

# Gridley City Planning Commission – Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 1, 2016; 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 6:03 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chairman Thomas.
2. **ROLL CALL** –

## Planning Commissioners

**Present:**  
Robert Thomas  
Robert Wise  
Mary Espino  
Ishrat Aziz Khan

**Arriving post roll call:** None

**Absent:** Shirley O’Brien

**Staff Present:** Donna Decker, City Planner/Consultant  
David Vantress – Gridley Herald

3. **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FORUM** – *There was no public in attendance.*
4. **CONSENT AGENDA**
  - A. **Planning Commission Minutes dated October 25, 2016**

**MOTION BY THOMAS, SECOND BY ESPINO**, for approval of Planning Commission minutes dated October 25, 2016 (with correction on page 4, p.3, strike out the letter “d” in the word “utilized”).

**By unanimous vote, the motion passes 4-0.**

5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**A. Introduction and review of the Climate Action Plan: A plan designed support the long term Greenhouse Gas Reduction efforts of the State of California**

- 1) Continued open public hearing – Chairman Thomas announced this item had been previously continued for further review and recommendations from the Planning Commission. He acknowledged the Planning Commission had been provided with excerpts depicting revisions from comments provided by Commissioner Espino and directed Planning Consultant Donna Decker to provide a verbal staff report update.

Ms. Decker, Planning Consultant, reviewed the revisions to the text based upon Planning Commissioner Espino's communication. The Commission responded with various comments, questions, and suggestions for changes to the document.

Planning Commissioner Khan suggested that an implementation strategy should include education and outreach to the public schools related to energy savings from electronic usage, avoid wasteful behavior. Khan also recommended the City contract with Chico State to develop a short video for the outreach effort which would be directed towards the application for daily use because this item would be an implementation strategy under "Energy".

Planning Commission Chairman, Robert Thomas requested verification of the percentage of power based on the City solar use. He suggested having verification that the percentage of solar use in the city is 9% per the document and inquired if due to the solar located at the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) and some residential. There is a possibility it could be more and would like to know the percentage during high use months, winter months and the status of the solar array project on Gridley Biggs Rd to Biggs at the WWTP. Chairman further elaborated as to the field excavations for levy repair from the ag fields nearby and added that site would not be regraded because they are going to have a solar farm there to also support the waste water treatment plant (WWTP). Chairman Thomas also wondered whether Gridley receives any benefit from that site at all. Planning Commissioner Wise inquired if the City of Gridley harvests methane in any form. Planning Consultant, Donna Decker responded that she would research the matter further.

Chairman Thomas and Vice Chairman Wise inquired about the streetlights and expressed concern that that the lighting is not as bright and suggested more light standards or possible brighter bulbs should be installed because it is a safety hazard. Furthermore, what are the City's plans, if any to rectify this situation and does the City Management have a plan in place or same concerns as they have with

the lighting. Planning Commission Chairman Robert Thomas reported although he understood the need for conservation and regardless of GHG, having too few light standards, it created a safety issue for the children in the City. He noted that the lighting in Heron Landing where he lives is particularly poor and low lit for standards.

- 2) Hear public testimony – There was no audience or testimony given.
- 3) Close public hearing – Chairman Thomas closed the public hearing.
- 4) Commission discussion - After general discussion, Chair Thomas described his displeasure with the proposed Climate Action Plan/GHG Reduction Plan (Plan) and announced that he disputed the issue of greenhouse gasses, the assumed chemical reaction in the atmosphere and noted that the definition and explanations with the additional language added by Planning Consultant Ms. Decker related to the comments by Commissioner Espino were all misstated and incorrect and furthermore that the scientific data quoted throughout the document was categorically untrue. He noted he had spent considerable time researching this information and that beginning on page 7, chapter 2, the policies outlines are right out of “Agenda 21” which result in taking away the rights and freedoms of the American public. He stated that the language of sustainability, lifestyles, and so forth in general are not sustainable. He noted that the use of Gridley Electric and PGE in the use of SMART meters was in opposition to his and other people’s rights in that at any time such agencies could shut the power off and he would not have air conditioning. Chairman Thomas referenced page 8, and explained that Policy 6.2 was impractical as the result will be the destruction of the hydro-electric plants we obtain power from and therefore we will not have that available as a renewable source and the valley will be flooded and impact various species of water fowl and fish.

