

KINGS COUNTY GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

CITY MEMBERS

Dennis Tristao - Chair
Garry Curtis
Judith Horn– Alternate

PUBLIC MEMBERS

Mark Pohle
Bob Lewis
Glenn Estes

Vacant– City/Public Alternate

COUNTY MEMBERS

Joe Neves
Jim Gregory

DISTRICT MEMBERS

Ronnie Silva
James Lohry
Louie Rodrigues – Alternate

COMMERCIAL MEMBERS

Jim Olivas
Jeff Stivers
John Bolze - Alternate

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Alicia Jacobo
Doyle Davis
Vacant - Alternate

AGRICULTURAL MEMBERS

Michael Miya
Craig Pedersen – Vice Chair
Charles Meyer - Alternate
Roger McVay – Alternate

KINGS COUNTY

PLANNING AGENCY STAFF: Greg Gatzka (559) 582-3211 ext. 2682, Jeremy Kinney (559) 582-3211 ext. 2673

CALL TO ORDER: The Kings County General Plan Advisory Committee (KCGPAC) meeting was called to order by Chairman Tristao at 6:35 p.m., on October 16, 2008. The KCGPAC meeting was held in the Multi-Purpose Room, Kings County Government Center, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd., Hanford, California.

Roll call of members was conducted by Mr. Gatzka, and a quorum of appointed Committee members were in attendance. Alternate John Bolze filled in for the absent Commercial Member.

APPOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS: None

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Gregory, Dennis Tristao, Garry Curtis, Alicia Jacobo, Doyle Davis, James Lohry, Michael Miya, Craig Pedersen, Jeff Stivers, Mark Pohle, Glenn Estes

COMMITTEE ALTERNATES PRESENT: John Bolze

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Neves, Ronnie J. Silva, Jim Olivas, Bob Lewis

COMMITTEE ALTERNATES ABSENT: Judith Horn, Louie Rodrigues, Charles Meyer, Roger McVay

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Zumwalt, Greg Gatzka, Jeremy Kinney, Marcum Caldwell

VISITORS PRESENT: Jeff Halstead, Tom Holm, Robert Keenan

UNSCHEDULED COMMENTS:

- A. Mr. Gatzka announced that on October 14th the Board of Supervisors approved changing the name of the Planning Agency to the Community Development Agency. The Community Development Agency includes two divisions: Building Division and Planning Division. Mr. Zumwalt stated the name change in no way affects the way in which the Community Development Agency functions and was primarily initiated because Carl Goff the building official is anticipated to retire and all new building officials must have certification. Committee members inquired about the timeline of the completion of the elements of the General Plan. Mr. Gatzka responded that the Planning Division hopes to have all of the elements completed by the end of the calendar year with the Noise Element presented at the next meeting. Mr. Gatzka stated that the only element requiring major work revision is the safety element. Mr Gatzka stated the review of the General Plan Drafts would likely be done by the end of February 2009.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made and seconded (Pederson, Curtis) to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2008 KCGPAC minutes. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- A. None.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Home Garden Community Plan-** Chairman Tristao asked if the Committee was in agreement to postpone the Home Garden Community Plan and all Committee members agreed.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Biological Resources Survey-** Mr. Kinney introduced Jeff Halstead from Halstead and Associates (environmental and biological consultants). Mr. Halstead presented the Biological Resources Survey. Mr. Tristao asked about the function and purpose of the Resource Conservation element. Mr. Gatzka stated that the Halstead study updated the Hansen Study which was used for the update of the 1993 Resource Conservation Element. Chairman Tristao asked if physical surveys were conducted. Mr. Halstead replied no but that a community survey was done. Chairman Tristao inquired about the Hoary Bat. Mr. Halstead responded that there is no date associated with the finding of animals and further research would need to be done to identify if there are any threatened or endangered species associated with new development. Mr. Halstead explained the typical methodology is to look at the map where the species exists and the eight maps surrounding the area in question.

