



City of Sebastopol
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UNAPPROVED DRAFT MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF February 14, 2023

PLANNING COMMISSION:

The notice of the meeting was posted on February 9, 2023.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Fernandez called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and read a procedural statement.

1. ROLL CALL: **Present:** Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Burnes, Kelley and Oetinger
 Absent: Commissioner Oetinger (Arrived Late)
 Staff: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
 John Jay, Associate Planner

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA: None.

3. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

November 8, 2022

Vice Chair Fritz moved to approve the minutes as presented.

Commissioner Kelley seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Burnes and Kelley

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Oetinger (Arrived Late)

5. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

A. Sustainable Transportation Grant Discussion

Director Svanstrom presented the staff report.

Senior Planner Barry Bergman of W-Trans traffic consultants gave a presentation.

Chair Fernandez asked for Planning Commission questions of staff or the traffic consultant.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

The report said the two-way street would be presented as an option. How did that option come about?

Barry Berman, W-Trans

That one predates me.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

When we did the General Plan update years ago one of the action items was to investigate a two-way street system, and full disclosure, I've been pushing the City to apply for this grant for a number of years, so I'm excited about this and think it's a good opportunity for us to further explore the two-way street idea, and that's why it's incorporated into this grant at this time, because it is part of our General Plan.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I will note that W-Trans did do an initial feasibility red flag kind of memo a few years ago on the two-way street idea, but that is as far as it went at that time. The funding to do a larger, more comprehensive study and coordinate with Caltrans and others like the County would be a much bigger initiative to do that. That memo didn't say that it was infeasible; it discussed some of the issues and some of the advantages of that. This would go into much greater detail and will consider how the City has developed and take into account the hotel and other things that have happened since then.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

Caltrans has their own planning documents that recommend investigating going back to two-way street systems, so it supports some of Caltrans' own thinking about the street network in downtown Sebastopol.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

This has been in our General Plan since 2016. It was obviously not one of the low hanging fruit like the rezoning and some of the Housing Element things that we have done; it is one of the longer ranges. In terms of the bigger picture for in-town I've had some discussion with Steve Weinberger, the principal of W-Trans, about this project and the other traffic issues in Sebastopol. Another component the City is also looking at—but will not be a part of this—as part of other development projects that are under review or that the City Council has received, is we have three locations in town. There are the two-way or other pedestrian biking transit solutions for downtown to make downtown more walkable. This grant would go further in trying to look at the urban design and making sure the downtown areas are walkable, safe, and pedestrian-oriented, as a main street should be. The other traffic components of our General Plan are that the likely intersection improvements along the Highway 116 corridor are at Covert Lane and Highway 116 coming into town on the north side for potentially a round-around or signal, and we need to think about if we're getting close to those triggers. Another location is Healdsburg and Murphy, and of course the Planning Commission just had a pre-application preliminary review for a 20-plus-unit project at that intersection. Also our General Plan notes either roundabout or signal, and because the land there is very limited it would more likely be a signal. The third location is Fircrest and Highway 116, and according to W-Trans is one of the last locations to need improvements, because there are signals in some areas down there that assist that. So that's the large overview of our Circulation Element goals in our General Plan, those three

locations, then the downtown core, and then obviously the Bodega Avenue improvements are underway to install bicycle lanes and sidewalk caps and deal with some of the roadway conditions out there.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

For historical perspective, the Fircrest Highway 116 roundabout was looked at some years ago, and there was quite a bit for and against, so it might be useful to look at that, because nothing has changed in that area and really it had to do with how much space do you need around there? I looked at the site with all the different criteria and presentation and numerous times it mentioned consideration for disadvantaged communities, so I wonder if having more bike lanes opens it up to individuals for whom that is their mode of transportation, and are there realistic opportunities to present that? Has that been looked at? Are there any considerations? Is that even a possibility that some of the areas could be considered for strategies to help?

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Are you asking whether there are disadvantaged communities?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Yes, and that would be presented as part of the application.

