

Gridley City Planning Commission – Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 10, 2019; 6:00 pm
Gridley City Hall, 685 Kentucky Street, Gridley, CA 95948

“Our purpose is to continuously enhance our community’s vitality and overall quality of life. We are committed to providing high quality, cost-effective municipal services and forming productive partnerships with our residents and regional organizations. Working together, we develop, share, and are guided by a clear vision, values, and meaningful objectives.”

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – At 6:00 p.m., Chairwoman Espino called the meeting to order.
2. **ROLL CALL** – Recording Secretary

Planning Commissioners

Present: Maria Espino, Chairman
Ken Wolfe, Vice Chair
Ishrat Khan-Aziz, Commissioner

Arriving post roll call: None

Absent: None

Staff Present: Donna Decker, City Planner/Consultant (DES,LLC)
Elisa Arteaga, Recording Secretary

3. **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FORUM** - *Members of the public may address the Planning Commission on matters not listed on the agenda. The Planning Commission may not discuss nor take action on any community participation item brought forward by a member of the community. Comments are requested to be limited to three (3) minutes.*

There was no public comment.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA** - *All items listed under the Consent Agenda are considered routine and acted upon by one motion. Any Planning Commissioner may request that an item be removed for separate consideration. The Planning Commission may only make minor comments; otherwise the item should be removed from the consent agenda and placed as the first item(s) under “Public Hearings”.*

- A. **Approval of the Planning Commission Minutes dated February 12, 2018, June 18th, 2018, and August 8th, 2018.**

Motion by Wolfe, second by Khan, for approval of Planning Commission minutes dated February 12, 2018, June 18th, 2018, and August 8th, 2018.

Roll Call

Ayes: Khan, Wolfe, Espino Noes: None Absent: None Abstain: None **Motion Passes 3-0**

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Tentative Parcel Map No. 1-19; Application for a tentative parcel map to subdivide three parcels consisting of approximately 4.7 acres into twenty-one (21) parcels consisting of one 0.25 acre parcel for a detention basin and twenty (20) parcels for a residential housing development located at the northeast corner of Peach Street and West Biggs Gridley Road in the Single Family Residential District (R-1) and Residential, Low Density (RLD) General Plan land use designation. (APN: 022-230-022, -024 & -025)

1. Receive staff report

Staff report – Donna Decker reviewed the staff report and plans as submitted to Commission. She explained the differences in previous plans (originally submitted in 1993) and changes since the first submittal of the map. She explained the applicant is proposing a 21-parcel single-family residential subdivision on three parcels (4.7 acre). The proposed subdivision was initially proposed and approved in 1993 and 2005; both maps expired. The applicant is submitting a similar proposal as previously approved with slight differences in lot sizes, the connection to Bridgeford Avenue for future growth to the north. The tentative subdivision map will create 20 new single-family lots ranging in size from 5,050 to 6,565 square feet and one lot reserved for a storm water detention basin 11,200 sq. ft. She elaborated as to revised zoning codes and purpose to support infill design and legalize small parcels in town. She explained the City reduced lot sized and allowed for smaller lot designations under R1 zoning. She reviewed exhibit "A" Conditions of Approval and map as well as discussing the variety of zones and lot sizes within the map, proposed sidewalk improvements and deferred improvements as well as standards that need to be made for this subdivision. She closed that this is an opportunity for Commission to make recommendations to bring to City Council of this project. The project is categorically exempt and no environmental impacts.

Chairwoman Espino and Vice Chairman Wolfe asked for clarification of deferred sidewalk improvements. Decker reported it was for curb and gutter (north to south areas of the project with landscaping only). Espino and Wolfe both expressed concerns with conditions relating to the City entering into a deferred agreement relating to improvements located on the east one-half of West Biggs Gridley Road and costs associated to the improvements be passed onto the future property owners of those parcels. They both elaborated as to when other subdivisions have built along West Biggs Gridley Road, the improvements were included.

