



City of Fort Bragg

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Meeting Minutes Special City Council

*THE FORT BRAGG CITY COUNCIL MEETS CONCURRENTLY AS
THE FORT BRAGG MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
AND THE FORT BRAGG REDEVELOPMENT SUCCESSOR
AGENCY*

Monday, October 16, 2017

6:00 PM

Town Hall, 363 N Main Street

Special Joint City Council/Planning Commission Meeting - Mill Site Land Use Plan

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peters called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Mayor Lindy Peters, Vice Mayor Will Lee, Councilmember Michael Cimolino, Councilmember Bernie Norvell, Councilmember Dave Turner, Curtis Bruchler, Mark Hannon, Teresa Rodriguez and Nancy Swithenbank

Absent: 1 - Stan Miklose

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THIS SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Mayor Peters noted that the staff report will be divided into major sections so that after each one, a separate public comment period could be held.

2. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

2A. [17-543](#) Receive Report Summarizing Community Input from Mill Site Reuse Workshops, Open Houses, Survey and Meeting with Coastal Commission Staff, and Provide Direction to Staff

Community Development Director Jones presented the staff report, assisted by Associate Planner Perkins and a PowerPoint slide presentation. Jones stressed that this meeting is the first phase of a long two-year process, and people will be allowed to give input throughout this period of time.

Vision: Community Development Director Jones summarized the portion of the report regarding vision and read the draft vision statement. She answered questions from Councilmembers concerning the survey and noted that responses from the community might vary at different times of year, depending on the tourism season and how many visitors are in town. It was noted that the survey showed a strong preference for focusing on jobs creation and economic development.

Public Comment on Vision was received from:

- Barbara Moller said the Mill Site needs to be cleaned up of dioxins before any planning or zoning is done there.
- Gabriel Maroney stated that not everyone wants a tourist destination. He believes the Mill Site should offer health-related jobs, as tourism jobs are not necessarily good ones.
- John Gallo wants to emphasize the Mendocino Coast as a beautiful place to live and visit, and the reason for development should be to maintain the scenic beauty as a gateway to the coast.

- Ed Oberweiser spoke on the need to thoroughly clean up the site. He said the tourist economy can create a lot of jobs.
 - Steve Heckeroth thinks it is important to adopt an energy element, with south facing roofs for solar energy and Electric Vehicle charging stations. He warned of the damage that could be caused by fire and climate change.
 - David Gurney said the Mill Site should be completely cleaned before any plans are made and that some vision besides tourism needs to be considered, as the tourist industry is not sustainable, especially in winter. He recommends alternative energy manufacturing, light industrial, and educational projects.
 - David Jensen commented on the survey and said the vision statement lacks specificity for open space and parks. He said the Mill Site needs to be part of the wastewater treatment management system in the future.
 - Ann Rennacker wants to see a thorough cleanup of the site first. She favors smart, green development, with special attention to sewage and water issues.
 - Char Flum said that cutting the Mill Site into pieces is not the way to go. She urged the Council to look at the big picture.
 - Jenny Shattuck spoke about her concern for wildlife and the ocean out on the Mill Site. She favors including "community space" instead of "open space" in the vision statement.
- Discussion: The following was noted during discussion of this item:

- Adding the word "healthy" before "sustainable community" in the draft vision statement.
- Wildlife-sustaining open space was also discussed.

Direction: Staff was directed to bring back a vision statement with a little different wording.

Land Use: Open Space. Jones reported on survey results regarding land allocations preferred by survey participants. Questions arose regarding the use of open space for events such as farmers markets and Paul Bunyan Days. Jones noted that allowing certain large events may be difficult on the Mill Site because of wetlands areas. Jones said that the Coastal Commission and five other entities do not want activity or development in lowland wetland areas. Because of heavy winds out on the headlands, it is not a good place to establish a playing field for sports. Other uses such as an open square with picnic tables and chess boards was discussed.

Public Comment on Open Space was received from:

- Steve Heckeroth recommended that the Council take a field trip to the Arcata wetlands estuary. Another land use possibility might be an assembly plant for agricultural electric tractors.
- William Lemos noted that many town squares are located away from the ocean, as having a square out on the headlands could incur huge maintenance costs because of competition with northwest winds over time. He spoke of the connection between the land and the marine environment, and any development of this land should take the wind into consideration.
- George Reinhardt suggested taking advantage of the local knowledge base in the community. He referred to a four-page outline he provided for the record which he would like the Council to use to inform the process for all concerned.
- John Gallo said the trees across from Starbucks could be the site of a good park and said that a downtown park is essential, but recommended a square surrounded on just two sides.
- Sheila Semans stated that open space for recreational purposes and open space for habitat are not the same thing, and that layers should be delineated to show the different types of open space.
- Teri Jo Barber said that trees should not be cut down without good reason.
- Carrie Durkee challenged the leaders to do the best they can with restoration, saying a good cleanup could garner worldwide attention.
- Eric Dwyer reminded the Council that the City had to increase the Transient Occupancy Tax to pay for maintaining the Coastal Trail, and that open space and parks come with maintenance costs.