Barry Berman, W-Trans

I've worked on a few projects in Sebastopol and I've noticed how it varies depending on which year's date you use, so part of it is a matter of what the data shows in a given year, but there are certain pockets that have shown up as disadvantaged. If it's not something that shows up in the census, then we can go to alternative things like looking at where those clusters of below market rate housing are located, where there may be things that are below the census tract level that still show up as pockets of disadvantaged. The way that these grants work is that it's not necessarily if it's located in that area as long as you can demonstrate benefit for the community and their involvement in the process.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I wanted to encourage that; it would be great if there were opportunity for that.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Usually census tract does not work for us, because it is beyond the City limits, so it's a whole lot of land where there are larger homes and things like that, but there certainly are pockets.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I know we are working with the County, and as part of their goals have bypass strategies for Sebastopol. I don't know if that's realistic or not. Is that still one of their goals somewhere or is that long gone?

Barry Berman, W-Trans

That's not something that I am aware of. I know that's something we want to include, that they would be certainly involved in the discussions.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Commissioner Kelley might know a little bit more about that, because she has brought it up in the past. My other question is under Circulation on page 3-3 where it says with respect to drivers and bicyclists, "It has been suggested that by creating a greater sense of uncertainty and making it unclear who has priority that it would reduce their speed." It

sounds like you want to make it riskier, and that way people would slow down and be more careful.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I'll get started, and I'm sure Barry can talk about this as well. There are a lot of different theories that have been tried about how to do traffic calming, the idea of slowing people down. Our Arts Committee, for instance, is looking at doing artworks, for example, on Petaluma Avenue right as you enter downtown—we're also going to have one on the east side of town—having some way of denoting that this is not just the state highway, this is a town, so slow down; you're going to be interacting with pedestrians and bicycles, etc. They used to use speed bumps, and that has progressed to a lot of the intersections in town using bulb-outs where the curb comes out; that's a little bit of what this is talking about. It's jutting that pedestrian space out in a way that protects the pedestrians, so we're not talking about making something unsafe, but in a way where it's not just a straight four-lane street. Steve was saying that at one point the lanes of Highway 116 were 18 feet wide each; that's a freeway width. You want lanes on an arterial that are 11-12 feet wide; you don't want lanes that big, because the cars will think it's a freeway because it's still the same amount of room, and they won't slow down. You put in vertical elements, trees, pedestrian bulb-outs, flashing beacon crosswalks, those types of things that start to make that a shared space and not just vehicle priority space is what this is talking about, so that's part of some of the elements to be looked at when he talks about urban design in the downtown and how that works.

Barry Berman, W-Trans

The kinds of things Kari mentioned, the treatments vary depending on the type of roadway. The discussion I've heard more in thinking about lower volume streets is should we put a center line down the street, and if you put a center line down the street then people feel like they can fly down it as long as they are they still within their lane, but if you remove the center line, people are a little more cautious. But on collector arterial roadways where you've got higher speed and higher volume traffic, narrowing lanes is a pretty common one to a point, but yes, safety remains a primary concern. There are certain standards that we still want to adhere to at a minimum.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I want to make it clear that this is to apply to, then do research and investigate. No decisions are being made regarding how we're going to do it. We will have multiple public comments to get ideas from individuals. Nothing has been set or decided upon. This is simply to be able to get the funding to go through this process and get public input, and there will be plenty of opportunity for that.

Deborah Burnes, Commissioner

Having been on Main Street for many years, I'm not an advocate of going to a two-way street. A more beneficial solution would be looking at this bypass. One of my concerns is that with approving all the new housing developments and everything we've been doing, things are spinning fast and it doesn't feel like we have the infrastructure in place to support all of this, so while I'm an advocate of housing and low-income housing and bringing on all these changes, we really need to look at the infrastructure, and traffic is a major issue. A lot of merchants are hearing that their customers are just not coming to Sebastopol anymore because the traffic is incredible, even down Highway 12. I would like to echo the City bypass, which I think would be great and kind of stepping back to look at the bigger picture so we can have the infrastructure to support all of this. Will you be looking at that? Can we make sure we add that and all the aspects of converting from a one-way street to a two-way street?

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Absolutely. Looking at alternatives is not just a matter of changing the directionality and looking at safety issues and existing conditions. We will also be looking at what is planned growth five to 20 years out, and what does that do to future traffic operations? If we remove a lane or change an intersection, how does that model? That's all part of the alternatives analysis.

Deborah Burnes, Commissioner

And maybe going to merchants up and down Main Street when you're looking at this, because it's a very interesting situation with the two-way versus one-way street on Main Street.

