

# Geyserville Planning Committee Monthly Meeting

## Minutes of September 28, 2021 Meeting

The meeting of the Geyserville Planning Committee was called to order at the Geyserville Firehouse at 7:05 p.m. by Daisy Damskey, President.

Members Present: Daisy Damskey, President, John Cash, Secretary, Walter Kieser, Steven Sachs.

1. Greeting and President's Update: President Damskey reported that Vice President Connors would not be attending but that with four members present, the Committee had a quorum. She welcomed everyone to our first in-person meeting since the onset of the pandemic.
2. Review and Approval of August 24, 2021, GPC Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2021, meeting was made by John Cash. Walter Kieser seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
3. Comments from the public/community: There were no comments.
4. GPC related correspondence: Daisy Damskey reported that she had spoken with a representative at the Exchange Bank and they agreed to refund past charges to our account and to eliminate them going forward. \$210 has been refunded to the GPC account.

John Cash reported on a communication he had received from Carol Beattie, the chair of Healdsburg Forever, that contained a call for proposals for a new initiative People, Parks, and Power (P3). This is a grant program jointly run by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. It is led and managed by the Prevention Institute. The grant program was discussed briefly and the Committee agreed to discuss next steps later in the agenda.

5. Presentation by Yael Bernier of the Dry Creek Valley Association regarding VRBO/shared equity partnerships for home ownership: Walter Kieser introduced Yael Berner who presented on fractional housing in the agriculturally zoned areas of the Dry Creek Valley. She has farmed in the valley for 45 years and is currently serving as President of the Dry Creek Valley Association. She said that Sonoma County created a "gold standard" of a general plan to preserve agricultural land, which is currently being challenged by a corporation that is building housing that has fractional ownership on agricultural land. Each property is divided into eight parts (ten-parts would key time-share regulations). Owners are allowed to be present for two days to a maximum of 44 days per year. She said this is clearly a business operation in violation of agricultural zoning policies, which state that on agricultural land there shall be no other industries.

The Dry Creek Valley Association has gone to the Board of Supervisors and a code enforcement letter was sent to Picassa, the developer of these properties. They replied saying that single family dwellings are allowed. St. Helena is engaged in a legal battle with the company and the Board of Supervisors of Sonoma County is now waiting to see how this case resolves. The Dry

Creek Valley Association has called on the Board to enforce a moratorium in the interim. This has been supported by a letter from the Alexander Valley Association. They want to stop Picassa from setting a precedent that can be used for further development in agricultural areas.

Steve Sachs pointed out that anything beyond a 14-day stay would trigger an IRS claim that Picassa is running a business enterprise. It was also pointed out that vrbo's are not permitted in agriculturally zoned areas of the County. Daisy Damskey announced that the County is sending representatives on a "listening tour" on this subject. They will be presenting to the GPC on October 26. John Cash raised a concern that Picassa could build a dwelling with fractional ownership on property in Geyserville and not create a problem related to agricultural zoning. He pointed out that this would go against the need for affordable housing in the community, which is a town priority.

The Committee agreed to consider writing a letter to the Board of Supervisors once the County presented on October 26. Daisy Damskey said we should actively publicize this meeting by producing a flier and a press release. Steve Sachs said we should use other community organizations to get the word out. Daisy said she would ensure that the flier is translated into Spanish.

6. Zoning and Food Truck Permits: Daisy Damskey reported that the food truck that has recently located at the south end of town is on County land and therefore permitted. Bryce Jones, a Geyserville property owner, pointed out that he had received numerous emails complaining about the presence of the food truck. He was surprised by the complaints since the earlier survey conducted by the GPC showed great interest in having a Mexican restaurant in town. The Committee felt that we have no official role to play here but since the survey was quite clear, the food truck should be welcomed to the community. Overall, the Committee felt that the community benefits from competition.

Walter Kieser moved that the Committee communicate with the owner of the food truck welcoming them to Geyserville on behalf of the GPC. The survey should be referenced in the communication. John Cash seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

7. Update on MAC/GPC partnership for Park Development: President Damskey reported that progress is being made on the park project. She expressed appreciation to Adrian Garayalde for her help in working the County. Walter Kieser reported that a design rfp had been distributed and there will be a design "event" in the future. John Cash asked if there is a strategy to engage the Hispanic community. Walter replied that there is, perhaps in conjunction with Corazon Healdsburg. Bryce Jones brought up the need for a public restroom. He cited the importance placed on this in the GPC sponsored survey. He said that people regularly relieve themselves into the shrubbery on his property.
8. MAC current status overview: Walter Kieser reported that all projects are moving along "at pace." He reviewed each of the approved projects and detailed their status.
9. Open Discussion regarding the development of actions plan for the Geyserville Planning Committee. Designing short term goals and objectives for the next seven months, leading up to 2022 town meeting: President Damskey reported that Art Torano is leaving Geyserville and will resign from the GPC as of December 31, 2021. John Cash expressed his concerns to the

Committee that the lack of a duly elected membership calls into question the Committee's ability to create and implement strategic priorities until a Town Meeting is held next April. He said that relations with the County and with Supervisor Gore's office are not ideal and some in the community are questioning the GPC's legitimacy. He suggested that we use the time between now and the Town Meeting to review our mission and purpose and to prepare a set of strategic objectives for presentation to the larger community.

Walter Kieser reported that he had found out definitively that the County is under obligation to fund the Geyserville Planning Committee's work but there is reluctance to do so. Steve Sachs said that we need to spend this time determining what the Committee is going to do going forward. John Cash proposed that a discussion of the Bylaws might provide the structure for future planning and that a revision of the Bylaws could be a centerpiece of the Town Meeting.

Walter Kieser suggested that we use the remaining meetings between now and April to discuss the Bylaws and Committee structure. Daisy Damskey suggested a meeting on October 11 since there would not be a quorum at the regular meeting scheduled for October 26. She suggested keeping the latter time, however, for the PRMD presentation on fractional ownerships and vrbo's.

Steve Sachs moved that the GPC hold a strategic planning meeting at 6:00 p.m. on October 11. Walter Kieser seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Adjourn: Walter Kieser moved that the meeting be adjourned and John Cash seconded the motion. The meeting of the Geyserville Planning Committee was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.