

  
**COUNTY OF PLUMAS**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

**DATE:** February 15, 2024  
**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:** Plumas County Courthouse Building  
Board of Supervisors Chambers  
Room 308  
520 Main Street  
Quincy, CA 95971

**THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE VIRTUALLY AS FOLLOWS**

**Zoom Meeting / View and Verbal Public Comment Opportunity:**

Members of the public who wish to watch live and provide public comment on any item on the agenda can join via the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/92668567598?pwd=T21qNFFGem1PWXBIUFFZSnJwZEIKdz09>

Call: 1-669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 926 6856 7598

Passcode: 461910

**Written Public Comment Opportunity:**

Members of the public may submit written comments on any matter within the Commission's subject matter jurisdiction (Plumas County Code Title 2, Chapter 2, Article 1, Sec. 2-2.107 – Duties), regardless of whether the matter is on the agenda for Commission consideration or action. Comments will be entered into the administrative record of the meeting. Members of the public are strongly encouraged to submit their comments on agenda and non-agenda items before and/or during the Planning Commission meeting, using e-mail address [publicplanningcommission@countyofofplumas.com](mailto:publicplanningcommission@countyofofplumas.com)

[www.countyofplumas.com](http://www.countyofplumas.com)

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**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**



*In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Planning Commission Clerk at 530-283-6207. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the County to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility. Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities.*

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***Note: A majority of the Board of Supervisors may be present and may participate in discussion.***

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Jack Montgomery, Harvey West, Chris Spencer

**Absent:** Charles Leonhardt, Moorea Hoffman Stout

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY**

*None.*

**V. CONSENT ITEMS**

**A. Items to be continued or withdrawn from the agenda.**

*None.*



B. Approval of Meeting Minutes of February 15, 2024

**Motion:** Approve Meeting Minutes of February 15, 2024, as follows:

**Moved by** Jack Montgomery **Seconded by** Chris Spencer

**Vote:** Motion carried.

**Yes:** West, Montgomery, Spencer

**No:** None

**Absent:** Leonhardt, Hoffman Stout

**VI. 2021 WILDFIRES LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLAN STANDING UPDATE**

Tracey Ferguson, Planning Director, stated that the grant applications for the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) administered Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery programs (CDBG-DR) will be available on the state's website at the end of February 2024. There are two grant programs. The first is for low- and moderate-income (LMI) homeowners and landlords who rent to LMI households for single family reconstruction (SFR). The second is for LMI homeowners and landlords who rent to LMI households for single-family mitigation retrofits (SFM) or home hardening and defensible space fire mitigation assistance. You must be an owner that was directly affected by the loss of a home in the 2021 wildfires to qualify for the SFR program. Landlords that lost their rental properties also qualify under SFR. The SFM program is countywide, and the home did not need to have experienced damage in the 2021 wildfires to qualify. Ferguson stated she'll provide the Commissioners with more information as it becomes available. Continuing, Ferguson explained that the Disaster Case Managers (DCMs) received a 6-month extension through FEMA. Grant program training by HCD staff for the DCMs and potential applicants is scheduled for the end of February 2024.

Ferguson stated that this weekend is the third Saturday meeting in Greenville (February 17<sup>th</sup>) where information will be provided for wildfire recovery. She also stated that elections for certain seats on the Dixie Fire Collaborative Steering Committee will occur during the Saturday Greenville meeting and that information on the positions and candidates is available on the Dixie fire Collaborative website.

Commissioner Montgomery inquired about the dollar amount that will be allotted to each homeowner under the CDBG-DR program. Ferguson stated that it's up to \$500,000 dollars in funding for the SFR program and up to \$50,000 for the SFM program. This program has been implemented by HCD throughout the state of California and is turnkey through the state once an individual is qualified.

Commissioner West inquired about the contractors that would be used for this program. Ferguson stated that it's her understanding that the state utilizes the same contractor for these programs throughout the state, and that the Planning and Building departments will be reviewing the state's construction document master plan sets for approval.

Commissioner Montgomery inquired about examples of this program that have been done in the past. Ferguson stated that there are 2020 wildfire examples, in addition to other past years wildfires, on HCD's website under the CDBG-DR action plans. Continuing, she stated that the income limit for what qualifies as LMI is a CDBG threshold from HUD and is 80% or below the annual county area median income.

