



**BLUE LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 4, 2014
7:00 P.M.**

**Community Center - 111 Greenwood Road
(Skinner Store Building behind City Hall)**

The Blue Lake Planning Commission Special Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at Skinner Store.

Commissioners Present: Jon Fechner, John Amirkhan, Karen Nessler, Rick Platz, Joe Krienke.

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: City Planners Bob Brown and Garrison Rees and Planning Commission Secretary Kara Newman

Staff Absent: City Manager John Berchtold

1. Approval of Minutes: October 21, 2013

- a. 5b: Change "date" to "data"
- b. Motion (Krienke/Nessler) to approve minutes with said change.
- c. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Public Input on Non-Agenda Items

- a. Merritt Perry requested that the Planning Commission meetings agendas be posted on the City's website.
- b. Planner Rees stated that City Clerk Adrienne Nielsen will post the agendas on the City's website in the future.

3. Approval of Agenda

- a. Motion (Platz/Amirkhan) to approve agenda as is.
- b. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion / Action:

4. Public Hearing/Planning Commission Action (Continued): 312-161-020 & 313-231-001/2013 Site Plan Approval for Blue Lake Roundstock, LLC to allow a dowel mill operation that will produce three to seven inch diameter doweled wood products (e.g. fence posts, tree stakes, etc.) Located in the City's Business Park at 791 Taylor Way on parcels 312-161-020 & 313-231-001. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH#: 2013122005) has been prepared and is proposed for adoption pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines.

- a. Chair Platz provided a brief history regarding the revisions made within the last 5 years to the Industrial (M) Zone to principally permit more uses and include performance standards that address issues which were normally addressed as

conditions of approval. Chair Platz noted that the project application is for Site Plan Approval and the Planning Commission's review should be focused on those findings.

- b. City Planner Rees summarized the staff report and referred to the public comment letters and responses from the applicant and staff that are included in the staff report packet. Planner Rees stated that staff finds the project in compliance with the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and recommends approval of the project with the conditions included at the end of the staff report.
- c. Commissioner Krienke inquired about whether the project is in the boundaries of the Industrial Park.
- d. Planner Rees clarified that a portion of the site was included in the 1982 Industrial Park EIR and a portion was defined as a 'future development area' in the EIR. Planner Rees noted that all of the M & ML zoned lands in the City are generally considered to be part of the Industrial Park.
- e. Chair Platz opened the item for public comment and requested that comments be limited to statements that were not already made at the 01/20/14 meeting.
- f. Kitt Man stated that he does not think the mitigation measures in the CEQA document are adequate to protect the public. Kitt mentioned that Blue Lake Power was recently moving logs on the western portion of their site and that it was very loud at his house.
- g. Kristina Walker stated that she does not think the requirements of CEQA were met for this project and believes this is a multi-phase project due to site preparation activities that occurred prior to the item being heard by the Planning Commission. Kristina stated that biological, cultural, noise, and lighting studies should have been done for this project. Kristina requested that the project be conditioned to say no direct lighting will leave the site. Kristina stated that the project site is in the flood zone. Kristina requested that the Commission continue the project until the proper studies are done to analyze the impacts of the project.
- h. David Glenn commented that mitigation measures require commitment from the applicant and expressed concern that the applicant will follow through with the requirements of the permit due to the applicant's history with the City.
- i. Lin Glenn expressed concern that the applicant will follow the requirements of the permit since the applicant has had a pattern of non-compliance in the past and still owes the City money from a previous lease.
- j. Jana Ganion of the Blue Lake Rancheria commented that the Tribe is requesting that an Environmental Impact Report be done for this project. Jana stated that the compliance and enforcement obligations should be more detailed so the City understands its legal liability.
- k. Dave Feral of Mad River Alliance commented that the drainage from the site goes into the Mad River and expressed concern about tannic acid from the site entering the Mad River and impacting salmon. Dave noted that a salmon die-off occurred in the Mad River near the City in the past.
- l. Heather Equinoss expressed concerns about noise that will be generated by the operation due to the non-compliance of Blue Lake Power and the past history of the applicant. Heather requested that the use not be allowed to operate at night.
- m. Merrit Perry commented that the City could be sued for adopting the project CEQA document since the impacts of the project were not adequately addressed and mitigated. Merritt noted that the 1982 Industrial Park EIR did not cover this site and that site specific noise, lighting, and wetland studies should have been done for the project. Merritt stated that 1 year of compliance monitoring for the project