Commissioner Khan inquired if there are issues with archeological artifacts. Decker explained if found, the contractor is required to stop and inform the City and the owner will need to have an archeologist come out to the site. Decker reviewed the process of approval of the map and responsible parties for the project and development. Khan inquired what the term "slope" meant on the property map. Decker explained it's part of the drainage information for the lots. The grading plans and improvement plans will be further submitted.

Chairwoman Espino inquired on the Bridgeford Ave proposed future street extension. Decker reviewed the future street extension (county) plan submittal and designation. She explained the future street extension on Bridgeford, required annexation due to county lines. The original proposal was not to have Glen Drive but due to safety personnel access concerns, this plan has been submitted.

Espino inquired about #11 condition. Decker explained it is to keeping the dust down for Butte County Air Quality. There was further discussion between Decker and Espino relating to the City providing the same type of maintenance of districts such as those of Heron Landing. Decker concurred and explained the process of the deed lot 21, detentions, landscaping and streetlights, as well as frontage improvements.

Commissioner Khan inquired if the building requirements included building to code for "earthquakes" criteria. Decker reported that they will need to meet the most current uniform building codes which include that criteria.

2. Open the public hearing – Chairwoman Espino opened the public hearing.

Kurt Hilbers – 1555 Atkinson Ct., Yuba City, owner of Hilbers Inc. introduced himself to the Commission. He explained there is a lot of interest to build especially after Camp Fire Disaster and would like to see the project built. The difference between them and other builders is that the project this is a much smaller project.

Chairwoman Espino ask about project timelines. Mr. Hilbers explained they are working on a smaller project in Gridley, so it would be fast and they anticipate to be under construction this summer. They have much larger projects in other cities, this is a small project and it would move fast. There was discussion between Chairwoman Espino and Vice Chairman Wolfe relating to the deferred development of improvements and if the new owners would be made aware ahead of time before purchasing the project of those assessments. There was concern expressed of passing on the costs of the improvement to new homeowners.

Decker explained the owners would be notified of deferred improvement costs. It is best to design the entire road vs a short entire section of the road. She explained the theory for deferring improvements to ensure design conformity. Wolfe expressed concern of future costs for improvements could change over time. Decker explained control points and improvements and elaborated as to designing of small sections, pockets done if not right there could be problems with funding to tear out and rebuild improvements. There would be disclosures provided to owners and options to set up an assessment district.

Commissioner Khan ask Kurt Hilbers to confirm the other areas of improvements, lift station and retention basin. Mr. Hilbers confirmed per City Engineer and City requirements would have to be completed before homes are sold and all improvements should be in place and to code and prior to sale of homes.

Pat Coghlan – 852 Idaho Street, addressed the Commission, submitted a written statement for the record (attached to minutes as "Exhibit A"). He provided a verbal overview of his written submittal, highlighting each concern. He asked the Commission to reconsider the allowance of deferred improvements. The deferment of improvements only provides savings of costs to the developer. It puts the burden on new homeowners, the City and/or County. He reported that all other builders have provided improvement upfront and allowing deferment of improvements makes the future property owners jump through hoops take on the burden that should be on the developer. He urged the Commission to reconsider. He added that

that the detention pond calls for 6 ft cyclone fence with flats, that will look very unattractive. His primary concern was the safety issues with the plan. He deferred to other areas that are unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. He suggested having a safety engineer review the proposed intersection with Idaho Street because it is not safe and the City not allow deferred improvements on West Biggs Gridley Road.

There was brief overview of the map reassessing safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Decker reported if upon building the detention pond it is deep that would require fencing the instead of the cyclone fence it could be changed to an iron fence around Lot 21 detention basin with shrubbery.

3. **Close Public Hearing** - Chairwoman Espino closed the public hearing.