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Representatives of local businesses are going to be critical stakeholders in that outreach process.

Linda Kelley, Commissioner

In the 2000s the bypass kept getting on the regional plan, but it never had enough traction. There was discussion about a bypass between Highway 12 and up by Guerneville using where the sewer line up to the mountains is placed, but there was concern that installing a bypass would be growth-inducing with all the convenience stores and vehicle supportive businesses, and encroaching into the open space like that. I don't know if it is still in the planning documents for the County traffic projects. Businesses were resistant to a bypass, because they were afraid people wouldn't stop, but people don't stop when there is terrible traffic either. I agree that we should look at a bypass as an option, but it is not an easy thing. My question is are we looking at the new bike lane on Petaluma Avenue that changed the avenue to one-lane down by Palm going north? Will any analysis be done as to whether that has been helpful or if there are any problems? Are we reevaluating that, or have there been any complaints?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I know the Council got an earful when the lanes were first reduced, but from both sides of the aisle; people who were thankful for it and folks who wanted the lanes to stay. I believe that W-Trans and Steve did take a look at the impacts after that was done. I don't have the details for that tonight, but it did not significantly impact the overall traffic flow, because it does go back to two lanes once you get to downtown. It's one lane coming into town, and it was really just extending that one lane a little bit farther before opening it up into two lanes; it wasn't two lanes, then one lane, and then two lanes again. It took a while for people to get used to it, but I don't believe the overall impact was that significant.

Linda Kelley, Commissioner

I just don't see a lot of usage of it, and some drivers, unfortunately, use that as a path. I know it's a little off topic, but we're looking at what we need to do to help move traffic flow through downtown.

Chair Fernandez asked for further Planning Commission questions of staff or the traffic consultant. Seeing none, Chair Fernandez opened public comment.

Eric Spillman, Sevenfold Creative

I've been involved with the core project over the years, and basically this outline looks really good and considered many things that would help Sebastopol re-envision its downtown and circulation. One of the healthiest things we can do is the traffic engineers

and professionals be open rather than coming up with the most fluid and correct model. It takes a lot of time to get around and circle to a destination with one-way traffic. Two-way traffic provides people going by the same businesses twice a day versus once. It would be interesting to find out the benefits and drawbacks through this study.

Lisa Pierce

There are many ways to improve the downtown, such as widening the sidewalks. One simple and low-cost idea for traffic calming would be reducing the speed limit on Main Street to perhaps 15 miles per hour and enforce it; it could even be a way for the City to make some money.

Emily Shartin, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition

The Bike Coalition is pleased to hear about this grant opportunity and the chance to improve bicycle infrastructure in the downtown, and we look forward to being involved in the future. The Bike Coalition is working with Bike Sebastopol, a group of citizens that is working on building community and culture around cycling and is involved in local policy and infrastructure conversations. I hope Sebastopol will involve this group in any of these discussions going forward.

Jan

I'm very excited about this and working with folks from Bloom. Go to Bloomtown.org for updates; we're going to try to keep the community engaged. My question is how do we support this grant other than letters of support; perhaps further documentation of issues in the City? How does this active community engagement get realized? The Bloom people who are participating in meetings are very talented and a cross section of our community.

Steve Pierce

Given that this is a climate related grant, do we have any idea about the greenhouse gas emissions reductions that would be part of this, or would that be part of a later study that the grant would fund? Would we be including any kind of effects on all the adjoining roads that might be used as shortcuts in a two-way street scenario? How wide a circle are we going to cast from the downtown on the actual implications or feasibility? I walk in town almost every day and love the new crosswalks with the lights, but I've had some near incidents of being hit and have seen people hit at the crosswalk in front of the car supply place that crosses over to the CVS parking area, so whatever is done, safety improvements need to be included there.

Chair Fernandez asked for further public comments. Seeing none, Chair Fernandez closed public comment and asked for Planning Commission questions of staff and the traffic consultant.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

How to support the grant? Once the grant is awarded, the support is from individual citizens coming to these meetings and giving their input.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

If we had positive support from local business owners or organizations in the downtown area for the grant part of it. We're also asking the Planning Commission for a letter of support. Knowledge from local business owners and people who are in downtown everyday would be helpful.