- is inadequate and that monitoring should occur annually. Merritt stated that site preparation activities and log storage has already occurred at the site and should have been analyzed in the CEQA document.
- n. Lin Glen requested that the Commission limit the hours of operation to 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 - o. Walter Nystrom of Blue Lake Power commented that he is in favor of the project. Walter commented that the project is a small dowel mill operation that does not propose any construction of buildings and will have limited impacts. Walter noted that the project will create jobs in the community.
 - p. Casey Murphy commented that he has to listen to the Blue Lake Power plant at night and that it greatly impacts nearby residents. Casey noted that his car is consistently covered with ash from the power plant. Casey requested that the Commission make a careful decision on the project.
 - q. Gary Johnston, the owner of the project site, commented that he is going to put in lights at the site to deter thieves and vandals from impacting his property. Gary noted that the grading activity that occurred recently was done under a grading permit from the City. Gary commented that the rental income from the dowel mill operation will help him make payments on the property. Gary expressed that noise from the dowel mill operation should be minimal in comparison to the old mill and the train that used to run through town.
 - r. Glenn Zane, the applicant, encouraged the Commission to approve the project and commented that Blue Lake Roundstock will be operating under a very restrictive permit. Glen explained that the operation will be taking a waste product from the woods and turning it into a product with added value. Glen stated that the operation will employ at least 8 full time workers and will be paying them a living wage.
 - s. Rebecca Zetler commented that the project has already started prior to Commission review. Rebecca stated that the employees will be from the Redding area and that the operation provides no benefit to the City. Rebecca expressed concern about noise and traffic impacts from the operation.
 - t. Glen Zane responded that some of the employees are from Humboldt County.
 - u. Merritt Perry commented that where the employees are from is not the issue. The issue is whether the impacts of the project have been adequately analyzed.
 - v. Chair Platz closed the public comment period.
 - w. Chair Platz summed up that he hears two main issues from the public which include the adequacy of the CEQA document and problems with the site where the operation is proposed to occur. Chair Platz noted that property owners have rights to conduct uses that are allowed by the zoning of their property. Chair Platz stated that he feels the project impacts have been properly addressed.
 - x. Commissioner Nessler expressed concern about impacts to the Mad River.
 - y. Planner Rees stated that the applicant has met the regulatory requirements for stormwater management and that impacts to the Mad River have been determined to be less than significant. Planner Rees explained that staff believes the mitigation measures required for the project are adequate and that no substantial evidence has been provided during public comment to the contrary. Planner Rees explained that mitigation has been required for noise impacts and if the measures are determined to be inadequate during compliance monitoring then the applicant will be required to modify operations to meet the City's standards.
 - z. Commissioner Amir Khan commented that the proposed hours of operation could be reduced to limit impacts and expressed concern about the amount of people from the public recommending against approval of the project.

- aa. Commissioner Fechner commented that staff are supposed to be experts on CEQA and that it is difficult to decide if the staff recommendation is valid when there is a large amount of public opposition.
 - bb. Planner Brown reviewed the CEQA Guidelines explaining the difference between an EIR and Mitigated Negative Declaration. Planner Brown explained that the Commission needed to determine whether they have received any substantial evidence during public comment that would necessitate preparation of an EIR.
 - cc. Commissioner Krienke expressed concerns about noise and lighting. Commissioner Krienke commented that it is difficult to delineate between what is fact and what is conjecture with regards to public concerns about environmental impacts of the project.
 - dd. Motion to adopt Resolution 2-2014 and approve the Site Plan Approval application (Platz/Fechner).
 - ee. Motion passed 3 (Fechner, Nessler, Platz) to 2 (Amirkhan & Krienke).
5. **Planning Commission Discussion: City of Blue Lake Strategic Growth Council (SGC) Sustainable Communities Planning Grant No. 3012-552. Receive comments on Draft Climate Action Plan.**
- a. Planner Rees briefly reviewed the SGC grant activities and emphasized the desire for input from the Planning Commission and City Council on the Climate Action Plan.
6. **Miscellaneous Planner Items**
- a. None.
7. **Upcoming Planning Commission Meetings for the next 3 months will be on February 17th, March 17th, & April 21st.**
8. **Adjournment by 9:00 pm unless extended by the Planning Commission.**
- a. Motion (Platz/Amirkhan) to adjourn. Passed unanimously.
 - b. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.