

**APPROVED ACTION MINUTES
CITY OF WOODLAND
PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2009**

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Lopez; Wurzel; Murray; Sanders; Barzo;
Gonzalez

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Norris; Sokolow; Smith

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Director's Report:

- Cindy Norris, Principal Planner: She reported that the home located at 210 Lincoln Avenue is now on its foundation.

2. Public Comment: This is an opportunity for the public to speak to the Commission on any item other than those listed on the Agenda. The Chairman may impose a time limit on any speaker.

- a. None.

3. Communication – Commission Statements and Requests: This is an opportunity for the Commission members to make comments and announcements to express concerns or to request Commission's consideration of any item a Commission member would like to have discussed at a future Commission meeting.

- Commissioner Gonzalez: She thanked Paul Hanson for being so prepared at the last Planning Commission meeting. She said that it was a real joy to work with him as he was "on his feet", prepared for changes and added graphics to his presentation.
- Commissioner Barzo: He asked about the auto repair shop located at Cleveland and Lincoln. He said that there are lots of vehicles being kept on the vacant lot next door and it is starting to look like a junk yard.
- Cindy Norris: She said that she will make note of this and will have Staff look into it for the Commission.
- Commission Barzo: He said that he is pro-business but thinks that they maybe taking advantage of the permit.
- Cindy Norris: She said that she will report back at the next Commission meeting.
- Commissioner Murray: She had no announcements or comments.
- Commissioner Wurzel: He said that Staff indicated at the last meeting that they will be adding training items for the Commission. He said that his own firm,

Economic and Planning Systems, provides presentations and has done so for City of Woodland staff, City of Folsom, City of West Sacramento and others. He said the presentation was on infrastructure burden on housing in the current market and development feasibility. He said that if the Commission agrees, he will himself do a presentation. He feels that it would help to give his perspective and help the Commissioners to understand the economics of development better. He said he can coordinate with a light agenda if they are interested. He said that City staff would be welcome to attend also and, of course, it would be free. He said that this was brought before the City previously when reviewing the fee deferral ordinance.

- Commissioner Sanders: He asked Staff to work with Commissioner Wurzel as they would be happy to hear this presentation.
- Commissioner Wurzel: He said that he would just need about a month to prepare.
- Commissioner Lopez: He had no announcement or comments.
- Commissioner Sanders: He asked about the plastic Best Buy sign on the back of the building. He said that it appears to be larger than the one they reviewed on the front. He wants to know if this is true.
- Cindy Norris: She said that she will look into this.
- Commissioner Sanders: He said that he remembered that the tag was smaller.

4. Subcommittee Reports.

- Commissioner Wurzel: He said that the housing subcommittee met regarding the housing element update which they are also the primary agenda item tonight. He said that Staff has done an excellent job addressing the housing issues.

PUBLIC HEARING:

5. 2008 Housing Element Update and General Plan Amendment.

The applicant, the City of Woodland, is requesting that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council approval of the 2008 Housing Element Update and approval of a General Plan Amendment.

Applicant/Owner:	City of Woodland
Staff Contact:	Dan Sokolow, Senior Planner
Recommended Action:	Approval (Recommendation to City Council)

DISCUSSION

- Dan Sokolow, Senior Planner: He provided a detailed presentation on the Housing Element Update, background report and policy document.
- Commissioner Sanders: He asked if Staff addresses the prior comments letter when submitting the Housing Element for certification. He asked if go through the letter and address comments specifically, indicating where addressed in the new draft.

- Dan Sokolow: He said that Staff did provide Legal Services and HCD with a memorandum detailing the changes made to the Housing Element in the background report and policy document. It addresses specifically the issues that were raised last year in the comments letter. He said that they mailed hard copies and also emailed the documents to Legal Services that are being reviewed tonight.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked if the Woodland Hotel is the best example of a SRO.
- Dan Sokolow: He said yes. There are some rooming houses on Main Street that may potentially meet standards but the Woodland Hotel is the only formally established SRO. He said that Commissioner Gonzalez is correct that there may be others.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that it would be helpful to have a table of contents and asked if it is not allowed
- Dan Sokolow: He said no.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked if the discussion of reduction of fees is related to specific projects or overall.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that it is city-wide. He explained that MPFP (Major Projects Financing Plan) base development impact fees apply city-wide and is slightly different in Spring Lake area. He said reduction fees are both residential and commercial. In December 2008, they took some projects out of MPFP. He explained that SLIF (Spring Lake Infrastructure Fees) are fees collected at permit issuance and are totally separate from MPFP. He said this is another layer for those in Spring Lake.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that the economy has changed and population is not growing as expected. She asked if they have made adjustments for this.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that in 2007, SACOG released the initial numbers. In 2008, the numbers were finalized. He explained that SACOG went to the State and the State came back and assigned a different allocation for the SACOG area.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked if they were reduced
- Dan Sokolow: He confirmed that they were reduced.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked how much they were reduced.
- Dan Sokolow: He said he could not specify off-hand. He said that if in June 2013 we only show a certain number, we will not be penalized. He said that the economy is not in our control so there can be no guarantee. He said that we can only reduce fees to try and stimulate development.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that the Homeless Coordinator is discussed on page 9 (2.13) and asked if this comes out of the General Fund or CDBG funds. She said that she keeps hearing that City does not want to tap into General Fund as money is challenged now. She said that CDBG and Homeless Coordinator would be appear to be an ideal match.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that he was unsure so he would follow up.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She referenced No. 2.15. She said that all the projects she has seen have set aside ten-percent for affordable housing. She asked if we are increasing this amount.

