

MINUTES OF THE SOLANO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting of August 7, 2014

The regular meeting of the Solano County Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers, Fairfield, California.

PRESENT: Commissioners Rhoads-Poston, Walker, Hollingsworth and Chairman Boschee

EXCUSED: Commissioner Cayler

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Yankovich, Planning Program Manager; Matt Walsh, Principal Planner, Amy Sinsheimer, PMC; Jim Laughlin, Deputy County Counsel; and Kristine Letterman, Planning Commission Clerk

Chairman Boschee welcomed Gil Hollingsworth as the newest commissioner to the panel. Commissioner Hollingsworth will be filling the District #5 seat which was recently vacated.

Items from the floor:

There were no items from the floor.

The Minutes of the regular meeting of May 1, 2014 were approved as prepared. The minutes of June 19, 2014 were postponed to the next regular meeting to allow for those commissioners who were present at the June 19th meeting to vote.

1. **RECEIVE** a status report on the **Housing Element** update process and solicit input concerning housing needs in unincorporated Solano County. (Planner: Matt Walsh)

Matt Walsh gave a brief introduction to the housing element update process. He said the Housing Element is one of seven elements mandated under state law to be included in the General Plan. The purpose of the Housing Element is to establish a comprehensive plan to address housing needs in the unincorporated area of Solano County. The Element addresses the housing needs of all economic segments of the county including low and moderate income households and populations with special housing needs. Solano County is required to submit its updated Housing Element to the State for certification by January 31, 2015.

Amy Sinsheimer, project consultant, gave a more detailed presentation on the housing element which included the requirements, relevant legislation, compliance, housing needs allocation, assessment overview, and updated schedule.

Commissioner Roads-Poston spoke about the average cost of rent and if the numbers are reflective of the entire county or just the unincorporated areas. Ms. Sinsheimer stated that when working on a county document they try and focus in areas that are unincorporated, but it is somewhat challenging because most rentals are within the cities. She said that it will be made apparent in the final document if enough data is not found for the unincorporated areas.

Commissioner Walker commented that the world has changed quite a bit, especially with the dissolution of redevelopment and some of the federal programs that have either been eliminated or dramatically reduced. He said that when looking at housing conservation and rehabilitation, a lot of the current programming talks about opportunities utilizing CDBG and HOME funds or other kinds of federal funding mechanisms, and in the new planning period there will be a new reality because redevelopment monies are gone. He spoke to the Homeacres area in Vallejo as an example.

Mr. Walsh noted that the county has some funding available that comes from a remnant of a settlement case involving the redevelopment agency and the county. He said that the money is kept in the county coffers dedicated to housing rehab in the Homeacres area.

In response to Commissioner Walker's inquiry about changes involving community care facilities, Mr. Walsh explained that the definition of a community care facility in the county's zoning code defines it as a home for disabled persons, people in recovery and transitional housing support. It includes transitional and supportive services in its definition but it only addresses facilities with 7 or more clients. He said it is a conditional use and he believed that the problem lies between what the state wants to see vs what is currently in the county code. The state would like to see transitional and supportive services removed from the conditional use category regardless of the size. Mr. Walsh noted that staff we will be bringing back before the commission some adjusted wording and possibly a modification to pull the transitional and supportive housing from the community care facility definition.

Commissioner Walker commented that the county does not have the majority of the services that can easily facilitate convenient transition from a current situation to a more improved situation, noting that many areas in the county do not have water, sewer, or transportation.

Mr. Walsh stated that the county does their best to work with the state office of Housing and Community Development to gain the flexibility with areas like Solano County. As far as recognizing that the county does have a voter approved initiative directing development to the cities, during the last housing update cycle, staff felt that HUD was willing to work with the county and hoped that they continue to do so.

There was some discussion with regard to energy conservation within the housing element and the correlation to the subdivision ordinance.

Chairman Boschee opened the public hearing. Since there were no speakers either for or against this matter, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Walsh noted that this item will be back before the commission in October with more specific implementation programs.

2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS and REPORTS**

There were no announcements and reports.

3. Since there was no further business, the meeting was **adjourned**.