

Minutes
27 September 2008

Call to Order

The General Plan Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Director **Susan Price** in the absence of **Colleen o' Sullivan**, who has resigned.

Minutes

It was decided to approve all outstanding minutes at one time, including the minutes of the instant meeting.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

Report from the Director of Natural Resources and Long-Range Planning

Director **Susan Price** reported that the ALUC project was underway with **Kelli Gant** scheduling the public meetings around the county.

Director **Susan Price** mentioned the existing GPAC vacancies and noted there had been no applicants but that perhaps another advertisement could happen with newspaper articles about the Safety Element.

Susan reported that the Board of Supervisors approved the County budget on 16 September 08 and the General Plan Revision was included. **Susan** announced the achievement of quorum with the arrival of **Carol Rogan**. **Susan** noted that District 2 had vacancies in both the stakeholder and interested individual categories and that perhaps due to the election campaign of Jeff Morris, January would present a better opportunity for appointment.

Susan and **Travis** are still working on the website.

Public Comment

There was no public.

Election of Chairperson

Susan Price announced the resignation of **Colleen o' Sullivan** and the need to select a chair. **Susan** said **Colleen** would continue to comment on drafts as they are completed. **Joan Carr** asked that the minutes reflect GPAC's appreciation of **Colleen's** service, in particular, acknowledging her extensive knowledge of the general plan

process and even-handed conduct of GPAC meetings. **Susan** discovered that GPAC's Bylaws provide that the vice-chair steps up in the event the chair resigns so no election is required. **Travis Finch** proposed that GPAC have no chair so that the committee does not wear out another qualified member. **Ross** concurred, recommending that **Susan Price** be our acting chairman as she is ultimately responsible for the Plan revision. **Travis** said he would so move if the task was agreeable to **Susan**; **Ross Burgess** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. It was agreed that **Susan Price** would wordsmith the Bylaws to accommodate this transitional position.

Revised General Plan Update Timeline

Susan Price notified GPAC that the Planning Commission made minor changes, to wit: moving the Community Plans up into the 36-month timeline and relocating the Economic Development element. **Susan** re-agendized the matter for the Board of Supervisors. **Ross Burgess** objected to the relocation of the Economic Development element as it is a completely new element and not a revision. **Susan** disagreed and suggested the review of another jurisdiction's economic element. **Ken McCoy** wanted an explanation as to why the economic development element had suddenly become more important than its original listing. **Susan** felt it was important now due to the poor economy and so forth. **Ross** thought it was putting the cart before the horse again and he hopes to visit the Economic Development element question only once, and adequately. **Susan** believes all the elements will be revisited several times and simply need to be started.

Definition of Goals, Objectives, Policies, etc.

Susan reminded GPAC that this topic was requested by **Kelli Gant** at the last GPAC meeting and made reference to definitions circulated several meetings ago. Although **Kelli** wished GPAC to make its own definitions, **Susan** said these are the accepted definitions. **Susie** wants to delete the *objectives* definition as being too synonymous with goals and that *goals, policies* and *implementation* is more consistent with other general plans. **Ross** prefers *goals and objectives*, to inject more vision than regulation into the General Plan. GPAC concurred with **Ross** and **Greg Simmons** noted that the use of the term objective provides an avenue of measurement for effectiveness in the future. **Ken McCoy** agreed that pie-in-the-sky statements might ensue using only the term *goal*. **Travis** worried that streamlining would be accomplished at the expense of clarity. **Susan** thought the trend was to streamline planning to eliminate gray areas. She mentioned that policies were extremely important and so the interleaving of goals and objectives was sometimes beneficial to the defining of policies. **Ken** is still uncomfortable with setting objectives as he is apprehensive that a board of

supervisors will disagree with the direction and remove it but on the other hand, believes the General Plan must reflect the desires of county residents, regardless of budget limitations. **Dero Forslund** cautioned that specifying a formula or ratio of deputies, for instance, could limit the issuance of building permits if, in fact, the county could not staff those positions. There was a brief discussion of funding sources, from Mello-Roos, the school assessment to impact fees. **Ross** said this very question is raised numerous times in the draft to be considered this meeting.

Susan agreed and directed GPAC to redefine the goals, policies and objectives questions with each item under consideration.

Safety Element

Susan passed out copies of the Safety Element draft as some members had difficulty downloading them in time for the meeting. **Susan** said she did not want to spend a lot of time on the narrative question; that she had just received a great deal of material from Bill Chambers but not in time to include it in this draft; that unless there were glaring issues with this section, she preferred to move on to the goals, policies and implementation areas.

