

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Members present: Diana Stewart, Dan Frasier, Graham Matthews, John Brower. Staff present: Senior Planner Carson Anderson, Director Rick Tippet, Clerk Naomi Merwin, County Counsel Joe Larmour via call-in. Others present: Brandt Gutermuth with Trinity River Restoration Project; Dan Dresselhaus, John Ramaley, Ben Rowe and Toby McCart with CalFire.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public may address the Planning Commission concerning matters within their jurisdiction, which are not listed on the agenda and to request that a matter be agendaized for a future meeting. No action may be taken on these matters at this meeting.

Chair Stewart noted that public comments will not be heard specific to Item 5, and requested anyone with comments on Item 5 come forward during the regular Public Comment period.

No one came forward.

3. MINUTES – April 6, 2016.

Upon motion of Commissioner Frasier, seconded by Commissioner Matthews and carried, approved the minutes of April 6, 2016 as submitted.

4. OLD BUSINESS – Follow-up from Staff Concerning Responses to Public Comments on the County’s Draft Housing Element (per April 28, 2016 Special Meeting)

Action: As directed by the Commission

Chair Stewart opened Item 4 to the Commission; Senior Planner Anderson provided an overview for Item 4.

NEW BUSINESS -

5. UPDATE ON TRINITY RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM ON BUCKTAIL PROJECT AND OTHER CURRENT PROJECTS, AND DISCUSSION OF RELATED FLOODPLAIN PERMIT REVIEW PROCESS

Discussion: Brandt Gutermuth from the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) will provide an update on the Bucktail Channel Rehabilitation Project and other key current projects. Planning staff will provide an overview of the floodplain permit review process.

Chair Stewart opened Item 5 to the Commission.

Senior Planner Anderson provided the Staff Report overview for Item 5 and introduced TRRP representative Brandt Gutermuth.

TRRP representative Gutermuth provided a power point presentation to the Commission, highlighting the history of TRRP projects, the regulatory framework under which projects are carried out, as well as several current and recently completed projects – including the Bucktail Channel Rehabilitation Project.

Director Tippet added further comments regarding upcoming July 2016 FEMA floodplain mapping changes, and the County’s floodplain administrative obligations connected with that rollout and the Bucktail project.

6. **WORKSHOP DISCUSSION OF CALFIRE THREE-ACRE TIMBER CONVERSION EXEMPTION REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS AND COUNTY ROLE IN REVIEWING SAME**

Discussion: Cal Fire representatives, including Dan Dresselhaus, Forester, who is tasked with performing local Trinity County field inspections, and John Ramaley, Forester III, will provide an overview of the Cal Fire Three-Acre Timber Conversion Exemption review process, including the scope of regulatory authority. The role of the County in the review process will also be discussed.

Chair Stewart opened Item 6 to the Commission.

Senior Planner Anderson provided Staff Report overview for Item 6 and introduced CalFire representatives Dan Dresselhaus and John Ramaley.

Ramaley reported that some 1,200 conversions have been reviewed across the district, as well as approximately 100 timberland harvest plans. He underscored that Cal Fire review of conversions is a ministerial process, with no provision for Cal Fire to contact the local agencies, and no requirement on the part of Cal Fire for notification of individual neighboring property owners. Ramaley added that no conversions were issued by the district in 2010, 155 were issued in 2015, and 123 have been issued thus far during 2016.

Dresselhaus explained his duties as a field reviewer, and referenced interface with County DOT encroachment staff and Fish and Wildlife as part of the inspections process. He discussed Forest Practice Act-mandated buffer requirements from watercourses as well as timelines in which conversion applicants must act in reference to slash removals, and upon the filing of the required completion report. Cal Fire can also assign a maintenance period of up to three years for roads and landings. Dresselhaus concluded by discussing staffing limitations (he is the only inspector for his unit), and the role of a county designee in affecting the conversion process.

Chair Stewart opened public comment.

Comments received from Debbie Lono, Clarence Rose, Carol Fall, Terry Mines, Eric Lono, Scott Morris.

Chair Stewart closed public comment and brought the item back to the Commission for discussion.

During Commission discussion, Cal Fire personnel were asked about the extent of the inspections process and when it concludes, neighboring property owner notification provisions, setbacks from streams, and about what happens if a county designee chooses not to sign the exemption application. Cal Fire indicated that the final inspection provides an opportunity to address environmental practice matters and that were the County to have a grading ordinance this would provide another layer for compliance review, in part, by clarifying buffer distances from watercourses; that review during the maintenance period is focused on roads and landings, typically with no option for Fish and Wildlife to sign-off. Cal Fire personnel stated that if the County designee chose not to sign the exemption application that Cal Fire would consider that a denial.

As a follow-up to Cal Fire responses the Commission asked Counsel whether there would be adverse legal ramifications were the County designee to not sign the exemptions. Counsel responded that the County has no legal obligation to grant the exemption, and it was suggested that staff should do research to determine how to make the purpose of the conversion clearer in the County's review process.

Direction to staff was to support Board action to implement an urgency moratorium to address the scope of inappropriate conversion activities while taking care to exclude standard non-cannabis-related forestry and homestead activities.

7. **MATTERS FROM COMMISSION**

Chair Stewart requested to be included in draft agenda distribution list.

8. **MATTERS FROM STAFF**

None.

9. **ADJOURN**

Chair Stewart adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm.