

MINUTES OF THE WILLOWS PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD APRIL 18, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Person Domenighini.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Titus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Domenighini, Lohman, Titus, Melquist

ABSENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was **moved** by Commissioner Lohman and **seconded** by Commissioner Melquist to approve the minutes of April 4, 2007, as presented. All ayes. The motion was unanimously passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

VARIANCE APPLICATION (V07-01)

Chairperson Domenighini outlined the procedure for this meeting and asked that all participants address the chair with their questions and concerns. Planner Karen Mantele presented this item to the Commission, explaining that the applicant has applied for a variance allowing them to install a bell tower on the existing church higher than the code allows for. Ms. Mantele explained to the commission that the bell tower proposal exceeds the current height limit in this district, which is thirty feet. She further indicated that the bell they want to install was the one from the original church. Ms. Mantele stated that after having a conversation with the applicant, he explained to her that they now had enough funds to install the bell tower. The applicant R. Keith Corum addressed the Commission and answered their questions pertaining to the application. Janie Kime, Ruth Dato, Jeff Paddock, and Norman George spoke in opposition of the variance request, and were mostly concerned with how many times the bell would be rung. Sherry Brott spoke in favor of the request, and stated that “for the record, she does not attend the Willows Christian Church.” Commissioner Melquist asked Mr. Corum if they decided that the church could not ring the bell, would they put up the bell tower. Mr. Corum stated that they would not be putting up the tower if they could not ring the bell. Discussion between the Commission and the Planner ensued wherein Commissioner Melquist made a **motion** to table this matter to the May 16, 2007 meeting, in which the neighbors and Mr. Corum could meet and perhaps compromise on this issue, and provide staff additional time to review the public nuisance code. Commissioner Titus **seconded** this motion. Motion carried.

DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION (DR07-01):

Commissioner Melquist made a **motion** to table this application for a further meeting. Commissioner Lohman **seconded** the motion. After further discussion to just discuss the landscaping review, Commissioner Melquist made a **motion** to recall the original motion. Commissioner Lohman **seconded** this motion.

Planner Karen Mantele presented this item to the Commission, explaining that the applicant has applied for a Design Review of the proposed bell tower and the landscape plan, in which the intent of the proposal is to remove the existing Bradford Pear trees, move the sidewalk to the curb, and plant 3 large shade trees. On Plumas Street, the applicant would remove the existing Bradford Pear trees, and replace the lawn with sections of ground cover and sidewalks. Ms. Mantele proceeded to explain, that the landscape plan was part of an original request that was denied last year by the acting Parks and Public Works Director, Greg Tyhurst. Ms. Mantele also explained that any trees that were removed would have to be approved by Public Works from their approved tree list. Commissioner Titus asked that Mr. Tyhurst explain why the original request was denied. Mr. Tyhurst explained that when he went to look at the trees that they wanted to remove, it appeared to him that they were healthy and were not a hazard. Mr. Tyhurst also explained that the sidewalks appeared to be fine, and the trees did not seem to be creating a hazard. The applicant R. Keith Corum addressed the Commission and answered their questions pertaining to the application. Don Bultema, Fred Knauer, and Patricia Hoops were in favor of removing the trees. Commissioner Lohman made a **motion** that the project is categorically exempt and to accept the landscape plan which included the removal of the Bradford Pear Trees. Commissioner Titus **seconded** the motion, and also made an amendment to the motion, in asking that all of the trees be removed with the following conditions: **Ayes:** Lohman, Titus, Domenighini **Noes:** Melquist

Conditions:

1. All new proposed landscaping and ground cover must be approved by the Public Works Department
2. Any work within the City right-of-way shall require an encroachment permit to be obtained.
3. Any work within the right-of-way will require stamped plans prepared by a civil engineer. The improvement plans shall be reviewed and approved by the City engineer.
4. The Bradford Pear Tree located in the City Right-of-Way on the South West corner of Plumas street also will be removed by he Applicant in conjunction with the removal of the other Bradford Pear Tress.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

Joint City Council/Planning Commission Meeting

1. Discussion occurred on subjects that should be reviewed and discussed at a Joint City Council & Planning Commission meeting tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, May 9, 2007. Suggested topics to consider for discussion and review are as follows:

1. Code Enforcement
2. Planned Development, Overlay Zone
3. Water Systems
4. General Plan, Circulation Element
5. High Density Zoning
6. Burn Letter Policy
7. Storage Units
8. Flood Map Revisions
9. Lot-Sizes

Council Members Thraikill and Towne were present at the meeting and commented on the time restraint that was set for the Joint Council/Planning meeting, indicating that the meeting will adjourn at 10:00 p.m.

2. Circulation Element of the General Plan

Planner Karen Mantele discussed the General Plan and in particular the Circulation Element. Ms. Mantele explained to the Commission that the current General Plan speaks minimal in regards to the Circulation for the City. Ms. Mantele further explained that there was a draft Circulation Element completed by a CSU, Chico student for a Masters project and she believed that it was very well written. She suggested that the Planning Commission review the draft element and perhaps recommend to City Council that they include in the upcoming budget year, plans to formally adopt this element into the General Plan.

3. Review of Flood Ordinance

Building Inspector, Clay Dawley was present at the meeting and presented the National Flood Insurance Policy and briefly discussed the City's Flood Plain Ordinance. He informed the Commission that the current FEMA map is under re-study and once completed, it will be 6-12 months before a new map is issued. He further explained that 24 homes were taken out of the flood zone on the map.

4. Planning Commission training by League of California Cities

Interim City Manager approached the Planning Commission with the idea of them attending future training by League of California Cities. He further explained that since we are approaching a new budget year, he could possibly budget for this training. There was some discussion on the price of the training. Commissioner Melquist explained that he thinks that these meetings are beneficial, and feels that it gives the City of Willows a chance to get feedback from other cities.

COMMISSION COMMENTARY:

1. The commission was informed that the City Council Subcommittee will be conducting interviews for the Planning Commission vacant seat on Thursday April 19, 2007.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 10:03 p.m..

LARRY DOMENIGHINI, Chair

Mallorie Vasquez, Minute Clerk