- John Fletcher wants to keep the town as pristine as possible and to develop wisely to make the Mill Site the crown jewel of Fort Bragg.

Discussion: The following items were noted during discussion of this item:

- Inviting downtown business owners to weigh in on what they would like to see regarding open space.
- Addition of a playground for the town and park area.
- Planting of trees to help with wind.

Direction: Take a look at doing a small neighborhood park with playing field, combined with public event fairgrounds, protected from nature. Bring back ideas for a downtown square. Add trees to protect from wind.

Land Use: Jobs & Business: Community Development Director Jones summarized this section of her report, noting that the Coastal Commission sees Fort Bragg as having a sufficient number of low cost accommodations. She answered questions from the Commission and Council regarding the three Alternatives, how numbers for potential jobs are determined, lot coverage ratios and height limits.

Public Comment on Jobs & Business was received from:

- David Jensen said it is important to consider what resources are not being used in Fort Bragg and make use of the opportunities that are sitting unused.
- Gabriel Maroney suggested warehouse space, a small wood mill, university, medical school or clinic on the Mill Site.
- George Reinhardt said restoration creates jobs.
- John Fletcher would like to see a coastal museum that would honor the logging and fishing industry and the natural beauty of the area on the site.
- John Gallo pointed out a discrepancy between the written policies and what is shown on the Alternative maps. He would like to see facilities for people in their 20s and 30s, such as a quality night club.
- Eric Dwyer is against chain stores and corporations but said that Fort Bragg needs more jobs.

Discussion: The following matters were discussed during this section of the meeting:

- The zoning for Noyo Center for Marine Science needs to be changed to marine research and education.
- High end hotel is a possibility for the site.
- Possibilities for the site include a place for the hospital to relocate, clean light industrial industries, high tech jobs, and energy source development.

Direction: Zoning for Alternates 1, 2 & 3 is okay, do site cleanup, consider high end hotel, do not hollow out downtown, do not extend Central Business District, keep some of site available for a lumber mill, consider leaving a portion of the site for timber industrial instead of urban reserve.

Mayor Peters recessed the meeting at 8:07 PM; the meeting reconvened at 8:15 PM.

Land Use: Housing: Jones reported that housing was a big concern for survey respondents, with small homes, multi-family dwellings and co-housing as priorities.

Public Comment on Housing was received from:

- Susan Nutter is against single family dwellings as they promote absentee owners and spec housing.
- Steve Heckeroth suggested zero-energy and fireproofing minimum standards for everything built in California, saying that houses need to create more energy than they use.
- Eric Dwyer believes denying mansions is wrong and that fear that the Mill Site will be turned into a corporate paradise in a few years is false.

Discussion: These items were discussed:

- Parking will be required no matter what type of housing is eventually allowed on the site.
- The amount of homes on the Alternative maps will not house the number of employees needed for new jobs. The jobs/housing balance is fundamental to planning.

Direction: The Coastal Commission suggestions regarding more small homes, cohousing, multi-family and mixed-use housing should be considered.

Land Use Plan Alternatives: Staff is seeking direction from the City Council and Planning Commission on which of the three Alternatives they wish staff to proceed with.

Public Comment on Land Use Plan Alternatives was received from:

- Rex Gressett has concerns about the whole process. He asked if one Alternative is chosen, would that not take the choice away from a developer? He recommends deferring zoning matters and beginning negotiations with a developer to clean up the site.
- John Gallo prefers a compromise between Alternatives 1 and 2. He encouraged the Council and Planning Commission to be cautious about how much is developed and recommended keeping options open in the future.
- Jacob Patterson encouraged the Council and Commission to think more about what the community wants instead of revamping the Georgia Pacific idea.

Discussion/Direction: Councilmember Turner supports Alternative 1 and taking baby steps. Councilmember Norvell supports Alternative 1. Councilmember Cimolino supports Alternative 1. Vice Mayor Lee thinks Alternative 1 is a great beginning. Mayor Peters likes Alternative 1. Commissioner Swithenbank supports an Alternative between 2 and 3 and does not want to limit development opportunities. Commissioner Hannon would like to see an update before supporting an Alternative. Commissioner Bruchler is in favor of Alternative 1. Commissioner Rodriguez supports Alternative 1. Community Development Director Jones noted that based on input from tonight's meeting, Alternative 1 will be changed, and another draft will be provided for further refinement, so the plan will evolve. All Commissioners and Councilmembers indicated that redline versions of the land use and sustainability sections are adequate. Jones explained the next steps that will be taken, the resource studies that will need to be done, and the further workshops which will happen between now and next spring. The subject of funding for the studies was discussed. Jones said that some will be done in-house by City staff. Jones will also look for more money and estimated that at least another \$100K will be needed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Peters adjourned the meeting at 9:07 PM.

LINDY PETERS, MAYOR

TERESA RODRIGUEZ, CHAIR

June Lemos, CMC, City Clerk

IMAGED (_____)