

MINUTES OF THE SOLANO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting of June 16, 2016

The regular meeting of the Solano County Planning Commission was held in the Solano County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors' Chambers (1st floor), 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, California.

PRESENT: Commissioners Rhoads-Poston, Walker, Hollingsworth, Castellblanch, and Chairperson Cayler

EXCUSED: None

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Emlen, Director; Mike Yankovich, Planning Program Manager; Jim Laughlin, Deputy County Counsel; and Kristine Letterman, Planning Commission Clerk

Chairperson Cayler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with a salute to the flag. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved with no additions or deletions.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the regular meeting of June 2, 2016 were approved as prepared.

Items from the Public

There was no one from the public wishing to speak.

Regular Calendar

Item No. 1

PUBLIC HEARING to consider Use Permit Application No. U-16-01 of **Westervelt Ecological Services** who is developing the Tule Red Restoration Project on behalf of the **State and Federal Contractors Water Agency**. The proposed project would convert approximately 420 acres of existing brackish managed wetlands to tidal habitat to directly benefit federally and state-listed Delta smelt, and salmonids within the Primary Management Area of the Suisun Marsh. The project is located within unincorporated Solano County approximately 9 miles southeast of Suisun City within the Marsh Preservation "MP" Zoning District, APN's: 0046-260-030, 070, and 110. (Project Planner: Eric Wilberg)

Mike Yankovich introduced the item by saying that this project is a public-private partnership effort to restore approximately 420 acres of tidal wetlands within the Suisun Marsh as part of the larger Suisun Marsh Habitat Restoration, Preservation, and Management Plan (SMP). The SMP is a comprehensive 30-year plan designed to address various conflicts regarding the use of Marsh resources, with a focus on achieving an acceptable multi-stakeholder approach to habitat conservation and the restoration of tidal wetlands.

Byron Buck, executive director of the State and Federal Contractor Water Agency explained that they are a joint powers authority comprised of members from the state water project and central valley project. He said they serve approximately 2/3 of California and over 3 million acres of agriculture. Solano County Water Agency indirectly is a member and part of their funding structure by virtue of them being a state water contractor and a member of the state water project contractor's water authority. Solano County gets water from the state water project and so therefore the county is part of the group that is obligated to provide some of these habitat restoration projects which are conditioned currently by the operation of both the state water project and the federal central valley project. Mr. Buck said it is permit conditions that they are now fulfilling to get the water they have today. This project does not relate to a water fix or anything else going on in the future, although it is part of eco-restore in the sense it is counting current mitigation obligations of the base line of eco-restore projects. In short, the projects have a mitigation requirement for 7,000 acres of title wetland habitat somewhere in the delta, and there are models that direct them to the places that are the most favorable for restoration. The Suisun Marsh plan was identified a long time ago as an area where this would be good so it is an obligation of the county now and the Suisun Resource Conservation District to do this restoration. Mr. Buck commented that they are the financial vehicle that makes this happen as part of the permit requirement.

Robert Capriola, Westervelt Ecological Services, provided a PowerPoint presentation detailing the project. He commented that they have built, own and maintain approximately 22 projects. He said their company is in the land business and are in it for the long run.

Commissioner Rhoads-Poston commended staff for such a good staff report and the applicant for a great presentation.

Commissioner Walker spoke with regard to the construction work once it begins. He wanted clarification on an inconsistency in the staff report about waste facilities. He noted in Finding No. 2 of the report it refers to a septic system, whereas in Condition of Approval No. 8 is refers to chemical toilets. Mr. Yankovich noted that this was a typographical error and confirmed that chemical toilets will be used.

Chairperson Cayler opened the public hearing, since there was no one wishing to speak, the hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hollingsworth and seconded by Commissioner Rhoads-Poston that the Planning Commission determines Solano County is acting as a Responsible Agency pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15050(c) & 15096; and approves Use Permit Application No. U-16-01 to construct and operate the proposed tidal wetlands restoration project subject to the recommended conditions of approval. The motion passed unanimously. (Resolution No. 4639)

ANNOUNCEMENTS and REPORTS

There were no announcements or reports.

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