- Dan Sokolow: He said that they are not changing 6A and not changing the affordable housing plans in the specific plan areas. He said that in market-rate subdivisions where they are not doing multifamily, for example Spring Lake, the requirement is ten percent of units must be affordable housing units. For multifamily at market rate, the percentages are greater and it has been this way for years. He referenced page 9, stating that the SLSP (Spring Lake Specific Plan) is not changing. He said that the twenty-five percent is an option that the developers have.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said this may push developers to have more units in a complex and asked if this is where the City is going.
- Dan Sokolow: He discussed the example of Terracina. He said that they did go for bonus density units. He said that the City has to provide you with additional units. It needs to be feasible, has to fit into the project site and still meet requirements such as set back and heights. The City has to provide incentives and there can be a relaxation of certain zoning standards or SLSP standards. He said they can be financial incentives and reduced parking ratios.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that it becomes, then, a negotiation and is not going to be the same with every project. She said the City needs to fulfill certain requirements and developer is asking the City how they can help out.
- Dan Sokolow: He said yes. In Spring Lake there are sophisticated developers with fairly good relationship established with City Staff. They work on those issues and make the project feasible. The City looks at the “now”, how the project looks, and the “long term”, how it is operated.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked why the City can’t use this same flexibility on these odd lots mentioned in the Housing Element that are 5,000-6,000 square feet on corner lots to make them work.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that due to default density, State law doesn’t recognize them as developable for affordable housing. He said that it is not impossible if do sweat equity project, including construction, entitlements through CEQA and parcel inventory. He said that the State does not view them as meeting capacity on low’s and very low’s.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that the small and odd sites are those mom-and-pop landlords and they live here in Woodland. She feels that if they were offered the same flexibilities, they might build up those lots.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that it could be done but hard to do. He explained that there needs to be a funding source and it could be problematic from a monitoring standpoint. He said that City has a responsibility to monitor affordable housing to show that units continue to stay affordable and stock does not disappear.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked for an explanation for the language on page 20.
- Dan Sokolow: He explained that solar access means that units do not block someone’s solar view. He then discussed the two errors in the report that were identified by Commissioner Murray during the subcommittee meeting. The first is in the background report (page 27) last line of the first paragraph states “August 31, 2008 to August 31, 2008.” Instead this should be corrected to “August 31, 2007 to August 31, 2008.” The second is in the policy document (page 13) on the

- implementation program. He said that in section 2.21, the timeframe is incorrect and should read “ongoing as needed.” He said this change with Planning Commission support.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She discussed the identification of potential sites listed in the Housing Element. She said that she is aware of more vacant lots within the City. She mentioned Walnut and First streets but realizes that there are many more out there.
 - Dan Sokolow: He discussed the “alphabet” streets in the East Street Corridor Specific Plan. He said that in order to count these sites as low’s and very low’s, they would need to do a program to acquire a number of parcels. He said that Legal Services said that need four acres or more for multifamily projects to make it practical. He said that need to accommodate onsite management in order to ensure good continuous operation and good screening of tenants. He said that need minimum size, zoning, 20 units per acre and the problem is that these parcels are small.
 - Commissioner Gonzalez: She referenced appendix A which lists vacant lots. She said that she knows of more vacant lots, such as on Walnut and California streets. She has compared these sites against Yolo County Assessor’s parcel numbers and they do not appear on this list.
 - Dan Sokolow: He asked for specific location information about the California Street lot.
 - Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that she would rather not say but rather the point being that there are other vacant properties in Woodland and they are not in the Housing Element. She asked why this would be.
 - Dan Sokolow: He explained how the vacant lot list was put together. Willdan drove through the City and put together the initial list. Then Staff went through every parcel on the list and made additions and deletions. He said that it is possible that they missed some parcels but feels that Staff got it right in terms of value and high density parcels that address low’s and very low’s.
 - Commissioner Gonzalez: She reiterated that there are criteria that parcels have to meet and maybe these others don’t meet it.
 - Commissioner Murray: She asked about the Kentucky region. She said that she continues to bring this up and asked if we need to build up Spring Lake first. She said that it appears to her that there is a lot of open space out there and probably not a bad idea to put in some low and very low housing there, or multiple dwellings.
 - Commissioner Sanders: He said that the Commission has had some significant reservations about putting any residential units out on Kentucky.
 - Cindy Norris: She said that the inventory is looking for parcels that are readily developable and have the right zoning, so that is why the Kentucky area is not included. She said that there is a large portion along Kentucky that will potentially need to be annexed. She said that they will bring the Kentucky area back for discussion and acknowledged that Commissioner Murray did raise a key issue of conflict with Spring Lake.