Ross Burgess said he found significant factual errors in the narrative and said they should be addressed before developing goals and policies. **Ken McCoy** said he thought GPAC had decided to eliminate the narrative as part of streamlining the General Plan. **Susan** said she was uncomfortable with doing away with all of the narrative and that when she was professionally unable to agree with the wishes of GPAC, she would prepare a Director's Recommendation. **Ken** recalled that the decision had been taken in an effort to meet the revised timeline. **Susan** restated her position, that Existing Conditions needed to be included. **Ross** commented that in a year's time GPAC had been unable to move past Existing Conditions or alternatively, to cure the inaccuracies, which is why he supported their elimination. This evening, due to the continued presence of Existing Conditions, he advocated addressing the inaccuracies once and forever.

Ken McCoy suggested that objections to Existing Conditions be circulated outside this GPAC meeting, in time for the next GPAC, so that this meeting could be devoted to goals, policies and objectives. **Susan** explained the limitations of the Brown Act and cautioned that communication between GPAC members had to be compliant; that having her forward the comments would work better. **Sandy Bechtold** thought the narrative could trail the approval of policies and goals; **Ross Burgess**

said it would be a waste of time to construct goals and policies based on a narrative full of inaccuracies. **Travis** advocated for retaining the narrative if **Susan** thought it was mandated; correcting the inaccuracies and moving on to the goals, policies and objectives. **Ross** concurred, saying that he thought we were selecting narrative topics based on priority of hazard, or threat to the safety of the county, yet the draft shows 1-1/2 pages for fire; communications, 2 pages; floods and dams, 7 pages and air quality, 2-1/2 pages; geology, 3 pages and airport safety, 4 pages. Further, that in the fire section, we appear to accept and incorporate Cal-Fire's fire severity zone map; **Ross Burgess** is concerned that its acknowledged inaccuracies will not be addressed properly. Another concern he expressed is the omission of any mention of the accumulated fuels hazard caused by decades of USFS forest management on 73 percent of the county landmass. **Ross** also objected to blanket statements referencing research done around county communities without identifying said communities. He wants to be sure that the General Plan recognizes the differences, historically and currently, between south county and north and northeastern county in regard to land management, volunteer fire department recruitment, forest fuel types.

Ross objected to the assumption that the average age of volunteer firefighters set forth in the Fire section was accurate countywide and that fire equipment, too, demonstrated by monies spent in the last 8 years, was probably not as obsolete as claimed in the draft. **Bill Chambers** noted that this material has been reviewed by the volunteer fire chiefs who made no comment.

Ross noted that the discussion of fire department organization was inaccurate; e.g., Kettenpom-Zenia is chartered under a 501-C3 and that category had been omitted. He also has issues with the discussion of mutual aid response areas; that the statement is too general and implies that a fire department will respond anywhere in the county at times; he believes that is true for adjacent areas only and that it should be made clear that a fire department will not abandon its home service area to fight fire in another area. There was discussion of the qualifying period of eligibility for firefighter payment; the draft indicates 24 hours; **Ross** referenced the Kettenpom-Zenia contract with CDF, which sets forth a 2-hour window and which timeframe is probably the reason the department earned over \$100,000 for the year. **Joan Carr** inquired if there was uniformity in contracts between CalFire and all county volunteer fire departments. **Bill Chambers** said he would recheck this with the departments.

Ross Burgess then referred GPAC to page 7, Emergency Medical Services, and took issue with the statement that Southern Trinity Area Rescue and Trinity Life Support were largely dependent upon county funding. STAR received no funding from the county prior to 1993, and in most years, has been a token of \$9,000 to \$10,000 compared to \$35,000 to \$80,000 for Trinity Life Support plus other disparities in supplies and services.

Ross moved on to Flood Inundation, around page 16 and asked that the material between page 9 and 16 be cut to one page because five pages is risk overkill in a county such as Trinity. **Susan** mentioned that there had been several authors for the section and that its length might not be related to its priority. **Joan Carr** volunteered to rewrite the section to a more manageable size. **Susan** said it was important to retain the information for environmental review purposes. **Joan Carr** saw **Ross'** direction, concurring that wildfire happens every year, flood or inundation on a longer cycle. **Carol Rogan** suggested that each section be shorter, with the extra or edited material appearing in an appendix.

Bill Chambers pointed out an error on page 12, next to last paragraph: There are no control operators (for the dam) stationed at Lewiston. **Susan** noted the correction.

