Woodland City Council Minutes Council Chambers 300 First Street Woodland, California

July 29, 1999

The Woodland City Council met in adjourned regular session at 7:30 p.m. in a joint session with the City Planning Commission in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Vice Mayor Steve Borchard conducted the meeting on behalf of the City Council and Dennis O'Bryant conducted the meeting on behalf of the Planning Commission.

ROLL CALL:

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Losoya, Borchard, Flory, Ryhal

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Peart

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: Steve Barzo, Michele Carotenuto, Jack

Mahan, Dennis O'Bryant, Toni Thompson, Felix Ybarra, Martie Dote (arrived at 7:50

p.m.)

STAFF PRESENT: Marler, Kirkwood, Kristensen, Wegener,

Agonia, MacNicholl, Grattidge, T. Brown, Tschudin (contract planner), Harris (arrived

at 7:42 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice Mayor Borchard requested those in attendance to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

COMMUNITY FORUM:

Vice Mayor Borchard said everyone is well aware that the City of Woodland is going to be experiencing some significant growth in the upcoming years. As community leaders, he said, it is incumbent upon the Council Members to assure that the community's values and visions are embodied in the new development. He said the General Plan is the document, which guides the City and holds and details these visions and values quite succinctly. He said the

General Plan is a living, breathing document, which can be changed. He said the General Plan should be changed when there is the public desire to do so. He said that is the reason for this community forum -- to solicit input from the public to tell the City how to keep Woodland's small town atmosphere. He said the public needs to tell the community leaders how to keep Woodland's agricultural heritage important and keep the neighborhoods which have been well designed and pedestrian friendly.

Senior Planner Robert MacNicholl gave Council and the Commission some historical perspective on the General Plan and the issues to be addressed at this forum. He said Woodland's General Plan is a critical document to the guidance of the community, the constitution for the City. He said in 1996 the General Plan was revised. He said there was a referendum in 1996 which further amplified the content of the General Plan, and made it clear to the citizenry and the City staff that the policies contained in the Plan were supported by the majority of the community. He said this forum's discussion will center around the traditional characteristics of Woodland, which have served Woodland well. He said some of these community qualities are agricultural heritage, well-defined neighborhoods, pedestrian friendly environment, mix of housing types and sizes and appropriate neighborhood scale. He said members of the public are invited to address the Council and Commission at this forum or submit written comments within the next week. He said all comments received this evening from the Council, Commission and the public will be compiled in a single paper which will identify the issues and the perceptions of those commenting as to what it is that makes the small town traditional values of Woodland work so well for them. Mr. MacNicholl said the traditional qualities include tree covered streets in a regular grid pattern; clearly defined neighborhoods with focal points such as schools and parks; neighborhoods on a pedestrian scale and nearby community facilities and neighborhood shopping opportunities; and housing which is architecturally interesting and available in a range of prices and densities. He then highlighted the following General Plan Policies:

- 1.A.1. The City shall strive to preserve Woodland's traditional small-town qualities and historic and agricultural heritage, while expanding its residential and employment base.
- 1.B.1. The City shall seek to preserve the vital qualities of existing, stable residential neighborhoods. The City shall promote the development of new residential neighborhoods with these same qualities.
- 1.B.2. The City shall require new and infill development to reflect existing neighborhood scale and character.

- 1.C.1. The City shall promote new residential development in a range of residential densities that reflects the positive qualities of Woodland's existing residential neighborhoods (e.g., street trees, pedestrian-orientation, mix of housing types and sizes).
- 1.C.2. The City shall encourage the creation of well-defined residential neighborhoods. Each neighborhood should have a clear focal point, such as a park, school or other open space and community facility, and shall be designed to promote pedestrian convenience. To this end, the City shall encourage the use of historic Woodland neighborhoods, including the use of a modified grid street system, as models for the planning and design of new residential neighborhoods.
- 1.C.7. The City shall promote architectural and landscape design features in new development that create more pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, such as rear garages, detached garages, front porches, tree-lined narrow streets, and landscaped strips between street and sidewalks.
- 1.D.1. The City shall attempt to ensure that decisions concerning land use and development are not detrimental to the positive character and identity of Woodland's existing residential neighborhoods.

Community Development Director Steve Harris arrived at the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Vice Mayor Borchard requested comments regarding the **agricultural heritage** of Woodland.