**VII. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS/COMMENTS**

Commissioner Spencer stated that Chief Cameron with the Sierra Valley Fire Protection District met with the owner of the Meadow Edge Park in Vinton. Plan revisions were discussed to address Chief Cameron's fire and life safety concerns and modifications will be coordinated with the owner of Meadow Edge Park and the project engineer.

Commissioner Montgomery stated that he is continuing work on affordable housing with the consultant LMNOP Design and The Almonor Foundation. He stated that one of the primary areas that they will key in on will be Canyon Dam. He also stated that because of this, he is curious about the CDBG-DR program and how it may be utilized by Canyon Dam owners.

Ferguson stated that she will send the information on the Disaster Recovery Block Grant to Commissioner Montgomery.

Commissioner West stated that he'd like to take the time to thank the Planning Department staff for their efforts, as the amount of time and energy with the volume of work being processed with such a small staff does not go unrecognized.

## **VIII. REVIEW OF 2035 GENERAL PLAN (Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director)**

### **A. Conservation and Open Space Element Goals and Policies**

Tracey Ferguson read aloud the Goal 7.5 for Cultural and Historical Resources and the accompanying policies 7.5.1 through 7.5.7, Goal 7.6 with accompanying policies 7.6.1 through 7.6.6, and Goal 7.7 with accompanying policies 7.7.1 through 7.7.4 with comments by Planning staff and the Commissioners.

Commissioner Spencer stated that the full general plan reads differently than the Open Space Element printout. Commissioner Montgomery stated that the Open Space Element skipped from 7.5.2 to 7.5.4. Ferguson acknowledged the typographical error and thanked the Commissioners for the corrections.

Commissioner Spencer inquired about the presence of a historical society in Plumas County. Ferguson stated that she believes that there is one through the Plumas County Museum. Commissioner Spencer stated that she is curious about how Policy 7.5.3 is actioned through the County process. Ferguson stated that the policy is to "support the registration of cultural resources" rather than the County doing the registration. Ferguson inquired about Policy 7.5.2. Commissioner Spencer stated that the policy states that the County will "participate and support."

Commissioner West inquired about the age requirement of a historically significant resource. Ferguson stated that anything over 50 years old is considered "historical" and needs to be investigated for historical validity. Ferguson stated, for example, that when the Planning Department receives a demolition permit application, there is a process to check the age and significance of the structure proposed for demolition before the Planning Department can approve the application. She stated that photographs are always required to be submitted by the applicant to the Planning Department as part of the demolition permit process, which are then given to the Plumas County Museum for archival purposes.

Commissioner Montgomery inquired about the rights of way for the railroads and the bike paths that are being made around Lake Almanor. He asked how the County would approach the preservation of the railroad rights of way in the context of "rails to trails." Ferguson stated that in the Almanor Basin there are plans to develop a trail around Lake Almanor, using the old railroad right of way to an extent, and depending on the zoning and "recreation" use, there may be discretionary permits involved, which would then be subject to environmental documentation under CEQA.

Commissioner Montgomery inquired about Policy 7.5.4 and if the brick walls in Greenville would have this policy applied. Ferguson stated that those particular structures are not considered 'historic buildings' under the General Plan, although what walls remain are within the Greenville historic district/boundary. Continuing, Ferguson noted that the Greenville historic district/boundary does not have any guidelines or conditions that have been developed to-date.

Commissioner Montgomery inquired about the process once archeological resources are discovered in a project that requires ground disturbance. Ferguson stated that they are required to stop work and contact the Plumas County Planning Department and the Native American Heritage Society. She stated that the County Coroner is called, which is the Sheriff in Plumas County. She stated that the process is to stop work, notify, assess, and go from there based on that assessment.

Commissioner West inquired about archaeological review that is done by logging companies. Ferguson stated that it's typical to have a cultural and prehistoric survey conducted, first, during the environmental documentation, if applicable. She stated that in areas where there are known cultural or historical sites there is generally avoidance mitigation and then there could also be monitoring on site.

Zachary Gately, Plumas County Grant Manager, inquired about Quincy Design Review and if it would fall under Goal 7.6 (Scenic Resources). Ferguson stated the Quincy and Chester design review guidelines have character, design, and/or preservation components for consideration. Gately suggested updating the guidelines. Ferguson stated that she accepted the public comment.

