



THE CITY OF
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Mayor
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Denise Athas
Councilmembers
Pam Drew
Pat Eklund
Josh Fryday

City Manager
Regan M. Candelario

Planning Commission Meeting

Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

February 25, 2019

Minutes

- Present:** Justin Derby, Chair
David Gabriel, Vice Chair
Reva Rao
Peter Tiernan
Thomas Weldon
Susan Wernick
- Absent:** Dan Dawson
- Staff Present:** Steve Marshall, Planning Manager
Chris Blunk, Deputy Public Works Director

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA: No changes to the proposed agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. APPROVAL OF PC MINUTES, WITH AMENDMENTS, OF NOVEMBER 5, 2018 (JD, DD, DG, RR, PT, TW, SW)

Commissioner Wernick requested changes to the minutes:

p. 2, paragraph 11 – change to read, “And the sidewalk on Novato Boulevard between San Miguel/San Marin has gaps.”

p. 5, paragraph 10 – change “maybe” to “may be”

p. 6, paragraph 7 – change to read – “Could you stripe diagonal spaces on Front Street . . .”

Motion/Second: Tiernan/Gabriel to approve minutes of November 5, 2018, as amended. Motion passed 6-0-0-1 (Ayes: Gabriel, Rao, Tiernan, Weldon, Wernick, and Derby; Nays: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Dawson).

2. APPROVAL OF PC MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2018 (JD, DG, DD, PT, TW)

Motion/Second: Tiernan/Gabriel to approve minutes of December 17, 2018. Motion passed 4-0-2-1 (Ayes: Gabriel, Tiernan, Weldon, and Derby; Nays: None; Abstain: Rao and Wernick; Absent: Dawson).

3. APPROVAL OF PC MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2019 (JD, DG, DD, RR, PT, TW, SW)

Motion/Second: Tiernan/Gabriel to approve minutes of January 28, 2019. Motion passed 6-0-0-1 (Ayes: Gabriel, Rao, Tiernan, Weldon, Wernick, and Derby; Nays: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Dawson).

CONTINUED ITEMS: None

NEW ITEMS:

**4. PROPOSED NEW CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CB)
NOVATO COMMUNITY GARDEN
GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY REPORT**

Consider providing a report to the City Council regarding whether a proposed new Capital Improvement Project to establish a community garden at the Lieb Property, 1521 Hill Road (APN 140-352-32), is consistent with the Novato General Plan.

Commissioners Tiernan and Weldon recused themselves from this item. Commissioner Tiernan is a member of the group advancing the community garden. Commissioner Weldon lives within 500-feet of the project site.

Deputy Public Works Director Blunk presented the staff report.

Commissioner Wernick referenced the City Council position on the community garden in 2017 and asked why a consistency review was not conducted sooner.

Deputy Director Blunk provided background information regarding conversations with Living Well Network regarding the community garden. A decision to formalize and document the project was made [based on City Council input] to work out responsibilities between the City and Living Well Network.

Commissioner Wernick asked if CEQA review would be performed on just the garden or full site.

Deputy Director Blunk said CEQA review would cover just the garden – there is no plan for the full site.

Commissioner Wernick referenced an Open Novato survey regarding the community garden - noted twenty-two respondents. Who is interested in gardening here?

Deputy Director Blunk stated he did not have that information and reiterated that General Plan consistency was the purpose of the hearing.

Vice Chair Gabriel inquired about the source of funds for the garden.

Deputy Director Blunk noted a variety of potential funding sources, including grants.

Chair Derby opened the item for public comment.

David Selzer noted his 10 year affiliation with Living Well Network and past efforts to establish a community garden. He expressed support for the community garden proposal at the Lieb property and commented on the benefits of the location.

Robert Bastione commented on his experience with gardening and his vision that a community garden will be a place of gathering for residents. He felt the proposal is consistent with the General Plan. He referenced Novato's history of agriculture. He recommended the Planning Commission follow staff's recommendation to adopt the resolution finding consistency with the General Plan.

Chair Derby closed the item for public comment and returned the matter to Planning Commission for deliberation.

Commission Wernick asked to confirm only personal cultivation would be allowed – no commercial.

Deputy Director Blunk confirmed personal cultivation only.

Commissioner Rao and Deputy Director Blunk exchanged comments; there is a gap in audio for the hearing and these comments cannot be confirmed.

Vice Chair Gabriel suggested having third party input from the UC Master Gardeners.

Mr. Bastione confirmed UC Master Gardeners have been contacted.

Motion/Second: Wernick/Gabriel to adopt the resolution reporting to the City Council that adding the community garden to the capital improvement program is consistent with the General Plan. Motion passed: 4-0 (Ayes: Wernick, Gabriel, Rao, and Derby) – Weldon and Tiernan recused and Dawson absent.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

UPCOMING AGENDAS AND QUORUMS: Planning Manager Marshall discussed future meeting schedules.

ADJOURNMENT: The Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.