Planning Consultant, Donna Decker noted that the policies outlined on pages 7 and 8 are from the 2030 General Plan and are not able to be amended during the process of the approval of the Plan. He accepted the distinction but concluded the policies were inappropriate. Chair Thomas shared that his opinion (page 15), “The Science of Climate Change” has been proven false and that the City should not entertain such language in the document. Chairman Thomas provided historical information related to the Ice Age, Cooling Trends, the 1970’s and Global Warming by noting in the years 986-1408 farming was possible in Greenland where it is not today. He noted the temperature is a full 6-8 C cooler than at that time and therefore, no global warming is occurring. Chair Thomas noted there was no distinction in the ice age felt by Europe, nor was there

discussion related to the issues of the Krakatoa eruption in 1883, nor of the eruption of Mt. St. Helens in 1983 related to global warming although huge amounts of ash were released into the atmosphere. Likewise, he noted the only result of the Mt. St. Helens was the pollution of farmland in the nearby vicinity and further cooled the world's temperature.

Chair Thomas stated he was troubled by the presentation of "Global Warming" as though it were the truth—which he added it is not. He continued by stating the Plan limits the freedoms that the community has and is a direct result of the "Agenda 21" which is also supported by the State of California. The State is working towards the effort to increasingly densify cities, towns, and even smaller communities by requiring "Stack and Packs"—described as a form of multi-story high rises which would not be appropriate in the City of Gridley.

Commissioner Wise responded to Chair Thomas' comments by relaying that the historical times noted by the Chair were presented in a compressed manner not fully describing the conditions during those times. He noted that in fact the glacier which were apparent in 1958 no longer existed, that ocean levels are rising, and it has been shown that magnetic north may be moving. He noted that he believes all of these things are connected to the actions of our civilization.

Chair Thomas disagreed and stated that he does not believe in Global Warming and invited the Planning Commission to decry the movement and find the City of Gridley exempt. Chair Thomas added that the target values shown in the Plan were not realistic, that he fears if they are not met, the State will find punitive measures with which to punish the City and likely create a financial burden on the City. He did not understand the Targets outlines as 1,2, and 3.

Ms. Decker described the approach of the Plan and requested they draw their attention to page 64 where the targets and values are described. Further, she defined the Targets, how Targets 1 and 2 were measurable but the City could not meet them because the levels were lower than even the State had proposed. She described the actions of the consultants in conversation with the Office of Planning and Research and other specialists within State Government whereby a solution was Target 3 based upon efficiency standards, which the data supports the City can meet and is an acceptable method to the State. After a brief discussion, Chair Thomas requested the Commissioners bifurcate the process and vote on the issue that the Plan is categorically exempt from CEQA.

**MOTION BY ESPINO, SECOND BY KHAN**, to find that the project is Categorically Exempt per the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061(b)(3), Review for Exemption, General Rule

**By unanimous vote, the motion passes 4-0.**

Chairman Thomas requested a motion be made to forward the Plan to the City Council for their input, for direction to the Planning Commission and what further revisions should be considered.

**MOTION BY WISE, SECOND BY KHAN**, to forward the Climate Action Plan to the City Council for their input, for direction to the Planning Commission and what further revisions should be considered.

**By unanimous vote, the motion passes 4-0**

6. **INFORMATIONAL** – None
7. **REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS** – None
8. **ADJOURNMENT** – At 7:30 p.m. the Chairman Thomas adjourned the meeting to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

Approval: \_\_\_\_\_  
Donna Decker, City Planner/Consultant, DES LLC