4. **Commission Discussion** -

Chairwoman Espino announced that new housing good idea for Gridley and Heron Landing Development has already set a standard to have improvements in place prior to the sale of homes. There will be more traffic and safety is a huge issue and she was not in support of the deferment of roadside improvements. She concluded she was in support of the development however, not the deferment of improvements along West Biggs Gridley Road as well as the extension to Bridgford Street.

Commissioner Khan announced she appreciated the interest in developing in Gridley but the sidewalk improvements should in place prior to the building of the development or if there is a deferment there should be a plan for deferred costs for future owners. There needs to be clarification for costs for proposal of deferred amounts to homeowners such as annual tax assessments.

Vice Chairman Wolfe expressed concern with deferment of improvements along West Biggs Gridley Road. He was in support of new housing but not deferring costs to homeowners.

Planning Consultant, Donna Decker suggested adding language to fencing conditions to the detention basin and deferment and cost plans. She explained the assessment process and plans.

MOTION BY ESPINO, for the following:

1. Determine the project is Categorically Exempt per the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15332(a-e), Class 32, Infill Development Projects; and,
2. Recommend approval of TSM 1-19 to the City Council with added two conditions of approval; if the detention basin requires fencing, it will not be cyclone fence, it will be iron/steel tubular fencing with shrubbery and the improvements along West Biggs Gridley Road and the Bridgford extension not be deferred.

For a lack of a second, motion did not pass.

Vice Chairman provided clarification that the Bridgford extension is County and is not included within the improvement limits of the project. He further elaborated that he did not agree with deferring of improvements.

MOTION BY WOLFE, SECOND BY KHAN for the following:

1. Determine the project is Categorically Exempt per the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15332(a-e), Class 32, Infill Development Projects; and,
2. Recommend approval of TSM 1-19 to the City Council with added two conditions; if the detention basin requires fencing, it will not be cyclone fence, it will be iron tubular fencing with shrubbery and the all improvements along West Biggs Gridley Road be included not deferred.
3. Direct staff to work with the Developer to define deferred improvement buildout costs and plans.

Ayes: Khan, Wolfe, Espino Noes: None Abstain: None **Motion passes 3-0**

6. INFORMATIONAL – None

7. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS

Donna Decker, Planning Consultant provided clarification of regular meeting schedule. They are scheduled to be held every 2nd Wednesday of the month. She added there will be an upcoming meeting with other items and provided a verbal update on the status of the AM/PM project.

- 8. ADJOURNMENT** – At 7:50 p.m. the Planning Commission adjourned to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on Wednesday, August 14, 2019.

Approved: _____
Donna Decker, Planning Consultant

Exhibit "A" to Minutes 7-10-19

July 10, 2019

852 Idaho Street
Gridley CA 95948

Gridley Planning Commission
685 Kentucky Street, Gridley
Delivery by hand, July 10, 2019.

In re: Tentative parcel map 1-19, Hilbers New Home Communities public hearing.

Good Evening,

My name is Patrick Coghlan. I reside at the above address and have done so since July, 1981. This proposed subdivision is one half block from my property and yesterday was the first time I learned of it. I have briefly reviewed the plot plan and I have several concerns about the project as presented to the Commission. I believe that the safe movement of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles in the area is unduly compromised by the current design. Here are my observations and concerns about this project:

1. To me this project appears to propose that safety improvements to West Biggs-Gridley Road needed to accommodate Glenn Drive will not be completed as part of this project ("FUTURE STREET IMPROVEMENTS: NAPO THIS PROJECT"), that no deceleration lane or left turn lane provisions for cross streets will be incorporated into the project, and that the road width will be less than that incorporated into Heron Landing and Eagle Meadows subdivisions, and therefore unable to accommodate such safety provisions in the future.

I ask you not accept these reduced standards and not compromise the safety of Gridley residents. We know that Biggs favors growth to its south on that road, that Gridley landowners along that road may also seek to build on their properties, that the railroad is against allowing additional at-grade crossings, and that overpasses are prohibitively expensive. As most of the traffic from Gridley subdivisions is southbound, and all the schools are southbound from the site, it is reasonable to expect that the majority of traffic from residential growth on this road will have to pass through this road section.