Ross advanced to page 17: He objects to the application of the AQMD's conclusions to the entire county regarding particulate matter when the measurements have been made exclusively in the Weaverville area and would prefer a statement suggesting that conditions may differ in areas other than the Weaverville basin. Since the AQMD is revising their standards, **Susan** thought perhaps GPAC should wait until the new standards were issued before incorporating this change. **Ross** said goals and policies would be materially affected, that more paving would be required to reach attainment; that economic development would be impacted significantly. **Ken McCoy** concurred, saying this was already a burden, that subdividers and developers were required to conform to Weaverville abatement levels, that wood heat is proscribed down river, for example. **Susan** pointed out that the Weaverville standard was the only available standard at present. Both **Ken** and **Ross** emphasized this as the very reason some objection or alternate direction must be included in the General Plan revision. **Dero Forslund** said GPAC needed to be aware of the impact wildfire smoke would have on the AQMD's revisions.

Ross next asked to review page 20, Landslides, in the second paragraph: ". . . result of clearcut logging." He doubted this was provable and asked for deletion.

GPAC then moved onto Airport Safety, at page 21: **Travis** objected to the statement that the airports are a vital link of the transportation system in the county in view of the fact the county has little or no transportation system. **Ross** felt the statement referencing inappropriate land use impinging on the safety and operation of the airports was extremely counterproductive and asked for its deletion. **Travis** and **Ross** both said the Airports section, at four pages, was too long and needed paring. **Ross** noted that the Weaverville airport has no location; that Hayfork and Hyampom airports remain the same distance from Red Bluff and the Trinity Lake airport has no location. **Joan Carr** asked who would do this revision. **Travis** noted that the concluding paragraph of each airport is identical.

Ross stressed that none of his comments are personal, except maybe for seeing blue-green algae twice on page 26! **Susan** acknowledged that GPAC thought it would be removed but her that planners expected to see these references. **Ross** suggested that giardi a be substituted instead as it is a real risk countywide.

Page 27, Water Quality, **Ross** took issue with the reforestation sentence, saying that its position applies to management of private lands, not public lands as the latter is probably jeopardizing the carbon credits Trinity County might sell. **Joan Carr** questioned saying Trinity County plays a large role or just a role. The consensus thought just a role was sufficient.

After a short break, **Ross** mentioned that the mineral content of Trinity County has a lot to do with where lightning strikes; that south county historically has fewer lightning strikes and fire risk is substantially less. **Susan** said that more material was coming from the Fire Safe Council and that **Bill Chambers** had still more information to be included. **Ross** wants the differences in private and public land management practices discussed in this element.

Moving on to *Policy S-1.1 Fire Severity Zones*: **Ross** thinks as written, economic and residential development is stifled. **Susan** took the comment and said there was good support for the opposing view. **Sandy Bechtold** said she thought that this policy was not under the control of the county; that CalFire had absolute approval when it came to development in certain fire zones. **Ross** said if the policy went forward, some stand had to be taken by the county. **Joan Carr** objected to the word *prohibit*; **Sandy** wanted the policy to state that the county might disagree by making its own evaluation and would issue permits in protest to CalFire's findings. **Ross** is opposed to rolling over and playing dead as CalFire's new regs

will end economic development. **Greg Simmons** thought the last portion of the policy could be retained as it puts the onus on CalFire as the lead agency and not the county. **Carol Rogan** thought the wording could shift to the county *considering* the fire severity maps in reaching its decision to permit or not to permit. **Sandy** pointed out that if CalFire disapproved, there would be no permit. **Ross** said it was time to push back, that agencies of local, state and federal jurisdictions should serve, not dictate. Our revision of this draft should challenge the fire severity maps and ratings similar to the appeal provisions found in the flood designation ordinance. **Susan** was unsure of CalFire's response if the County approved a project denied by CalFire. **Ross** thought opting out of CalFire protection might become an option for some projects and specific communities. **Dero Forslund** said that emerging legislation is specifically addressing the permission of development in an area of fire protection and denying it where protection is not feasible. **Susan** said she would review this legislation and write something for the draft.

Regarding *S-1.2 Encourage Cluster Development*: the concept of cluster development as a goal of fire safety is a departure from the original concept familiar to **Ross** that provides for subdivision of large parcels into residential-sized pieces if the large remainder is preserved for resource production. **Ken McCoy** disagreed strongly with cluster development being used as a tool of fire safety management; how is a condominium any safer than half-acre lots with hydrants and paved roads? **Joan Carr** thought it also could be construed to prohibit any development unless it was cluster housing. GPAC recommended that **Susan** strike the cluster housing statement.

S-1.3 Fuel Modification Programs: GPAC endorsed this policy with **Travis Finch** and **Joan Carr** requesting wording that ALL public and ALL private lands are included.

S-1.4 Wildland Fire Management Plans. **Ross** objected to this policy on the basis that it created an undue financial burden on the developer; **Ken** thought there were already enough fire rules in place. GPAC recommended striking this policy.