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Getting a diverse set of support letters representing a range of interests in the community would be really helpful. Disadvantaged communities are something Caltrans is looking closely at, so if there are any organizations, maybe a manager of an affordable housing complex near the area, or a group that serves low-income individuals within that area, that could be beneficial. Certainly the business community, and any other constituent groups showing a broad range of support would be helpful.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Again, this is just to qualify for the grant, so we're not making any decisions. If we get the funds, then we'd be able to look at these things, and then we'll open up a discussion on that. One of the other questions regarded climate and greenhouse gas. Can you talk a little more about that?

Barry Berman, W-Trans

That's not something that is emphasized with this grant as much. There are other grants within the program that are more climate focused. I think it's something that would support the grant if we can show, for example, that there would be a mode shift and we would reduce vehicle transportation and increase active transportation where you increase transit ridership, that kind of thing. It's not something we need to quantify for the purposes of this.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I live on the north side of town, and whenever I have to go to somewhere around Palm Drive Hospital and I have to go all the way down to where it's two-way, just to get right back up, I think about the extra mileage, the extra traffic, the extra turns, and the greenhouse gas and the VMT. Will there be an opportunity in the grant to look at some of that? There are the pass-through trips in Sebastopol, which if we could get rid of some of that would reduce greenhouse gas and VMT as people are waiting in traffic. The other side of it is all of the very short local trips, which are probably double what they actually need to be because of the one-way system. Would the grant be looking at those types of things as it is analyzing the traffic patterns?

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Typically when we look at traffic we're looking more at operations, so vehicle delay, safety, things like that; you're talking about a different analysis. We'll have to see if there's a good tool that's available for that kind of thing. I could think of a few ways to go about it, but that's worth exploring.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think before implementing something like this it would need to go through CEQA, and that is one the analyses of what would be the DMT be? What would the greenhouse gas be? One of the questions I saw in the chat is what is the relationship to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that is being updated in the next year? Barry, I don't know if W-Trans has thought about this or not, although I know Steve is aware of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, but it seems like that is really good timing in terms of taking that comprehensive look. Our current Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is from about 2010, and we've implemented a lot of it. What's next then? Some of that in my mind is the street connectivity and how this might play into that.

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Once everything gets completed on Bodega—I don't think it's all funded at this point—I think that completes just about all the bike lanes that were in that plan. What's interesting is that in the last ten years or so there's been a big shift in the whole bicycle facilities

planning to try and create what they call “low level of traffic stress streets,” so creating things like buffers between bike lanes and travel lanes and looking for opportunities to add more protection for bicyclists. So I may not be necessarily putting a new bike lane at this location, it may be a matter of enhancing existing facilities and how that fits in with whatever is done on the streets. Maybe there are a couple of extra feet that could be found for restriping a lane or things like that that where there may be some opportunities to enhance it.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Another question regarding looking at traffic flow, but also keeping in mind what it will cause for shortcuts or surface streets. I’m assuming that definitely will be part of that process, not just saying this is going to increase flow, but what effect it would have on other side streets?

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Whoever is doing the analysis would go out and identify a whole set of intersections, because like you said, one could affect the next and the next, etc., so there might be 10-20 intersections that all get analyzed, and when you start doing different scenarios it moves things around, and then you start seeing what those consequences look like.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I wanted to follow up on what Kari was talking about earlier about having to go all the way down south and then circle back around at Petaluma Avenue and how that adds to the traffic, and the one thing that stands out in particular, and something that has changed relatively recently, is the popularity of The Barlow. If you’re coming from the north part of town, to get to The Barlow you have to make a lot of loops to get there. You have to go all the way down to Bodega, down Sebastopol Road, and back up Petaluma or Morris. These one-way streets create additional traffic just because you have to loop back around on yourself to get to your destination. I have some other comments about the grant itself. I realize we’re not seeing the full documentation, and traffic is obviously important and we need to know what the traffic implications are, but a big issue of the downtown is it’s not a great place. The sidewalks are too narrow and the traffic there often moves way too fast, particularly when you get south of Bodega, and I think traffic calming there is going to be super important, because it just doesn’t feel like a place that people want to hang out, because it feels more like a highway. We need to think about what we want to be. Do we want to be a place that moves traffic through efficiently, or do we want to be a place where people actually want to spend some time? I just want to make sure the grant has a good amount of emphasis on the urban design and place-making component and not get too caught up in just analyzing the traffic circulation. One issue I talk about a lot is you can walk down Main Street on a Friday or Saturday and hardly see a soul, and then you get to The Barlow and there are hundreds of people there, so how to bring some of that vitality to downtown is an important aspect of this grant. Also, Caltrans published a document about ten years ago called “Main Street California” that talks about when your Main Street is a Caltrans highway it’s a different animal, and they had a lot of good quotes, one of which is, “Livable main streets convey a sense of place and enable communities to thrive,” and that’s an important aspect of this. If we want to create a Main Street that’s really a center and focal point, and something the community can be proud of, and it helps our downtown businesses to thrive, efficient throughput of cars may not be the thing that makes our downtown thrive. I want to make sure we really focus on the pedestrian and alternative methods of transportation in the grant. People are willing to walk farther on Main Street if it’s a pleasant walk, so they wouldn’t mind if they had to park a few blocks away. I want to make sure urban and place-making is incorporated into this grant application, because people are willing to get out of their cars and walk or bike more if they feel comfortable and

