

CITY OF COTATI

MINUTES for the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission

DATE OF MEETING: Monday, October 17, 2011  
TIME OF MEETING: 7:00 pm  
PLACE OF MEETING: Cotati City Hall, City Council Chambers  
201 West Sierra Avenue, Cotati, CA 94931

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moore called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Brady, Ford, Hancock, Vice Chair Ritter and Chair Moore  
Commissioners Absent: None  
Staff Present: Parker and Pajon  
Consultants: Beth Thompson and Ben Ritchie, DeNovo Planning Group

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. For the Regular Meeting of September 19, 2011

Motion:	Vice Chair Ritter made a motion and Commissioner Ford seconded the motion to approve the September 19, 2011 minutes.
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Yes: 4                      Noes: 0                      Abstain: 1                      Absent: 0

B. For the Regular Meeting of October 3, 2011

Motion:	Vice Chair Ritter made a motion and Commission Brady seconded the motion to approve the October 3, 2011 minutes with corrections from Commissioner Hancock and Commissioner Ford.
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Yes: 5                      Noes: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

IV. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

V. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Citizen Karen Mihalovich asked for an accommodation and spoke about issues on Windmill Farms. She submitted a letter for the record.

Nicholas Alva, Old Redwood Highway, commented on the noise level from modified vehicles and that this violation should be enforced.

In response to George Barich's comment about procedure, Community Development Director Parker explained that the City of Cotati follows ADA state requirements, which requires the City to provide reasonable accommodation.

## VI. MATTERS AT HAND

### A. General Plan Update meeting #4: Circulation and Noise

Community Development Director Parker welcomed everyone and turned the presentation over to Consultant Ben Ritchie.

Consultant Ben Ritchie opened the Circulation and Noise segment of the General Plan Update.

Consultant Zack Matley spoke about local transportation and circulation throughout Cotati.

Consultant Ben Ritchie reviewed the feedback information from the Vision Workshops.

PUBLIC COMMENT opened at 7:35 pm

Greg Karraker, 1200 Railroad Avenue, commented on pedestrians and bicyclists and wondered how much the City is going to spend on 2% of travelers.

Joyce Garcia inquired about bicycle studies and funds that are spent for bicyclist and pedestrians routes. She asked if there was solid information available about bicycle ridership to support the funds that will be required. She doesn't feel it is a smart way to spend taxpayers' money.

Nicholas Alva said that he is a bike rider and commutes to work on the Laguna trail. He said that the current streets are not safe and he has to drive his kids everywhere. He feels that more people would ride if there were safer routes available.

Cory Lafond, agreed with the bike plan and said that if there were better bike paths available that the percentage of riders would grow.

Kathryn Wickstrom asked for the definition of traffic calming. She said that Old Redwood Highway is a thoroughfare and a gateway to Highway 101.

Vince (last name unknown), SSU student, stated that the overall road maintenance prevents many bikers from riding.

Tom Scott, Olivers' Market, stated that over 50% of business comes from outside the city and that outside traffic is needed for businesses to succeed. He said that aggressive calming on arterials may force traffic into the neighborhoods.

Laurie-Anne Barbour, Ross Street, is in favor of increased bike facilities and that bicycle riders include school children. She said that it is reasonable that funds would be spent encouraging bicyclists and walkers and that more people would bike and walk if it were safe.

PUBLIC COMMENT closed at 7:48 pm

In response to Commissioner Hancock, Consultant Matley explained AB1368, which requires all modes of transportation are being addressed.

Consultant Thompson responded to the inquiry of why so much money is being spent on bicyclist and pedestrian improvements. She explained that the General Plan and this process identifies community desires, but that funding has not been obligated.

Consultant Matley explained the following:

- the 1% bicycling and 2% walking in the slide presentation was “commute to work” data only
- county studies on bicycle ridership indicate that more people would bike and walk if there more paths and safer routes
- there are different levels of traffic calming available and many factors in choosing measures for a particular street

Community Development Director Parker explained that the City uses very little General Fund money for roadwork and that the City must comply with Federal and State laws for streets. She said that the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians are not being put ahead of other needs, but that future plans would ensure all users were accommodated.

*1. In developing a goal and policy framework to address transportation and circulation, what top three issues or actions should the City prioritize?*

Commissioner Brady:

- a walkable Cotati means a “shopable” Cotati
- improving our public transit stops (needs covering)/ paratransit place to sit
- Old Redwood Highway improvements

Commissioner Ford

- plugging gaps in bike and pedestrian network
- public transit
- Old Redwood Highway, north of the hub

Vice Chair Ritter

- sidewalks for a walkable Cotati
- bicycling / connectivity
- improvements to the Old Redwood Highway to Stony Point on Hwy. 116, including Madrone and Alder

Commissioner Hancock

- safe routes to school
- healthy and safe alternatives for bicycles and pedestrians
- local signage for community, how to understand and communicate ways of connecting

Chair Moore

- traffic speed on E. Cotati near Rohnert Park border (safe for all modes and reinforce citing)
- safe routes to Thomas Page School (this has been a priority since 1998)
- signage and information for locals

2. *In reviewing the 1998 General Plan goals and policies best address the concerns you identified?*

a. *Which 1998 General Plan goals and policies best address the concerns you identified?*

b. *Which priorities are not addressed in the 1998 General Plan?*

Commissioner Hancock said signage would be a good implementation program.

Chair Moore said that Madrone and Hwy. 116 needs to be added

Consultant Ben Ritchie presented the noise segment of the General Plan Update.

Commissioner Hancock said that there didn't seem to be anything to identify maximum levels of impulse noise.

Discussion ensued on the noise ordinance.

PUBLIC COMMENT opened at 8:38 pm

Nick Alva said that noise caused by automobiles is explosive and is destructive energy with negative outcomes.

PUBLIC COMMENT closed at 8:43 pm

3. *In developing a goal and policy framework to address noise, what top three issues or actions should the City prioritize?*

Chair Moore

- late night noise (between 2:00 am and 6:00 am)
- construction downtown need to anticipate existing conditions and enforcement; mixed-use (apartments vs. delivery) emphasis on understanding the challenges of co-mingling and mitigation

Commissioner Ford

- loud vehicles
- understanding of developing compatible mixed use developments in the downtown

Commissioner Brady

- enforcement

Commissioner Hancock

- vehicles (non-muffled/impulse noises) on Old Redwood Highway and E. Cotati
- what is the newest technology for noise attenuation

Vice Chair Ritter

- bar/motorcycle noise (health and quality of life)
- highway 101 noise
- curfews on leaf blowers/mowers

## VII. REPORTS BY STAFF

Community Development Director Parker spoke on the following:

Due to the closure of City Hall during the last two weeks of December, there will not be a December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Staff would like to have a meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup> to bring several projects forward.

All Planning Commissioners agreed on the December 12<sup>th</sup> date.

The Association of Environmental Professionals will not be able to make the October date for their training date and they will keep us informed when the date is announced.

## VIII. REPORTS BY COMMISSION

The Commission requested that packets be available earlier.

Consultant Thompson advised the Commission that Chapter 2 is required reading for the next meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED by Chair Moore at 9:05 pm

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Keri L. Pajon  
Planning Commission Secretary