Margery Holmes Brown, resident of Woodland off and on for the past 25 years, voiced her concern about a distinct feature of our community which is at risk due to development to the south of Gibson Road. She said bordering Gibson Road is a row of 100-year old olive trees. Bordering County Road 101 is a row of very old black walnut trees. She said these two lines of trees are very indicative of the character of Woodland, its history and the agricultural heritage of our community. She said she feels these trees add great value to our community, and the trees are an opportunity to develop an area, which is pedestrian friendly. She said a very nice bike path could be built to the Junior College and the new southeast area High School to be built. She urged that other options be considered such as shifting the road a few feet to the south to save the trees or directional boring. She suggested that volunteers could be used to maintain the trees.

Senior Planner Robert MacNicholl summarized that many of Ms. Brown's comments were directed to creating a **pedestrian friendly environment** as well as to help preserve the **agricultural heritage** of Woodland.

Planning Commissioner Martie Dote arrived at the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Robert Chamberlin, a fourth generation Woodlander, said there are many things in Woodland he does not like. He said he does not like the growth in Woodland and wanted to make Woodland a small agricultural community. He said unfortunately in the 1960's when Woodland was trying to get businesses to come to Woodland we got the wrong element. He said we attracted businesses, which attract low-income individuals.

Mr. MacNicholl said Mr. Chamberlin's comments indicated he is looking for diversity in the community's economic base, having jobs, which are higher paying and require more skill.

Dudley Holman in regard to **agricultural heritage** he said he works for a small agricultural firm in Woodland, and when he moved to Woodland 40 years ago most of Woodland was agriculture. He said there were ups and downs in the community as agriculture itself went up and down. He said now there are a number of agricultural firms in town but other types of businesses that have come in outnumber them. He said Woodland needs to preserve and encourage the continuation of those agricultural businesses. He said if the City can help them in anyway to maintain their operations in Woodland rather than moving away because of new regulations or new requirements, the City should maintain that side of our agricultural link. He said unfortunately Woodland does not have many cross-town streets any more. He said Kentucky Avenue is about the only street that can be used for agricultural equipment.

Vice Mayor Borchard requested comments from Council and the Planning Commission regarding **agricultural heritage**.

Council Member Flory said **agricultural heritage** is several things. One is the preservation of facilities, the trees and silos, which maintain the aesthetics of our agricultural heritage. Another issue is the preservation of commercial and retail businesses that support agriculture and returns the tax base to the community. He said also there is the issue of helping to preserve agriculture as a whole, the business of agriculture including the growing and harvesting.

Mayor Losoya he is supportive of the preservation of ag land, but it is the industry that we really have to protect and develop. Without that, he said, we will lose the ag land and the livelihood that people in our community rely on. He said unfortunately economics is driving the growth of many communities,

and there has been a change over the last ten years in reference to how communities have been able to survive. He said previously there have been subsidies from the Federal government and subsidies from the State, which has helped ag businesses, survive. He said we do not have the subsidies any more. He said we need ways to promote our economic base, and unfortunately that means bringing in businesses and industries from both ends of the scale.

Planning Commissioner Jack Mahan said he is not certain it is the agricultural heritage that determines the other qualities, such as the small town character, the possibility for well-defined neighborhoods, and potential pedestrian friendly environment. He said the fact that Woodland is an island of agriculture and the history has evolved in that. He said we also have heritage in architecture and trees. He said when we talk about agricultural heritage it far exceeds preservation of the industry. He said we need to look at enhancement of the ag industry itself and the pay as we go issue. He said unfortunately retail sales leads the way in the pay as you go process, but if there is too much in retail sales there will be a different kind of community character. He suggested that we be more proactive on enhancement of the industries that we have, such as the seed businesses.

Planning Commissioner Martie Dote said she feels the base of preserving our **agriculture heritage** is preserving the land. Without the land we do not have the agriculture. She said one of the tools other cities have looked at is urban belt boundaries.

Dudley Holman said we would all like to stop growth in Woodland right now and turn the clock to what it was in 1962 when he moved to Woodland with a population of 16,000. He said we need, however, to look at the practical consequences if we try to set a limit on growth. He said if there is a demand for land and housing, the prices will be driven up. He said there may be people from outside the community who can afford to buy a house in Woodland when our young people in Woodland cannot afford to buy. He said part of the reason is there may not be the job opportunities to enable our young people to buy a house in Woodland. He said although we do not want more housing, the consequence of not trying to meet the demand in some limited way is going to price our young people right out of the market.

Planning Commissioner Felix Ybarra said there is always an issue of cost and maintenance with respect to the olive trees. He said by preserving the trees we add to the quality of life and the quality of our community. He said we need to listen to our General Plan policies and stick to those policies. He said we need to enhance what we have instead of stretching what we do not have out.

