

City of Bishop  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
City Council Chambers – 301 West Line Street  
Bishop, California 93514

February 28, 2012

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Huntley called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Huntley.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Huntley, Bhakta, Gardner, Crom and Malloy

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Lowthorp and Hardy

OTHERS PRESENT:

Peter Tracy, City Attorney  
Keith Caldwell, Planning Director  
Michele Thomas, Secretary  
David Grah, Public Works Director

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Huntley asked if anyone wished to speak on a subject not calendared on the agenda. There was no public comment.

(1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION

Commissioner Crom moved to approve the minutes of the January 31, 2012 meeting with the correction on page 3; change the month from March to February in the motion for the discussion and recommendation of approval for Final Draft Mobility Element.

Ayes: Malloy, Crom, Bhakta, and Gardner  
Abstain: Huntley

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

## CORRESPONDENCE

None

## NEW BUSINESS

### (2) Auditorium Sidewalk Width

David Grah, Director of Public Works, explained to the Commission that the City has the opportunity to replace a block of sidewalk using grant funds if the work can be completed before July. The east side of the block of North Fowler between Line and Church along the City Auditorium was selected for the replacement. To preserve new landscaping along the auditorium, an 8 foot sidewalk is proposed instead of the 10 foot width called for in the Mobility Element of the General Plan. With the New Mobility Element, any modifications to the adopted street standards would require approval by the Planning Commission.

Grah stated that the project would remove the existing curb, gutter, and sidewalk and replace with American Disability Act (ADA) compliant disability accessible sidewalk. The entrance to the auditorium will also change to be in accordance with ADA requirements. Staff is looking into using colored concrete to make the area more aesthetically pleasing and will include a bench outside of the auditorium. The project is expected to be complete in May or June.

Crom asked Grah where the funding is coming from for this project. Grah stated that the funding comes from Proposition 1B funds. Voters of the state passed a bond 4-6 years ago giving \$400,000 to small cities to spend on street projects. The City has spent most of the funds during the past years and the balance of \$130,000 needs to be spent before the end of the 2011-2012 fiscal year, or the remaining funds will need to be returned to the state. The project is expected to cost \$50,000 - \$60,000 for construction. In addition, overhead utilities will be moved underground costing \$30,000, along with related costs for material testing, design, and construction inspections. The estimated cost for the Auditorium Project is \$126,000. There are other projects that will be funded with the remaining Prop. 1B funds as well such as the right-of-way for the Mac Iver Street project.

Crom asked Grah what the plan was for the school kids that use the sidewalk going to and from school if the project plans to be built during the current school year. Grah explained that the kids could still use the sidewalk on the west side of Fowler. Grah added that there is a possibility the contractor may be able to leave a path open on the east sidewalk during certain times.

Bhakta asked what the width is on the existing sidewalk, which Grah stated is a little over 9 feet wide. Grah also explained that Fowler Street is not centered correctly. The project will move the curb line to the east which reduces the sidewalk width about one foot. The entire new sidewalk will be 8 feet wide with the exception of the area at the south end where the curb line will jog out a little.

Gardner brought up the concern related to the public understanding the purpose of city funds to fix the sidewalks and other projects rather than a project someone else may feel is more important and how these funds must be spent towards certain projects. Grah explained that the city does their best to inform the public there are a lot aspects to spending monies for certain projects. Caldwell also brought up the importance of the new sidewalk related to the growing activities the City puts on that use the auditorium and that the present sidewalk condition is unsafe. The traffic going in and out of the auditorium on Fowler Street has grown significantly over the past several years.

Bhakta says he understands the purpose of spending the money of the sidewalk project and also using colored concrete to make the project look nice, but feels it is a good idea to educate the public to show a justifiable cause for spending the funds on the extras. Bhakta also asked if there would be ADA rails along the ramp as well. Grah stated that with this project, there will not be handrails along the ramp as Grah does not believe a rail is required and will verify if this is correct. Grah did say that with this project, the handicap ramps will be the Case-A style ramp, not the style used on some previous projects such as Grove Street Sidewalk Project.

Bhakta brought up that the overhang along the wall is in poor condition and whether the project will address this at the same time. Grah explained that with the project and the extras like colored concrete and a bench, the funds are already stretched as far as possible, and addressing building issues is beyond what can be done with the transportation funds.

Huntley questioned where the idea of the colored concrete came from. Grah stated that Charles Mulligan, the artist of the sidewalk rendering drawing, came up with the idea. The idea was presented to city staff and council and concurrence was received regarding the concept with much more muted colors than shown on the drawing. Huntley shared that he showed the drawing to five different people within the community and no one was in favor. Grah did say that the colored concrete is not essential to the project and there are actually two construction options, one with color and one without. Some commissioners are concerned about the idea of using colored concrete for this project could open the door for the idea in future projects and that if this were to happen, to make sure to use a color that would work best for the City over all.

Bhakta asked Grah to confirm that the idea to sacrifice sidewalk width is to increase planter width. Grah stated that the 8 foot sidewalk preserves the existing 8 foot wide planter area outside the auditorium and provides over 8 feet from the back of sidewalk to the pavement in the parking lot of City Hall. According to the Tree Committee, when the tree list was developed, 8 feet was a magic number for large trees to grow properly. Bhakta continued with his concern regarding the elimination of sidewalk width and asked Grah how much congregation the City feels would happen on the sidewalk area. Grah says he expects the future traffic to be comparable to current numbers with the possibility of a small increase. Grah added that large trees were recently removed for the project, and they had taken up about a foot of sidewalk width in the past. The 10 foot sidewalk in the Mobility Element allows for tree wells that this project will not have. Other

sidewalks in the City that are about 5 – 6 feet wide with similar pedestrian volumes seem to be adequate. With the electricity poles removed, there will be additional room on the sidewalk as well.

Discussion continued regarding types of trees and uprooting along with sidewalk widths within city limits not related to the project. Items discussed relating to Main Street and West Line Street are on state highways and Caltrans handles these streets. Grah did share with the commission that Caltrans does have a major ADA project planned for the City of Bishop in the coming years. Huntley asked if our Mobility Element affects Caltrans and Grah said that it does not directly but Caltrans is required to be sensitive to the communities they are in and the Mobility Element is the City's transportation vision. But Caltrans follows their standards first.

Commissioner Malloy moved to approve the 8 foot Auditorium Sidewalk width. Further discussion was held.

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS:

Caldwell thanked David Grah for his time and efforts on the Mobility Element and the General Plan. Caldwell also thanked the commission for their questions as the questions and concerns help staff move into the right direction for the City. Huntley also thanked staff for the information regarding a truck lane on Main Street. Crom asked that the City Council receive copies of the email correspondence between Grah and Caltrans related to restricting trucks to the left lane through downtown Bishop on Main Street. Thomas said that she would make copies for City Council.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Huntley adjourned the meeting at 7:45 P.M. The next scheduled meeting will be March 27, 2012 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers.

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Chairman Huntley

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Michele Thomas, Secretary