

---

**PLUMAS COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Minutes of the Meeting of February 2, 2017

---

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

**Dr. Robert Abbott**, *Commissioner (District 1)*  
**Dr. Shauna Rossington**, *Vice Chair (District 2)*  
**Larry Williams**, *Chair (District 4)*  
**John Olofson**, *Commissioner (District 5)*

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Plumas County Planning Commission (the *Commission*) convenes in a meeting on February 2, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in the Planning and Building Services Conference Room, Quincy, CA.

**II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**III. ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners Present:** Dr. Robert Abbott, Dr. Shauna Rossington, John Olofson, Larry Williams

**Commissioners Absent:** none

**Also in attendance** (*Supervisors and staff*)

Rebecca Herrin, Senior Planner  
Supervisor Jeff Engel  
Supervisor Michael Sanchez  
Supervisor Lori Simpson

**IV. ADDITIONS TO OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA**

There are no additions to or deletions from the agenda.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY**

There is no public comment.

**VI. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

*Randy Wilson, Planning Director*

Wilson spoke with Supervisor Thrall this morning and she is actively looking for a Commissioner to represent District 3.

One of the roles of the Planning Director is to serve as Zoning Administrator, which is quasi-judicial, in review of development proposals. Wilson, in making the decision on the project, essentially acts as a judge. There is an active special use permit application on file for the Trilogy building on North Mill Creek Road. This site is also under review for a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change application for the Plumas Charter School. There are two more special use permits for the same property that will be submitted shortly to resolve ongoing code enforcement issues with two entities occupying the building without special use permits.

permits for the same property that will be submitted shortly to resolve ongoing code enforcement issues with two entities occupying the building without special use permits.

Once the applications are submitted, Rebecca Herrin, as the staff planner, processes the applications and prepares staff recommendations for the Zoning Administrator. Wilson has an ethical obligation to perform the role of Zoning Administrator at the public hearing. Therefore, Wilson must recuse himself from any discussion directly related to the Trilogy building property on North Mill Creek Road.

County Counsel Craig Settlemyre also has a potential conflict of interest in the property in that he owns a significant amount of Plumas Bank stock and Plumas Bank is the property owner. There is a question on processing of concurrent applications on the same property as they may compete with each other. As Settlemyre cannot be consulted, Herrin will need to speak with Jim Moose of the law firm Remy, Moose and Manley. This firm is under contract with the County for the General Plan lawsuit.

Wilson reminds the Commission that they cannot change the zoning code, but can only provide a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for a change to the zoning code. He warns the Commission that they should not discuss the Trilogy building property directly as the General Plan Amendment and Zone Change will come before them at a later date. Although there is no financial conflict of interest with Wilson, any discussion outside the Zoning Administrator public hearing could create conflicts.

Commissioner Rossington asks for clarification on the different applications. Commissioner Olofson asks Wilson if this will impact item VIII.A. Wilson responds that is a "close call". The proposed code amendment applies to all Light Industrial (I-2) properties in the county and as long as the discussion does not directly address the North Mill Creek/Trilogy property, meaning the Commission should not discuss the proposal in light of the applications currently on file.

Discussion ensues about permitted uses, special use permit requirements in the I-2 zone. Commissioner Olofson questions if charter schools are exempt. Wilson replies that the school board may exempt schools from zoning requirements. Previously the charter school was in the Trilogy building for a number of years due to the school board approving an exemption but the school board has not approved another exemption at this point in time. The County, therefore, never approved the charter school occupying the Trilogy building because the school district provided itself an exemption from the County's regulations.

Wilson adds that the old general plan required amendments for most changes. The General Plan Update has streamlined the process somewhat, but still requires a general plan amendment for a change between Industrial and Commercial.

Steve Wathen of Feather Publishing asks questions about the different types of actions and Wilson describes processes for general plan amendments and zone changes and special use permits. The general plan contains policies, language and maps that show designations. The zoning code implements the general plan and maps the corresponding zoning designations. These maps are directly associated with each other. But in order for a change to be approved, all general plan policies must be reviewed and CEQA review and compliance must be achieved.

Wathen asks for further explanation of a special use permit. Wilson explains that some uses are allowed and some are conditionally allowed with a special use permit. Some counties refer to this permit as a conditional use permit or a use permit. The proposed use may fit or it may not but in order to be approved the use must be compatible with general plan policies. There must be environmental review that may lead to conditions being imposed and the proposed use must be compatible with all other uses permitted in that zone.

The role of the Planning Commission is to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on legislative matters. The Planning Commission does not have development review authority; that authority is granted by the Board to the Zoning Administrator.

**VII. GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT (GOVERNMENT CODE 65400):**

*Rebecca Herrin, Senior Planner*

Presentation of draft General Plan Annual Progress Report to the Commission. The purpose of the report is to discuss the County's actions during the past year in implementing the general plan. The report is presented to the Board of Supervisors and to the Planning Commission and copies sent to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and to California Housing and Community Development (HCD). The report will be added to the agenda for the next meeting in order to give the Commission time for review.

One of the attachments to the report is the list of zoning code updates, previously discussed and approved by the Commission. Commissioner Rossington requests that the code amendment to add schools to the Light Industrial (I-2) zone be added to the list. Herrin responds that the code amendment is on the agenda for discussion only and has not been approved for action by the Commission or the Board.