Planning Commissioner Steve Barzo said he liked all of the community qualities suggested, but he said several are missing. He said the only comment he had was on the overall process. He said we need to be objective and flexible enough to encourage any improvement in the quality of life of Woodland. He said he knows we have a General Plan, but if someone comes up with an idea that can improve it the Planning Commissioners and the Council should be objective enough to listen to the idea and go from there.

Planning Commissioner Dennis O'Bryant said **agricultural heritage** helps define Woodland and makes Woodland what it is today. He said agriculture gives Woodland the small town feeling that it has had for a number of years. He said maintaining a vibrant ag sector, both farming and farm supplies, is important. He noted that Sacramento used to be a large agricultural community but growth pushed those businesses out. He said we need to avoid that in Woodland. He said the City needs to involve itself in agricultural preservation issues, regionally and statewide.

City Manager Richard Kirkwood said he feels we all came from an agricultural base at some time in life and agriculture is part of the social, economic and political fabric of our life. Particularly in Woodland, he said we are surrounded by agricultural properties. He said our General Plan respects our **agricultural heritage.** He said one of the things the City could do is celebrate more our agricultural heritage, such as creating the Farmer's Markets, parades, and celebrating the equipment that we have in our ag history museum. He said this gives the public the ability to enjoy and embrace this heritage more.

Vice Mayor Borchard noted that the Farmers Market in Woodland is held on Tuesdays from 4-7 p.m. and Saturdays 9 am to Noon on the north side of the County Fair Mall in the parking lot. He said the Farmers Market was held on Second Street and the street was closed off before Heritage Plaza was in place. He said there was a problem with traffic in the downtown, and there was not the pedestrian travel. He said ag land preservation and ag business preservation is very important to Woodland as well as allowing ag movement on Kentucky Avenue. He said with annexation of property south of County Fair Mall there will be a need for a land trust of some sort.

Senior Planner Robert MacNicholl noted that the County Fair in August has a strong agricultural flavor and the City of Woodland participates in this event.

The City Manager said the Downtown Coordinator position is being recruited, and he has obtained additional information with regard to one of the most successful Farmer's Markets in the State in downtown San Luis Obispo. He said he will work with the Woodland Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Association and the business community on the material he received.

Senior Planner Robert MacNicholl said there are a number of copies of this agenda packet on community qualities. He said a number of comments from the public were presented as well as comments from Planning Commissioners and Council Members. He said the public is invited to pickup a copy in the Community Development Department at City Hall, and they can provide their written comments. He said he would like the material within a week so staff can compile the information and get a report back to the Planning Commission and the Council. He said the purpose of this forum was to get issues on the table, and more information is welcome.

Council Member Flory thanked those who spoke at this meeting, but he was concerned about the lack of participation. He said there are 2,800 homes and thousands of people coming with new development in the next 20 years. He said he hoped to address the issue one more time and to get more public outreach. If only ten more people provide input that is a decision of the community.

Mr. MacNicholl said he is not certain how much the public is aware of this issue. He said currently the environmental document is being reviewed, and presentations have been made to the public with respect to the Specific Plan. He said until it becomes real, it is difficult to get the public to come forth.

Council Member Flory said as the review process is going along the input can come from Council and the Commission, and there does not necessarily have to be a joint session.

The City Manager said he is not convinced we have talked about all of the community qualities. He said discussion of the **well-defined neighborhoods** was absent. He urged the Council and Commission to talk about the remaining qualities.

Vice Mayor Borchard invited comments on well-defined neighborhoods.

Michelle McCalip said she has lived in Woodland for three years, and she chose to live in Woodland for many reasons. She said she lives in the old neighborhood in Woodland and feels safe. She said what she likes about Woodland includes the Stroll through History, Hot August Nights, the Santa Parade, and the small town July 4th celebration. She said the farmer's market is also good. For improvements she said businesses downtown should promote foot traffic, such as small cafes. She said she would like to see the older neighborhoods preserved.

Margery Brown said she is also interested in supporting downtown businesses. She said Woodland downtown needs to be able to compete with the big box stores. With respect to **well-defined neighborhoods** she said when new neighborhoods are developed they generally contain moderate-income housing and then Woodland does not have the types of income to support some of the higher priced stores and restaurants. She said it is important to maintain the mix to have a high end section of town that brings in extra incomes that will support the businesses that need to charge more to stay in business.

