



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PALISADE PLANNING COMMISSION
February 7, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the Town of Palisade was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Amy Gekas with Commissioners present: Riley Parker, David Hull, and Vice Chair Leora Ruzin. Absent were Commissioners Don Bosch and Ed Seymour. A quorum was declared. Also in attendance were Community Development Director Brian Rusche, GIS Coordinator Todd Widegren and Administrative Assistant Shelley Kopasz.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Motion #1 by Commissioner Riley Parker, seconded by Commissioner David Hull to approve the agenda as presented.

A voice vote was requested.
Motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Development Director Brian Rusche announced that there are positions available for 4-year terms for the Planning Commission and will expire in February 2027. For more information, or if you want an application, please email brusche@townofpalisade.org by the end of February 2023.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion #2 by Commissioner David Hull, seconded by Commissioner Riley Parker to approve the Minutes from the January 17, 2023, Regular meeting of the Palisade Planning Commission, as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lisa Marie Pinder, 411 W. 1st Street commented that she has been in the cannabis industry for several years. She stated that she looked at the numbers for 2020 and 2021 for cannabis revenue; the numbers have taken a downturn with a 25% revenue loss in the State of Colorado in 2022. She commented that with the opening of Grand Junction cannabis sales in 2023, Palisade will take a “very large hit” on the tax revenue with the Town of Palisade. She would like the Town to consider that impact of the decline regarding tax revenue and budgeting in the next 3 to 4 years.

David Walker, 588 W. 1st Street, announced that the intersection of First and Elberta is a main thoroughfare in the Town of Palisade with a lot of traffic. He continued to state that there are no crosswalks on First Street, east of Elberta Avenue, for pedestrians to safely cross. He suggested that a crosswalk on Kluge and Peach could improve safety for pedestrians. Mr. Walker also brought to the attention of the Commissioners that he would have liked to see a traffic count for Elberta Ave on the

agenda. He suggested the Commissioners and the Board of Trustees get the information of a traffic study from the Town so that there is better understanding of the traffic problems on Elberta Ave.

Gail Evans, 126 Majestic Court, expressed her concerns that Gubbini Wine located at 305 Main Street was evicted when the business was just starting to make money. Her opinion is that J U B Engineers is going to take up the store front. It is her impression that there is an ordinance in place for retail establishments implying that Farmers Insurance, the Chamber of Commerce, and J U B Engineers are offices with no retail. She is concerned that Sandy King Studio is up for a sale and questioning if the space will be retail or office space.

RESOLUTION 2023-01 – 2022 PALISADE GAME PLAN

The Planning Commission is authorized by Section 31-23-206, C.R.S. to approve a comprehensive plan for the Town. Section 31-23-208, C.R.S. provides for the approval of the Plan by each governmental body of the territory affected; therefore, the Board of Trustees will also consider adoption of the Palisade Game Plan after the Planning Commission completes its work.

Chair Amy Gekas opened the hearing at 6:13 p.m.

Community Development Director Brian Rusche initiated the presentation by giving his thanks to the Planning Commission for their hard work in this process of being a steering committee for the Palisade Game Plan.

Kris Valdez of Community Planning Strategies presented the final comprehensive plan to the Planning Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jan Miller, 347 Troyer Ave, questioned the process of the plan and how it gets adopted by the Commissioners and wants clarification on this process of the Comprehensive plan.

Community Development Director Rusche explained the comprehensive plan is a vision for the community and not necessarily a zoning or a quasi-judicial activity that the Planning Commission is accustomed to. He explained that if this plan was adopted tonight it goes to the Board of Trustees. He suggested that he would meet anyone during business hours to explain this whole process including Ms. Miller's specific vacant lot in which she inquired.

David Walker, 588 W. 1st Street, stated that his name was on the last comprehensive plan as he was the mayor at that time, commenting that he is very pleased with the document. He wanted to see more public comments but loved that it is a very clear process. He questioned the statistic of 1,254 housing units in Palisade and he assumes it is a zip code count and should be clarified in the Comprehensive Plan.

He further explained that on page 34 of the Comprehensive Plan, the future land map indicates First Street is going to change from mixed-use to residential. He stated the importance of having First Street as mixed-use because he asked how the Town of Palisade would grow the business structure with it changing to residential. He continued to comment that on Page 36 of the Comprehensive Plan, there is a line item that refers to a buffer zone between Palisade and Clifton that has been in place since 2007. He wanted to point out that it is not proposed but an existing plan preventing sewer tie-ins and things of that nature. He pointed out that on Page 42 and 43 of the Comprehensive Plan regarding Hazards, there is no mention of the hazards that are being trucked through the town off Exit 42 currently and would like to see it in the Plan. He mentioned that in Chapter 5 of the Transportation section, he was disappointed there was no mention of the G 7/10 Right of Way, and no mention of the truck routes. He brought up that in the Future

Capital Projects section, he states water is critical and there is no mention of the plan regarding surface activity on the land that the Town owns or controls.

Gail Evans, 126 Majestic Court, agrees with Mr. Walker with businesses on First Street being important and agrees with Mr. Walker on the “water issue”. She added that she did not feel that the Palisade Game Plan platform was easy to use with the QR Code.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Vice Chair Leora Ruzin wanted clarification of First Street going back to residential asking if the businesses would be grandfathered in and recommended that it should be changed to residential simply because the traffic is so bad in that area. Community Development Director Rusche stated that it does not change anyone’s zoning, and that most of the street is existing residential uses.

Commissioner Parker agreed with Mr. Walker regarding our water in Cabin Reservoir with the water that exists, and it is an asset to this town. He also stated that he was not aware that the zoning was going to change on First Street and agrees with Mr. Walker about that comment. In conclusion, Commissioner Parker believes that this document is worthy of sending forward to the Board of Trustees.

Commissioner Hull commented that the zoning on First Street should be reconsidered after the adoption of the plan, when it gets presented to the Board of Trustees as to the zoning changes. He suggested that we have a paragraph in the history section of the Comprehensive Plan that recognizes the estimated value of the water by stating that we would not sell our water rights to Ute Water.

Motion #3

Vice Chair Ruzin made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Parker, to adopt the Resolution 2023-01 – 2022 Palisade Game Plan, with the condition that a paragraph be added to reflect the Town’s water in the chapter before it is presented to the Board of Trustees.

A roll call vote was requested.
Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Gekas closed the hearing at 7:15 p.m.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Community Development Director Rusche announced the Palisade Game Plan would be brought to the Board of Trustees in late February.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion #4 to adjourn by Commissioner Hull, seconded by Vice Chair Leora Ruzin at 7:18 p.m.

X 

Amy Gekas
Planning Commission Chairperson

X 

Shelley Kopasz
Administrative Assistant