safe. In response to Emily Shartin of Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, letters of support are important and the Bike Coalition would be a great support for this application, and anyone else who represents some organization in town; and as Barry said, having a variety of different types of groups supporting this application goes a long way with Caltrans, so hopefully someone can reach out to the Downtown Association and the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations involved in the downtown to ask for letters of support.

Barry Berman, W-Trans

Regarding those support letters, if there is anyone who would be a good speaker on behalf of public health and the benefits of walking and making a more pedestrian-friendly downtown, that would certainly be favorable for this.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

That's a good idea. In the report you talk about a Complete Streets idea, making sure we talk about wanting to make a complete street, not just a vehicle-oriented street. One thing that is a big problem downtown, which is partially captured in looking at regional partnerships with the County and the Transportation Coalition, is the through traffic of primarily the gravel trucks. A lot of big, loud trucks go through downtown, making it an unpleasant experience and impacting the quality of life, so looking to partner with these other organizations to figure out how to get more control of large trucks coming through the downtown and have less of them.

Vice Chair Fritz made a motion to enable the Planning Commission Chair to sign a letter of support for the Caltrans Transportation Grant.

Commissioner Oetinger seconded the motion.

Chair Fernandez asked for further Planning Commission comments or questions. Seeing none, he asked for a vote on the motion.

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Burnes, Oetinger, and Kelley.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2022-067

1. 421 Group, on behalf of Regen West for a Zoning Ordinance amendment to allow cannabis retail delivery only in the Industrial (M) Zone. However, this zoning modification would apply to all Manufacturing Zoning District properties. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and provide a recommendation to the City Council for final decision on this amendment.

Associate Planner Jay presented the staff report.

Chair Fernandez asked for Planning Commission questions of staff.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

Section 360.075, Item B is worded strangely. It says, "The co-located cannabis retail delivery office only are subject to following criteria, are subject to an administrative permit review." Are we saying that they are subject to the criteria below as well as being subject to an administrative permit review?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We can work on that wording to make it clearer. The intent is that we would require an administrative permit; that's how we confirm that they are meeting all the criteria, and if they don't meet those criteria they wouldn't be considered a co-located with manufacturing use; it would be like a bonafide delivery and it would need to go to the Planning Commission for a use permit. The wording could be, "are subject to the following criteria *and* will be evaluated through the administrative permit review process," or something like that. Or we could make it that an administrative permit is required as one of the criteria, and then that would eliminate most of the second part of that sentence.

Chair Fernandez asked for further Planning Commission questions of staff. Seeing none, Chair Fernandez opened public comment and invited the applicant to speak.

The applicant gave a presentation and was available for questions.

The Planning Commission had no questions for the applicant.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Before opening public comment I wanted to reiterate that this isn't an amendment that we would approve that suddenly opens delivery in Sebastopol, because that's already allowed by the State for outside entities coming in and making deliveries. Basically what this would do if enacted would be to say that local businesses can, but I want to make sure it's clear that it doesn't mean that no deliveries could be made.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

And we do have three delivery-only licenses that aren't associated with manufacturing use in town, two of which have been issued to Solful and SPARC, and we have a third license for delivery-only that has never been approved and issued. That may have happened if delivery were allowed within the manufacturing zone. The question of if it's delivery and no storefront, that seems appropriate for the manufacturing zone, but until now unless this amendment were passed, delivery-only is not allowed in the manufacturing zone, so it's also kind of already allowed in Sebastopol, just not in this particular zone.