Michelle McCalip said she was attracted to Woodland because she did not see chain link fences in the front yards, the houses in the older area are more well-kept, and there was older housing available which had not been demolished. She said she feels safe and is not afraid to go out at night in Woodland. She said law enforcement is a very important element to a community. She said Neighborhood Watch Program is a great feature of Woodland.

Tom Lumbrazo of Turn of the Century said the Planning Commission and the Council approved some community design guidelines last year, and in trying to recreate neighborhoods traditional to Woodland some of those guidelines addressed that. He presented a picture of a new subdivision being developed in Sacramento, which highlights some of the features the guidelines have addressed. He some of the features included separated sidewalks with six feet of landscaping, heavily planting of street trees, historic lamp posts, and variety of streetscapes and architecture. He noted that narrower streets as in the older part of Woodland add to the character of the City.

Andy Nantz said he lives in the same neighborhood as Michelle McCalip, and the neighborhood is very diverse. He said one of the key issues is that there are no bars on the windows, and there are not the security screen doors. He said people sit on their front porches and people are in the streets, and everyone feels safe. He suggested to create more **well-defined neighborhoods** that the developers be asked to develop the same contiguous area and work within that one area. He said this creates different architectural styles within the same area. He said this would provide greater diversity of floor plans and different fascia. He also suggested for more green area that one side of the street could have no sidewalk and the other side of the street with sidewalk.

Vice Mayor Borchard said he would like to see with new development a gateway that identifies the neighborhood but also has different developers building within the same area. He said there could be a theme but the different developers would accommodate that theme.

Robert Chamberlin said he did not see any advantage of narrow streets. He said the streets should be wide enough for emergency vehicles.

Senior Planner Robert MacNicholl said the purpose of narrower streets is that they create the setting for slower traffic and creates a more congenial atmosphere for the pedestrian.

Commissioner Ybarra said another advantage of narrower streets is that the tree cover would fill in much faster giving the desired ambiance.

Public Works Director Gary Wegener said some streets in the City are narrower than others, and the City receives complaints about the congestion. He said the street widths have been studied as part of the Streets Master Plan and developed street widths on the basis of that Plan which Council did adopt. He said he could review that matter again with Council.

Commissioner Michele Carotenuto said in regard to **small town character** he has only been in Woodland for 12 years but has experienced living in small towns in the 60's, 70's and 80's (St. Helena, Callistoga, Napa, and Lakeport). He said one of the things that attracts him to Woodland is the attempt of the community to try to maintain the heritage and the quality of the small town atmosphere. He said he has walked the Downtown many times and he has not seen a cul-de-sac in the Downtown. He said the narrow streets give quality and character to the neighborhood. He said he is disappointed that the Downtown businesses close down at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Toni Thompson said Supervisor Dave Rosenberg pointed out at the last Council meeting that it is not just a City effort to keep small town atmosphere, but the County works hand in hand with all of the cities in Yolo County to keep housing construction inside the cities. She said the City should start offering developers an opportunity to change lot sizes, and the City needs to look at the process. She said smaller houses can be sold on larger lots if that is what the buyer wants. She said the builder wants to maximize his profit, but the builder also wants buyers. She said the Commission has previously talked about appropriate neighborhood scale. She said the huge trees down College Street are all wrong according to scale for the street but it works. She said the City needs to give the flexibility to the developer and City staff.

Commissioner Ybarra said because of the economy of scale and the cost of things it is very impractical to do what Commissioner Thompson suggested, so the question is how do we provide incentives to make it worthwhile to not necessarily have subsidized housing. He said he does not have an answer.

Commissioner O'Bryant said what he has heard tonight is that the community does not want to see Woodland build a generic suburb. He said we should extend what is good in Woodland to what we will do in the future.

Vice Mayor Borchard thanked the audience for their input.

City Manager Richard Kirkwood said he felt there was very good dialog tonight, and it serves as a springboard to more community outreach. He said this is a compliment to the City Council because one of the goals the Council set in its strategic planning session last October in addition to this community forum was to have more opportunities for the public to voice their opinion about the community. He said Council has tentatively set October 23, 1999 as the next goal setting retreat. Following that at the first of the year there will be a good opportunity to re-engage the public again. He said he hopes the public will provide additional input this next week.

ADJOURNMENT:

	Αt	9:18	p.m.	the	Vice	Mayor	Borchard	and	Planning	Commissioner
O'Bryant adjourned the joint special meeting.										

Jean Kristensen, City Clerk of the City of Woodland