Wilson adds that the report should be placed on the agenda for the final recommendation. If additions or changes will be made, those should also be on the agenda. The Board could change the report. The Planning budget is tied to a work plan. If the changes to the zoning code approved by the Board add responsibilities to the department, that may also affect the budget. Currently, those zoning code updates that are on the priority list are either required for general plan implementation or are required by state law. Adding a zoning code update that is not part of the general plan would require additional environmental review that would not be covered by fees. County initiated amendments should be addressed under the budget process.

**VIII. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS:**

**A. DISCUSSION:** Code Amendment to permit schools in the Light Industrial (I-2) zone.  
*Commissioner Rossington*

Commissioner Rossington distributes materials to the Commission. As the I-2 zoning allows a dwelling unit, a child day care home and limited child day care home by right, she feels that a school should also be allowed by right. Wilson explains that the State of California requires that child day care homes be permitted in all zones that allow dwelling units.

Rossington goes on to add that several counties allow schools in Light Industrial zones and there has been a precedent set. She feels that it is inconsistent and arbitrary not to allow schools if day care homes are allowed. Wilson explains that there is policy language in the general plan that would need to be addressed. Herrin adds that there would be issues in the general plan as

well as the general plan environmental impact report. Wilson adds that this is not a shortcut as CEQA must still be addressed. While the other zoning code proposals may be able to "tier off" the general plan environmental impact report, a separate CEQA analysis would most likely be required to add schools to the Light Industrial (I-2) zone.

Taletha Washburn, of the Plumas Charter School, shares her view on the issues and conflicts between Plumas Unified School District and Plumas Charter School. Changes in the administration of the district have resulted in a lack of continuity which creates difficulties in ongoing planning efforts.

Rossington requests that the proposal be put on the agenda for the next meeting for a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

**B. DISCUSSION:** Annual Planning Area Review (General Plan Introduction page 13)  
*Commissioner Olofson*

Commissioner Olofson reminds the Commission that the general plan requires a review of one of the five planning areas every year. Herrin explains that the annual review is a continuation of a previous Board policy whereby new information in the planning area as a result of archaeological studies or flood studies would be incorporated into the general plan maps. This is not intended to be a full review, but an update to incorporate information.

Wilson explains that the general plan is the guide to development in the County and there has not been a lot of development in the County since the adoption of the general plan. 4400 lots have been created since 1985 and only half of those lots have been developed. There is very little pressure for development in the County and the population has actually fallen. Olofson suggests that the Commission leave item B and go on to item C.

**C. DISCUSSION:** Schedule for bringing the zoning code into conformance with the General Plan-*Commissioner Olofson*

Olofson explains that item C. is on the agenda in order to get some idea from staff on the timing to bring the zoning code into compliance with the general plan.

Wilson responds that, after the completion of the general plan and in discussion at the Board during budget hearings, the then District 5 supervisor argued that the zoning code update could be delayed indefinitely. The original plan was to continue with the zoning code update immediately after the plan was adopted, but the Board chose to cut Planning's budget and eliminate positions, even discussing leaving the department with only the Planning Director. Wilson argued successfully to keep one planner in order to prepare staff reports for the Zoning Administrator.

**D. DISCUSSION:** Countywide Master Recreation Plan-*Commissioner Olofson*

Olofson states that, although a master recreation plan may not be required as part of the general plan, the materials from the Office of Planning and Research distributed by staff contain numerous citations on the types of activities and planning efforts that are similar to this type of plan.



It is important to pursue a master recreation plan to encourage economic development and create year-round jobs. Olofson and Supervisor Engel met with Coleen Shade, our general plan consultant who now has her own firm, about the possibility of creating a recreation master plan. Olofson feels that the Commission would benefit from inviting Coleen Shade to give a presentation on recreation master plans and what one could do for Plumas County.

Plumas County is trying to create and attract jobs. Businesses are moving out of California. Plumas County has natural resources unmatched in other areas but is missing year-round recreation. Shade indicated that a master plan would inventory recreation facilities and potential recreation opportunities. Most of the recreation facilities are located on USFS lands and the Forest already has inventories. Supervisor Engel and Olofson have met with the new Deputy Forest Supervisor, Barbara Drake, and she has indicated that she is willing to help.

Shade has also indicated that she knows someone on the Sierra Nevada Conservancy that administers grants and other types of funding. Olofson would like to put the Recreation Master Plan item on the agenda for a public hearing and recommendation to the Board to take action on the plan.

Wilson explains that, if this plan is not part of the general plan, it may not need CEQA compliance.

Rossington shares her experience with the Running with the Bears event which attracts 600 people and brings approximately \$400,000 in revenue to the local economy. Other events, however, do not utilize local contractors and do not help the local economy. Olofson adds that other forests in other areas hold events and he feels that there is ample room for improvement in our local Forest,

Olofson would like the discussion on the two specific plans to be continued. Herrin questions the format and wording of these items on the agenda. Olofson responds that he will send a clarifying email on these two items. He expresses dissatisfaction with the look of industrial buildings along the highway corridor in the eastern part of the County (District 1).

**IX. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

*M/S/C: Olofson/Abbott 3-0 to elect Shauna Rossington as Chair and Dr. Robert Abbott as Vice-Chair*

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, motion is made by Commissioner Abbott, seconded by Commissioner Olofson, with a unanimous affirmative vote recorded, to adjourn the meeting of February 2, 2017 at 12:05 pm.

  
Larry Williams, Chair  
Plumas County Planning Commission

  
Rebecca Herrin, Senior Planner