Chair Fernandez opened public comment.

Yarrow Kubrin

I'm a 20-year Sebastopol resident. I was on the Sonoma County Growers Alliance, and founding member of the Sonoma Country chapter of the California Cannabis Industry Association. I've held committee positions with the National Cannabis Industry Association, and I'm on the board of the Sonoma County Cannabis Alliance. With respect to this noticing requirement, cannabis is over regulated in California and I don't know why a business has to notify their neighbors if they're making deliveries if they already have the ability to make deliveries for wholesale and the only difference is the recipients, because there is already distribution allowed from this place, so they can already do business-to-business cannabis deliveries. Again, that seems like a lot of administrative burden. The California cannabis industry suffers from over-taxation and a lack of access to retail. It was a big deal to even get another dispensary approved beyond SPARC for Solful; I spoke in favor of Solful as well.

I have no financial interests with The Resourcery or Solful. The direct-to-consumer model increases access and means less traffic in downtown. The argument that there are already a couple of delivery licenses would really be a restriction on trade and the opportunity that regulated cannabis businesses can garner from the facilities that they've already established, which are very expensive to set up. We have two very successful dispensaries in town. I don't see this as something that's going to negatively impact neighbors or where there needs to be a large administrative burden or hurdle to the existing business merely to be able to bolt on this additional capacity. And again, with a distribution license they're already able to make B-to-B deliveries, the only question is whether they can make B-to-C deliveries. If we're going to support cannabis we destigmatize it by treating it like most other businesses, which means we lower the regulatory hurdle, and I invite the Planning Commission to think about this in a way that's consistent with the way that we regulate other businesses. To my knowledge, The Resourcery hasn't had any issues there and this is an easy no-brainer, and you support other cannabis businesses in doing that, because this is a standard that would be applied to Industrial and not just to The Resourcery. I'm a zoning geek with 20 years real estate experience and 20 units of real estate in college, and I can't think of a single compelling argument why an industrially zoned property couldn't easily accommodate delivery vehicles. Thank you.

Zac Guerinoni, Ahti Farms

I am the co-founder of Ahti Hash, one of the licensed manufacturers here in Sebastopol. There's not much to follow up with after Yarrow and Andrew; they pretty much nailed everything on the head. The cannabis industry is clearly in dire need of some support, and allowing a direct-to-consumer option for the existing licensed business would be a huge help. Thank you.

Chair Fernandez asked for further public comments. Seeing none, Chair Fernandez closed public comment.

Chair Fernandez made a motion to approve Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2022-067.

Vice Chair Fritz seconded the motion.

Chair Fernandez asked for further Planning Commission comments. Seeing none, he asked for a vote on the motion.

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Burnes, Kelley, and Oetinger.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-24 Parks Budget

Director Svanstrom presented the staff report.

Chair Fernandez asked for Planning Commission questions of staff.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

We've looked at this before, so is this just more updates?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We do our budget on a yearly basis, but our Capital Improvement Plan does look out a couple of years. Capital projects are multi-year projects because they're large and span more than one year, What we're doing right now is we are required to submit our budget for fiscal year 2023-24, so from July 1st of this year to June 30th of next year, and we use this as an opportunity to update projects that are delayed and request they be pushed to a later year. What we're doing tonight is a check-in before I submit the budget. It then goes to the Budget Subcommittee, which will go through and talk about all the capital improvements and City department budgets, and they give their recommendations to City Council and the Council discusses it and adopts it in a May-June timeframe. Once Council has had its first hearing on the Capital Improvement Plan you will see all of those projects coming back to you to have a hearing on General Plan consistency, so in June you'll see what the final Council recommendation is for the parks projects as well as all the other capital projects in the City.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

For example, you mentioned the Ives Park pool exterior shower, and the budget shows that \$75,000 of it is unfunded. Let's say you spend the money for pre-design, and then if you don't get the rest of it funded does that design expire and you have to do a new one? How do you determine what to move forward with, particularly with items that are not completely funded?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

