supplied from the Water Agency. During periods of peak demand, up to three million gallons per day is used. Water conservation is currently in the spotlight and citizens are encouraged to conserve. The City sponsors a "Cash for Grass" rebate program and Greywater workshops. Leak detections are done annually for private and public meters. Groundwater banking is being evaluated with the SCWA and a test program is being initiated. Recycled water represents another potential source of water savings projects are being designed to make greater use of this resource.

Mr. Takasugi is optimistic about this capital improvement project. He cited some of the recent successful public works projects; Street to meter, East Napa Street code, service line replacements and slurry seal bid projects. The water system project down West Napa Street (Highway 12) is just beginning with the design replacing the water main and trenching pipeline. The expansion of zone 3 will improve system pressures. (Brazil Street and East Fourth Street). Conservation versus rates analysis. The study is minimal and proactive following the water agency's strategy. He discussed the reasons why water supply reliability is an ongoing issue; the long distance from the Russian River supplies, the vulnerability of the existing pipeline to natural hazards, the relatively low productivity of the Aquifer, saline water and groundwater depression at the southern boundary, and the pumping limitations on the Russian River due to drought conditions.

The integrated water management plan efforts include collaboration with the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) and the Valley of the Moon District (VOMWD) for conjunctive use projects. There may be a future water rate increase that would require City Council approval. Comm. Howarth confirmed with Mr. Takasugi that overall water use has been holding steady, thanks to conservation efforts, recognizing there was a downturn in 2008, 2009, and 2010.

Comm. Felder clarified that the increase in water usage during the summer season causes the City to use existing wells to supplement SCWA deliveries. The City Engineer agreed that this is how the wells are used. The current policy is minimizing well use in order to protect the aquifer.

Comm. Cribb would like a comparison between Sonoma and other similar communities. The City Engineer stated that Sonoma's per capita water use is higher than that of many similarly-sized communities. This could be a result of the tourism industry, at least in part.

Comm. Willers confirms with Staff that customer water meters are read electronically and that radio towers are not set up to accommodate independent readings; i.e. there is no online capability.

Vice Chair Tippell thanked the City Engineer for his presentation.

Mr. Takasugi is happy to provide more information to the Planning Commission if desired.

**Item #2– Public Hearing – Consideration of amendments to Title 2 (Section 2.60) and Title 19 (Chapter 19.42 and section 19.54.080) of the Sonoma Municipal Code strengthening provisions related to historic preservation, clarifying the duties of the Design Review Commission and adding provisions establishing a process for the designation of locally-significant historic resources.**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Comm. Felder confirmed that although property owners of potentially significant historic sites have the opportunity to weigh in on the designation of their property as a local resource, they do not have veto power over such a designation.

Comm. Cribb's experience, from serving on the Design Review Commission, is that being proactive with implementing changes, such as training on design considerations pertaining to historic buildings, is of great importance to preserve the unique qualities of Sonoma.

Planning Director Goodison stated that the current City budget allocates more money for Planning and Design Review Commissioner trainings.

**Vice Chair Tippell opened the public hearing**

Loyce Haran, resident and League of Historic Preservation member, stated that that becoming a Certified Local Government like Napa and Larkspur is very important. She thanked staff for its diligence in successfully working with the State. The Certified Local Government Program (CLG) gives the City firmer guidelines and the resources to preserve historic buildings as future developments are proposed. Design Review Commissioners will need more "hands on training" and the State and other Cities will give assistance in that regard.

Karla Noyes, Sonoma County resident, is on the League for Historic Preservation and has spoken at Design Review Commission meetings in support of the CLG designation.

**Vice Chair Tippell closed the public hearing**

Comm. Willers expressed support for the changes.

Comm. Edwards made a motion to recommend that the City Council approve a Certified Local Government. Comm. Willers seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. 6-0.

**Issues Update:**

1. Williams Sonoma proposal to be heard at the Planning Commission meeting 10/10/13.
2. The City Council has adopted a long range management plan for the sale of 32 Patten Street.
3. Nicora Place project at the Planning Commission special meeting 9/26/13.
4. Planning Commissioner's Conference at Sonoma State University on 12/7/13.
5. Special meeting of the Oversight Board meeting on 10/3/13.

**Comments from the Audience: No public comments.**

Comm. Edwards moved to adjourn. Comm. Howarth seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 6-0.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 10, 2013.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission on the 14th day of November, 2013.

Approved:

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Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant