



SAN BENITO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Eric Brunnemann Damon Felice Tim Foley Jessica French Robert Gatto Vicki Montoya Joan Moore Jason Noble Antonio Ortega George Rajkovich David Roemer Jan Saxton Franz Schneider Tom Tobias Jim West
County Administration Building – Board of Supervisor Chambers, 481 Fourth Street, Hollister, California

MINUTES AUGUST 6, 2009

PRESENT: Gatto, Moore, French, West, Foley, Roemer, Schneider, Rajkovich, Noble, Felice (arrived 6:08 p.m.), Saxton (arrived 6:16 p.m.), Montoya (arrived 6:17 p.m.)

ABSENT: Brunnemann, Ortega, Tobias

STAFF: Director of Planning (DoP) Art Henriques, Assistant Director of Planning (ADoP) Byron Turner, Associate (AP) Planner Michael Kelly, Deputy County Counsel (DCC) Shirley Murphy

The regular meeting commenced at 6:04 p.m.

West moved to approve the certificate of posting, Schneider seconded, and the motion passed 9–0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No verbal public comment took place. Included with the agenda packet as written public comment, a letter from Joseph Thompson suggested using agribusiness in Napa County as an example for San Benito County to follow, and attached to the letter was a court decision regarding wine-related, airport-adjacent development affecting wetlands in Napa County.

DISCUSSION

1. Minutes

a. April 30, 2009

Schneider moved, and West seconded the motion, to approve the minutes of April 30, 2009. The motion passed 9–0.

b. June 11, 2009

Moore moved, and Roemer seconded the motion, to approve the minutes of June 11, 2009. The motion passed 7–0, with Schneider and West abstaining.

2. Board of Supervisors Direction on County Growth

DoP Henriques reviewed the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors feedback to the growth projection alternatives information provided to the Committee at its June 11, 2009, meeting. West suggested that the County's desired growth rate, as chosen during the General Plan Update process, be observed as an average over five years to allow for year-to-year variations in development activity, as opposed to the County Growth Management System's current limiting of growth each year to one percent. Henriques mentioned that one idea considered for the updated Growth Management System Ordinance would involve a growth cap that would "float up and down" according to the State's average growth with a minimum floor of one percent among other potential changes. Noble stated concern that this approach would potentially cause San Benito County's growth to lag behind the rest of the State's growth. Schneider noted that allocations under the City of Hollister's growth cap were initially not used during slow market conditions but were still available when the economy improved and were eventually used.

Henriques then provided an update on the County's budget hearings. He noted that Staff was directed to find ways of potentially saving costs in the General Plan Update process. Schneider asked whether the existing General Plan would be updated in parts or be fully replaced, and he stated concern that care must be taken not to repeal portions of the existing General Plan accidentally. Henriques replied that the question is to be determined. *Felice arrived during this item's discussion at 6:08 p.m.*

3. Drafting a Vision for San Benito County

- a. Confirming and Expanding on the Phase One Public Outreach Input
- b. Developing a Vision Statement

DoP Henriques explained the tasks, asking the Committee for their input to build on the General Plan Update Phase One stakeholder input. Henriques also explained the vision statement task, referring to the Mintier Harnish memo included in the Committee members' agenda packet. Schneider asked whether the Vision San Benito report was completed. Foley responded with a general description of the report and suggested that the Committee review the report. Henriques further described the task and pointed to sample vision statements in the agenda packet.

Foley raised the question of how the Committee should handle advocates for specific projects. West suggested they submit written material, Noble said they should have their three minutes of public comment time, and Saxton stated that the Planning Commission and not the Committee should examine specific projects.

Discussion then took place on how to prepare the vision and raise issues. Henriques said Planning Staff will examine the Vision San Benito statement and compare it to the General Plan Update Phase One outreach and provide to the Committee. Roemer suggested Sutter County's vision statement as an example.

Gatto mentioned the Joseph Thompson letter included as public comment in the agenda packet, and a brief discussion took place on Gilroy-Hollister public transit and the costs of car-based transportation. Foley said that the Committee would not be discussing single issues at that time, referring to this topic and also Schneider's June 11 mention of public health as a General Plan component, and stated the Committee will visit these issues later.

Under public comment, Scott Fuller spoke of Vision San Benito and mentioned a Community Foundation application for a Packard Foundation grant to update it. He also commented on this evening's agenda item 2, saying that the General Plan discusses growth in general and not a cap on building permits and that restricting building permits for housing will not necessarily stop local population growth. People will instead "double up," and population will continue to grow naturally according to birth and death rates, he said. *During this item's discussion, Saxton and Montoya arrived at 6:16 p.m. and 6:17 p.m., respectively.*

4. General Plan Consultant Summary of July Progress

Henriques discussed the consultant's statement. He mentioned the www.sanbenitogpu.com website and noted its content and purpose. He discussed ERA (economic consultant) involvement, the General Plan consultant's Background Report (currently under preparation), the environmental impact report (EIR) consultant, and the noise consultant. Gatto asked about General Plan consultant status. Henriques stated that Planning Staff will discuss funding with the consultant and that the General Plan update could save money for future applicants by allowing them to tier off the General Plan EIR for their own projects. Gatto noted that not doing the General Plan right could cost the County economic development and other opportunities. Foley asked about whether General Plan alternatives could be reduced in number to save money, and Henriques said that, yes, the State does not set a high minimum on the number of alternatives. He discussed State law on how small changes can be done to update the General Plan, such as technical amendments to keep the document up to date. However, he said the State questions General Plans over 10 years old, and the County becomes a "target" when the General Plan becomes too old. An old General Plan might also give the County a competitive disadvantage with regard to neighboring jurisdictions, he said.

5. Future Meeting Items

Montoya asked about what Committee members should do for the next meeting. Foley answered that the members should bring components the Committee will prioritize. Committee members may give comments to Planning Staff, and Staff will summarize for the September 10 meeting. Montoya also asked about a question in the Phase One survey report on transitional housing, and Henriques explained that transitional housing refers to battered women's shelters, homeless shelters, and other housing for persons making a transition. Discussion took place on what the State requires for transitional housing and what action has taken place in the community. Montoya noted an ethnic difference in support for transitional housing (as the survey showed greater support among Latinos for transitional housing). Saxton asked about the consultant's progress reports, and Henriques said the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors receive quarterly reports and GPAC receives monthly reports. Saxton requested to see all of what the General Plan consultant is doing.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m. to the regular meeting of September 10, 2009.

Minutes prepared by Michael Kelly, Associate Planner. Attest: Art Henriques, Director of Planning.