Commissioner Montgomery inquired about the meaning of the word "equitable" in Goal 7.7. Ferguson stated that it has to do with age, location, access, etc.

**IX. DISCUSSION: ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) ORDINANCE AMENDMENT (Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director)**

Tracey Ferguson stated that she is continuing to work with Workbench, the consultants working with the Planning Department to update the County's ADU ordinance to bring into conformance with state ADU law.

Ferguson provided the Commissioners with 2 handouts from Workbench, the Plumas County Draft ADU Ordinance Cover Letter and the Plumas County Draft ADU Ordinance. She stated that ADU code language is spread throughout the Plumas County code and now the objective is to put all the code language under Plumas County Code, Title 9, Planning and Zoning, Chapter 2, Zoning, with a new "Article 45."

Ferguson stated that she anticipates being able to come to the Planning Commission in March 2024 with formal ordinance revision language and a resolution to the Board of Supervisors to recommend the changes.

Ferguson stated that there will also be new definitions under Chapter 2, Zoning, Article 2 "Definitions." She stated that these will include Accessory Dwelling Unit, Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit, Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit, Conversion Accessory Dwelling Unit, and Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit. She stated that the term "guest house" will be removed.

Ferguson stated that the new state law generally requires any zoning district that allows a residence will need to allow an ADU. She stated that the state has decided that ADUs do not add density for the purposes of environmental review and general plan density and consistency. She stated that the county will need to decide what this will mean for agricultural zones where ADUs and guest houses were not expressly permitted previously.

Sara James (County Counsel staff) inquired about the effect on the commercial zones. Ferguson stated that dwelling units are permitted in C-1, C-2, and C-3. James stated that they have Craig Settemire, former County Counsel, on staff who may have insight on this issue.

Gately inquired about how taxes would affect a property with an ADU. Ferguson stated that she will need to ask the Assessor.

Ferguson stated that the consultant has removed the 'additional quarters' from the code and that she will need to discuss additional quarters with the consultant.

James stated that additional quarters is defined as space in a building for living and sleeping purposes in the same building. She stated that the floor area of the additional quarters shall not exceed 30% of the primary unit. Ferguson stated that in that definition, there isn't a need for eating and sanitation which would apply to a dwelling unit and ADU.

Ferguson stated that the County would want to preserve the definition of additional quarters.

Ferguson stated that an ADU requires one off street parking space, but there are criteria that can be met where parking is not required.

Commissioner Spencer inquired about additional quarters as its own set of rules aside from ADUs. Ferguson stated that it's because additional quarters are different from ADUs and shouldn't be part of the discussion. James stated that the benefit may be that the ADU and additional quarters would both be allowed, and this would add additional capacity.

*James inquired about building an ADU and being allowed to live in a recreational vehicle (RV) while the ADU is being constructed. Ferguson stated that in order to qualify as an ADU there must be a primary dwelling unit on the property.*

*Commissioner Montgomery inquired about the possibility of building a 1,200 square-foot ADU before the primary dwelling unit. Ferguson stated that a 1,200 square-foot dwelling unit can be built first as a primary and then can have a change of use permit applied to it later.*

*James inquired about the size of ADUs now limited to 1,200 square feet instead of up to 50% of the main dwelling unit. Ferguson stated that the maximum limit in floor area is 1,200 square feet and that she wasn't certain that it was ever limited to half the square footage of the primary ADU. James stated that in the Plumas County Code written definition for ADUs, the floor area limit for an attached ADU is no more than 50% of the square footage of the primary dwelling unit's living area, with a maximum increase in floor area of 1,200 square feet.*

*Commissioner Montgomery stated that the language states that the lower limit shall be no less than 800 square feet. Ferguson stated that the language reads "in no case shall an ADU of less than 800 square feet be prohibited."*

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/ON-GOING PROJECT UPDATES**

*None.*

#### **X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

*Tracey Ferguson noted that the following items would be on future agendas:*

- 2023 General Plan Annual Progress Report*

#### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

***Motion:** Adjourn to the regular meeting scheduled on February 15, 2024*

***Moved by** Chris Spencer, **Seconded by** Jack Montgomery*

***Vote:** Motion carried.*

***Yes:** Montgomery, West, Spencer*

***Absent:** Leonhardt, Hoffman Stout*