After the exceptional job done by Heron Landing in accommodating expected growth, the last thing you should do is allow a pinch point to be created to accommodate this small development. The traffic on the road is definitely mixed use, in that in addition to residents it is used by farm vehicles and agricultural transport trucks, and is the dominant means by which police, fire and ambulance vehicles travel between Gridley and Biggs. When considering traffic safety simple residential standards are not effective and should not be relied upon. To keep this section of road safe I ask that the Gridley Planning Commission require road improvements which keep the same standards used for construction of Heron Landing and Eagle Meadows, and that they be completed prior to residential occupancy.

2. The project proposes an extension of Idaho Street as its one and only southbound traffic artery. It is reasonable to expect nearly all pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle traffic will be southbound towards highway 99, the city center, the shopping center and the schools, and such traffic will cross Peach and Oak Streets before turning on Spruce or a street further south. This is a high risk route and should not be considered.

Patrick J. Coghlan In re: Tentative Parcel Map 1-19, Gridley Planning Commission, July 10, 2019

Because Idaho Street is parallel to but only a little over 100 feet from West Biggs Gridley Road, these crossings are problematic for southbound motorized vehicles on Idaho crossing Oak, Spruce and streets further south as frequently cars turn east and do not have the time to react to a vehicle in the intersection. Pedestrians and bicyclists have an even worse problem as they take longer to cross the road. Crosswalks are impractical as motorists have too little warning after turning. If crosswalks were installed then a pedestrian crossing could result in a backup of vehicles onto Biggs Gridley Road. All it would take is one OTR truck to fill up the space between the crosswalk and the road.

A further issue is the absence of sidewalks on Idaho Street. Currently most pedestrians on Idaho walk in the street. In winter muddy areas discourage use of the city right of way where the sidewalk should be.

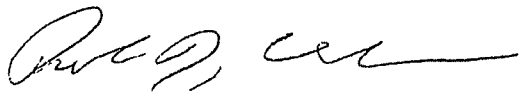
I ask the Commission to review the safety of the anticipated route for the residents of this subdivision, with special consideration for the safety of children walking or cycling to school, while mindful of the mix of vehicles going back and forth in the area.

3. The proposed intersection of Peach Street and Idaho Street has all the problems outlined above for Oak, Spruce and Hazel, with two added problems. If you imagine you are a southbound pedestrian on Idaho Street in the subdivision and you are looking West to ascertain oncoming traffic while next to the fire hydrant at the northeast corner of the intersection, you will note that your ability to both see and hear the traffic which may be about to turn eastbound on Peach is impeded by a six foot sound wall. With today's hybrid and electric vehicles you will be unable to see or hear such traffic. A vehicle turning from Biggs Gridley Road to Peach will also be blinded to the intersection and, while trying to execute a safe left turn may have less than 100' to respond to pedestrian. At about 35 mph that vehicle can be in that intersection in about three seconds. I think that it is unthinkable to put anyone, especially our school children in such an unsafe predicament. I fear that many will not recognize the sensory deprivation and attempt to cross that road without due caution. A sizeable side yard setback for lot 1 and elimination of the sound wall for that lot would be little relief.

I also ask your attention to the existing stop sign in the northbound lane of Idaho at the intersection with Peach. I can tell you that in the last 37 years it has rarely been visible due to trees or motorhomes parked in front of it. (The current property owner has a low utility trailer there, and that has helped a lot.) As the intersection is currently a "T" it has not been much of a problem, but if Idaho is extended, a section will need to be red-curbed or some other remedy chosen to make it continuously visible.

Thank you for your time. I encourage you to seek the guidance of a qualified traffic safety engineer in reviewing these issues. Please assist our community to grow but let's do so safely or not at all.

Sincerely Yours,



Patrick Coghlan