There are two kinds of projects. The shower is probably a smaller one, in that it is \$100,000; for a city budget it's not that huge. It's not the Calder Creek restoration, which is a multi-million project, so the funding is kind of foreseeable; in this case we do have this money in the reserves. For a smaller project like this it's okay to do the design knowing that you're going to be able to fund it in the next year or so. Our job as staff and City grant writers is to start to identify funding sources for some of these, and if we can do it without the park fund, that's always helpful. With respect to the Ives Park exterior shower, I spoke with folks at the Community Development Commission since they thought this would potentially be available for homeless folks with tokens to come and get showers. In speaking with them, there aren't any funding sources at the County level for that. I think one that is a little more questionable, because it is not in the master plan, this Commission has recommended that this not be funded with parks money, which is why the funding that is identified for it is not in the parks funding. The larger projects like Calder Creek, yes, you do have to get to a certain level before you can go out for grants, you do have to spend some money upfront, and that's what CUSP is trying to help us with. I think Barry Bergman just talked in his presentation about the Caltrans grant; that would get you to about 30% design. It's basically you've gotten to the point where you know it's realistic, and the construction details still need to be worked out, but it's enough that you have the feasibility and some of the general design done, and the community participation and voter confidence from the City Council, and that's where we're at with the Calder Creek project. We know we don't have funding for it and we're going to have to go after grant money. We have a few ideas of where that money might come from, but we need to do this initial work, which CUSP is trying to get us dollars right now. That's how you attempt to do the really big projects, and sometimes, like the Ives Park Master Plan, it is a long time and you end up doing some updates, and there is the trick of not doing a bunch of design work that's going to get changed in a few years. The Americorps Trail is one where they probably didn't do quite enough design before submitting for the grant, which is why it's taking a bit more time.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I don't know if it's realistic to consider putting together a budget that takes into consideration what impacts it would have on future project maintenance, just to have an idea of what resources the City is committing to in the future.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think it is realistic, and it might be in our General Plan to make sure that we're doing that. I spent a decade doing planning and public architecture that was all public and park facilities, and there is definitely a component of what kinds of surfaces and materials you use in terms of it might be more expensive up front, but from a maintenance standpoint they're a lot easier to take care of, and that is definitely a critical factor. But yes, that's the other component, do we need that or not?

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I was looking at the South Main Street parklet, and the description says, "Develop design features for parklet in the downtown area." Is that particular to this site, or if we develop components and styles, would those same design elements be used at a future parklet at another site, or is the design element feature just for this site?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The City is actually handling this in a two-fold approach. Right now we are working on design guidelines for parklets, so this is not just for Caltrans streets but for City streets too, and people can propose them and the Design Review Board would review them just like residential or commercial design guidelines. We had one meeting on those design guidelines with our Design Guideline Subcommittee, and a second meeting scheduled for the end of February. That will go to Council in late March, and then come to the Planning Commission for final review and adoption. That's why the design work cost is almost as much as the parklet, because it's the more comprehensive approach. Then the construction of the one would be for that one particular location. The idea is they may have some of the same elements, but you could vary them so they don't all look the same. Because it's a parklet, it's being funded through the Building and Facility fund.

Chair Fernandez asked for further Planning Commission questions of staff. Seeing none, Chair Fernandez opened public comment. Seeing none, Chair Fernandez closed public comment.

The Commission discussed the application as follows:

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I think it all looks reasonable. We've seen most of these projects in some capacity previously and it's good to see them moving forward through the process, and I'm glad some of these have money to move forward. I don't have any changes at this point.

Vice Chair Fritz made a motion to approve the proposed fiscal year 2023-24 Parks Budget as presented.

Commissioner Oetinger seconded the motion.

Chair Fernandez asked for further Planning Commission comments. Seeing none, he asked for a vote on the motion.

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Burnes, Kelley, and Oettinger.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

8. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES – None.

9. PLANNING DIRECTOR’S REPORT

A. Public Meeting Update (Starting in March)

B. Liaison List

Director Svanstrom and Associate Planner Jay provided updates.

The Commission asked questions of Director Svanstrom and Associate Planner Jay.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Fernandez adjourned the meeting at 8:44 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 28, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.