Mr. Gregory asked if any species are not included within the map because of their sensitive nature. Mr. Halstead replied that in the 1993 Biological Survey there were 67 sensitive species in Kings County, but in the 2008 Biological Survey there are 92 sensitive species. Committee members asked why this number increased. Mr. Halstead stated that the increase in sensitive species is due to an increase in the number of species cited in Kings County as well as already identified species which have been added to the list of sensitive species. Mr. Halstead explained that the Delta Smelt has been identified by the California Natural Diversity Database as a species within Kings County even though it is several hundred miles away because pollutants could potentially flow from the Kings River and affect the Delta

Smelt. Chairman Tristao asked whether the adoption of the Resource Conservation Element would require new mitigation measures. Mr. Halstead responded that there would be no new regulations under the update of the Resource Conservation Element.

The presentation concluded with a slideshow tour of the County highlighting the threatened and endangered plants and animals and sensitize habitat within Kings County. Chairman Tristao asked if the Kettleman City Community Plan included plans to channel growth away from species and habitat identified within the update of this Resource Conservation Element. Mr. Gatzka stated that these resources were not available at the time the Kettleman City Community Plan was drafted.

B. Agricultural Conversion Study- Mr. Kinnney introduced Thomas Holm from Michael Brandman Associates. Mr. Kinney stated that Michael Brandman Associates (MBA) is scheduled to present the Agricultural Conversion Study, and following with goals, objectives, and policies of the Resource Conservation, and Open Space Elements. Additionally MBA is preparing the Air Quality Element for Kings County's General Plan update. Mr. Holm presented the Agricultural Conversion Study. Chairman Tristao asked if the study considered programs which convert farmland back to wildlife. Mr. Holm responded that MBA is aware of that issue but did not address it completely within the report. Mr. Holm presented several maps and focused particular attention on the farmland surrounding the Hanford, Armona, Lemoore and Naval Air Station Corridor. Chairman Tristao asked how the data was compiled to determine the conversion of 681 acres of farmland to urban uses from 2004 to 2006. Mr. Zumwalt responded that the Department of Conservation compares aerial imagery on two year intervals to determine what land has been converted from farming to urban use.

Committee members began discussing conservation easements as a tool to mitigate the loss of farmland and preserve farmland. Mr. Miya asked if farmland mitigation fees could go toward other programs. Mr. Holm responded that the requirements are somewhat wide open but that conservation easements are a very common mechanism for mitigating the loss of farmland. Mr. Keenan from the Home Builders Association of Tulare and Kings Counties asked if the County could just not change the zoning from agricultural to urban. Mr. Zumwalt responded that the County would be able to do that but zoning is a political issue. Chairman Tristao asked if the prison population was taken into account for the population projections. Mr. Zumwalt explained that the prison and LNAS projections were taken out of the future growth assumptions and the housing for LNAS will be assumed at a constant of 1,596 households. Mr. Miya stated that the farm bureau is generally opposed to the conservation easements. Mr. Holm responded that long range strategies need to be in place to preserve ag land. CEQA serves as the basis and has already established farmland mitigation requirements in the courts. Mr. Miya asked if you can have a fee based structure without easements. Mr. Holm responded that the loss of farmland can be mitigated without a conservation easement. Mr. Holm finished presenting the Agricultural Conversion Study but because of time constraints was unable to begin presenting the goals, objectives and policies of the Resource Conservation and Open Space Elements.

MISCELLANEOUS

A. MEMBER COMMENTS: Committee members discussed the limited time frame to complete the KCGPAC presentations with only two meetings between now and the end of the year. The Committee did not commit to increasing the number of meetings but indicated

that increasing meetings in the month of January and February would help the Committee get through the possible backlog of Draft General Plan Documents.

B. STAFF COMMENTS: None.

ADJOURNMENT – A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was adjourned at 8:46p.m.

A. Next regularly scheduled meeting to be held on November 18, 2008, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory R. Gatzka, Deputy Planning Director