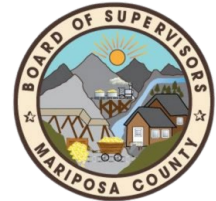




Mariposa County

<http://www.mariposacounty.org/>



GARY FRANCISCO
HEATHER HUPPE
ADAM FERGUSON
CAROLINE McGRATH
CANDY O'DONEL-BROWNE
EILEEN COLLINS
CHARLES LAMMERS
ANGELA HEISS
NANCY PARKE

CHAIR
VICE-
CHAIR
MEMBER
MEMBER
MEMBER
MEMBER
MEMBER
MEMBER
MEMBER

FINAL MINUTES OF THE MIDPINES PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

NOVEMBER 13th, 2024

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

Seeing a quorum, the regular meeting of the Midpines Planning Advisory Committee (MPAC) was called to order by Vice Chair Huppe at 6:03 PM.

Present: Heather Huppe, Nancy Parke, Charles Lammers, Rosemarie Smallcombe (Supervisor), Art Baggett (Planning Commissioner), Angela Heiss, Candy O'Donel-Browne, Caroline McGrath (arrived @ 6:08 PM)

Excused: Eileen Collins, Adam Ferguson, Gary Francisco

Staff: Polina Pivak, Steve Engfer

Guest: Erin Hazelwood

B. Approval of Minutes

1. September 11th, 2024

By a unanimous vote, the MPAC approved a motion by Heiss, with a second by O'Donel-Browne, to accept the minutes as presented with one (1) abstention by Huppe.

C. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Guest, Erin Hazelwood, stated that they were in support of the construction of additional recreational facilities for wheeled activities in the Midpines community.

Huppe gave news to MPAC that Francisco's wife has recently passed away and recommended that they sign a sympathy card to give to him and asked for any other suggestions from the MPAC on ways to support Francisco. Smallcombe offered to pick up some flowers and deliver the card to Francisco.

D. Committee Business

1. Discussion and Potential Action to Adjust MPAC Meeting Frequency and/or Committee Structure.

Huppe introduced the item and stated that the decision to meet less frequently would also be contingent on progress on adopting the Midpines Community Plan (“plan”).

Engfer stated that the plan was sent out for tribal consultation, which will be completed in December. The plan will be published for the formal public review period shortly after. Engfer stated MPAC participation in the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors public hearings will be appreciated. Engfer explained the difference between the Native American Heritage Commission consultation and the California Environmental Quality Act public review period.

Huppe explained that the purpose of the MPAC would be completed with the adoption of the plan. Rosemarie stated that other County advisory committees are similar to MPAC that meet primarily to discuss community updates, but take little action. There are 55 boards and committees that serve a County population of about 17,000. This takes up a lot of staff time. Rosemarie explained that the same discussions can happen with regular community meetings led by the district Supervisor and Planning Commissioner, without requiring additional staff time or quorum. The El Portal Town Planning Area Advisory Committee has already transitioned to community meetings rather than committee meetings.

O’Donel-Browne stated that there may be more community participation by removing the formality of the MPAC and by bringing snacks!

Smallcombe added that currently there is little flexibility in the agenda or meetings to discuss important issues in order to comply with the Brown Act.

Heiss stated that there needs to be a balance of informality with some structure or facilitation if MPAC moves to community meetings to ensure the effectiveness of group discussions.

Lammers recommended keeping the MPAC as is with the agenda and quorum requirements, but removing the “planning” nomenclature in the MPAC meeting name and adjusting the structure. Lammers added that MPAC should meet next in January to continue this discussion once there has been more progress on the plan.

O’Donel-Browne provided history on the “Midpines Boosters” who were a similar community group that was created prior to MPAC and had a more informal structure. Lammers agreed with the transition, but reiterated the need for keeping regular meetings, structure, and agendas. There is a lot of valuable information that is discussed at MPAC meetings.

Engfer stated that a non-Board appointed committee is a more nimble structure but would remain effective in community engagement.

Heiss stated that Midpines is different from El Portal because there is less of a sense of community. There may not be additional participation by lessening the formality of MPAC.

Smallcombe explained that the topics of conversation is what brings people to community meetings. Flexibility in meeting structure can allow for more flexibility in meeting topics.

Heiss recommended that the MPAC meet in January to discuss progress on the plan and then meet quarterly as a group with a different structure.

Parke recommended publishing the meeting topics to encourage public participation. Huppe stated that the new group can grow with regular meetings and invitations. Lammers stated that having a “town list” of emails will be important for future communications and for obtaining Firewise recognition.

Huppe recommended continuing the discussion in January. Lammers agreed and stated that more time is needed to consider the structure of future meetings. Heiss stated that changing the meeting location and being able to have dinner will draw people and make meetings more pleasant.

Engfer reiterated that MPAC does not necessarily need to meet to continue to work on the plan, but can participate in the public hearing process.

Huppe recommended meeting at the Bug on January 8th with the new informal structure as a community meeting. MPAC did not obtain consensus or make a decision to adopt informal meeting structure.

E. Updates and Activity Reports

1. Community Plan Draft Update

See Item D.1. discussion.

2. Muir Lodge Site Update

Smallcombe provided an update from Corrina Miranda and Steve Ward. Asbestos are a concern, therefore burning the remaining structures on the property is not the best option. The property owner needs to take legal action to remove the squatters on the property.

McGrath stated that someone has been trying to buy the property, but the property owner is unwilling to sell.

3. Oak Fire – Update, Evacuation Routes, and Lessons Learned

Smallcombe followed up with Sheriff Brieze who signed an agreement with the National Park Service on August 29th, 2024 to cross-deputize law enforcement within the Park and the County. There is ongoing discussion between the Sheriff's Office and Yosemite National Park. Huppe requested an update on whether there is

a plan for shutting down Highway 140 in the case of future disasters.

4. KOA/Terrramor Update

No update except that there is some ongoing vegetation management on the property.

5. Whispering Pines/Bear Creek Cabins Update

No update.

6. Oak Road Bridge Project Update

Contacts are being obtained to request easements for this project in addition to research on property lines in this area.

7. CALTRANS Project/Study Update

Smallcombe followed up with Caltrans regarding the study, which currently undergoing agency review. The Ferguson Project is unlikely to be voted on for funding before January.

Lammers brought up the issue of striping near the Bug. Smallcombe asked for a picture to send to Caltrans. Lammers requested signage to show visitors that there are restrooms at the Midpines Community Park.

8. Planning Commissioner Update

Baggett provided an update on the Development Code update project, including the engagement schedule. Baggett gave an update on other recent actions to improve the housing crisis, such as allowing park-model RVs for residency, extending emergency use of trailers, and keeping the secondary residence provision.

There are upcoming discussions on code compliance, setbacks, lighting standards, subdivisions, and more.

9. Supervisor Update

See Items E.2, E.3, E.6, E.7 discussion. Smallcombe added that the Board of Supervisors (BOS) formally transition to the “strong CAO” model. The next step would be to consolidate the Building Department, Planning Department, and Environmental Health Division into Development Services. Joe Lynch will be bringing an item to the BOS for a new position to manage Development Services. The step after would likely be to create a centralized purchasing function.

F. Future Agenda Items

There is no future formal meeting scheduled, however the MPAC would like to continue to discuss recreation planning for Midpines and the meeting structure.

G. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting of MPAC was adjourned by Vice Chair Huppe at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By,
Polina Pivak, Housing and Community Development Specialist