S-1.5 Fuel Breaks. At first, GPAC attempted to revise this policy to reflect the county's role more accurately but then **Joan** pointed out that specifying the size of fuel breaks actually mandated lot sizes and setbacks and the Wildland Urban Interface covered this policy adequately. **Ken** also felt the issue was covered by the subdivision act and was even limited by where it would be

applied. It was decided to expand 1-1.3 and strike this policy.

S-1.6 Development Guidelines. GPAC thought this policy and *1-1.7 Fire-Resistant Building Materials* were redundant and asked that they be deleted. **Joan** thought it would be useful to include the Board of Supervisors' position on fuel management on public lands. She even thought it should be a separate goal and policy.

Dero Forslund posited that most private land in the county predates public land and as such, probably has more gravitas; what provides supremacy of the Forest Service? Why does the private landowner have to clear around his land; why not the Forest Service clear around its land? This led to a discussion of putting public agencies on notice when they are deficient in due diligence with regard to fuel breaks and fuels reduction. **Ross** thought the practice of setting backfires on private land to protect public land was a badly flawed policy, particularly when the private landowner has no recourse.

S-2.1 Fire District/Department Strategic Plans. This paragraph was revised to *encourage* development of strategic fire plans. **Joan** wondered why the communities had to do it when perhaps the county had better capabilities to provide mapping, etc. **Dero** thought a further problem is that there are few defined districts with boundaries albeit agreements between departments and thus a planner might inadvertently review the wrong plan.

S-2.2 Fire Protection Services. **Sandy** objected to ". . . shall ensure . . ." believing that it would require the county to pick up the tab if the developer did not. **Ken McCoy** is worried this policy might require small developments to have a fire station, truck and personnel. **Susan** said she was exploring the method by which development might afford the county additional fire protection. She mentioned that many counties have used impact fees to fund increased protection and that it is time for this county to consider some fund-raising mechanism also. **Joan** suggested wording that would encourage a developer to provide protection but not require it nor the maintenance of existing infrastructure. **Dero** suggested that the funding mechanism the road department is using for road development might also work for fire protection. While **Ross** objected to any requirement that places a financial burden on county residents, **Susan's** experience has been that developers will pay these fees. **Travis** pointed out that Trinity Pines, as it was developed, probably would not be permitted by today's standards and its residents must cope with the deficiencies on a daily basis. **Ken McCoy** hopes the county does not turn into a heavily fee-based

county through the recommendations of policies like this one. **Joan** and **Sandy** continued to object to the use of the phrase, “. . . shall ensure” and **Susan** realized that their reading indicates that it declares that the county WILL pay and she will reword it so that the developer is required to pay or provide alternate methods. **Bill Chambers** thought the policy overlooked the equipping and staffing question and pointed to the fees for calls concept being floated by some local volunteer fire departments.

Next Meeting/Agenda Items

Ross called for adjournment and departed; however, **Susan** asked GPAC if they wished to push on for a bit and began discussing the next Agenda; she had arranged for Bob Nash to discuss the Comprehensive Economic Strategy that the county is required to have in place as the old one is expired. Normally, a different committee takes on this task but **Susan** suggested that GPAC is a natural fit as it will be considering much of the same material and participation would possibly simplify GPAC's task rather than having to interface with another group. **Joan Carr** asked to postpone his attendance so that GPAC could first finish the Safety Element. **Susan** will try to schedule him sometime early in November as his funding requires that he start soon.

Ken asked that GPAC members forward their remaining comments on the Safety Element to **Susan** before the next meeting so GPAC would be ready to work. **Susan** checked to determine if GPAC was agreeable with posting the first completed Safety Element draft on the website, to begin to solicit comments. There was no dissent.

Susan clarified that GPAC had earlier discussed including a category, *Objectives*, in each element but for the moment we are continuing solely with Goals and Policies.

Susan said the RCD is updating some of the GIS maps under the Blue Print Planning grant and they will be available to the General Plan at some point, certainly by the time the draft is posted to the website.

Joan asked for a date certain by which her revisions needed to be to **Susan**. It was agreed that only the Safety Element would be considered at the next meeting.

There was some discussion about grant funding for the Housing Element and when the updated information could be inserted so GPAC members were encouraged to review that element before the next meeting. Also discussed was how public comment would be solicited once the Safety Element was published to the website.

Adjournment

Director Susan Price adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

SANDY BECHTOLD
Secretary to the GPAC

Members present:

Sandy Bechtold; Ross Burgess; Bill Chambers;
Travis Finch; Ken McCoy; Carol Rogan; Greg Simmons.

Members absent: Dennis Corp; Kelli Gant; Lyn Scott; Bryan Taylor.

Staff present: Susan Price, Dero Forslund