- Commissioner Sanders: He said that there is Spring Lake, the reserve and flood issues on Kentucky, so the Commission has been very reluctant to talk about residential projects out there.
- Commissioner Lopez: He thinks that most lots are listed because they already have infrastructure such as roads and sidewalks.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that the two multifamily sites in Spring Lake may not have completed sidewalks, but do have backbone infrastructure such as roads, water, sewer and storm drain.
- Commissioner Sanders: He opened up the discussion to public comment. There was none. He then said that Staff has done an excellent job. He said that the Housing Element continues to be very important to him and the Commission has an obligation to the community to meet this. He said that when discussing zoning changes, it is important that it is well noticed and well in advance so people have an opportunity to appear and discuss. He said that since he has been on the Commission, they have reviewed group homes and Wayfarer 1 and 2, and these have been very contentious with the community. He wants to make sure that Staff plans well for meetings so public can be present. He said the Housing Element Update is great and he is happy to support.
- Commissioner Lopez: He said that some properties on the list are already redeveloped and asked if it is saying that they need to be redone. He asked because he owns them.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that based on statistics, those parcels are not critical. He said that since it's a very successful business, he does not see those changing their use. When City did the original inventory, they found that that area was under utilized, such as parcels closer to the train tracks.
- Commissioner Lopez: He said it would be good to see the Armfield area developed as it is first thing you see when come into town. He said it would be good to see something other than a train cargo container with graffiti. He said that the proposal seemed very well drafted.
- Commissioner Wurzel: He discussed Policy 2A-11. He said that if a project comes forward and suggests a down-zone, like Pioneer Investors; the implementation program is written such that the applicant would need to identify adequate replacement site at the time there are requesting the zoning change. As opposed to just identifying sites, it could be stronger such that they apply for up-zoning. He said that this is really Staff level review to ensure that they lay the responsibility heavily on applicants. He wants to make sure that it happens once approved. He said he supports the report and Staff did a good job.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She referred to section 2.12 (page 9). She said it says that through Section 8 program, HUD to raise payments to rent to 110%. She said that it appears to be an invitation to increase rents.
- Dan Sokolow: He said it could potentially have this unintended effect. He said this is a hold over from the 2003 Housing Element and not a new policy.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that it is a good program but only when the market is setting it and not government. She said that SSI is mentioned but it should be the same throughout out all communities. She asked if it is intended

that SSI person will live on own and cover all of their basic expenses. She said that could not get rent down that low unless someone else subsidized the rent.

- Dan Sokolow: He said that SSI monthly amounts are very marginal. He said that in some multifamily situations, units are assigned to very low income housing so they may be paying a couple hundred dollars in rent each month.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She said that once peopled get into retirement ages, their ability to go out and generate more income decreases. She questions how they will move these people out of SSI or supplement SSI without it penalizing them. She said, therefore, we ill not be meeting our extremely low's.
- Dan Sokolow: He said that it is really challenging to meet them and some SSI and elderly recipients may live with family but it may not always be a viable situation.
- Commissioner Murray: She congratulated Dan for persevering through this process and making a readable document. She said she is proud.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

It was moved by Commissioner Wurzel and seconded by Commissioner Lopez and unanimously voted that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council adoption of the 2008 Housing Element Update project and General Plan Amendment No. 2009-01 based on the identified findings of fact and by taking the following actions:

- Confirmation of exemption from the provisions of CEQA.
 - Approval of the 2008 Housing Element Update.
 - Adoption of the General Plan Amendment Resolution No. 2009-____.
- Commissioner Sanders: He added that the motion will include corrections noted during the Commissions discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Norris
Principal Planner