

CITY OF WASCO
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
2nd MONDAY OF EACH MONTH
January 13th 2014 – 7:00 P.M.
City Council Chambers
746 8th Street Wasco, California

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Vice Chairman Drescher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **FLAG SALUTE** Vice Chairman Drescher led the flag salute
3. **INVOCATION** Vice Chairman Drescher offered the invocation
4. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Vice Chairman Drescher, Commissioners: Ramirez, Tapia, Pallares,
Absent: Romero
Staff Present: Planning Director Mobley, Planner Cobb, Administrative Assistant Debra Andreotti

5. **AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:** None
6. **HEARING FROM PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA** –This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Commission on any matter not on this agenda and over which the Commission has jurisdiction. Speakers are limited to two (2) minutes.

The Planning Commission will receive your comments but NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING. Should your comments require further consideration by the Planning Commission; the item will be agendaized for a report and discussed at a future Planning Commission meeting. Please state your name and address for the record before making presentation.

7. **Nominations and Appointment of Officers.**

- a) Nomination of Chairman.

Commissioner Ramirez nominated Vice Chairman Drescher for Chairman, 2nd by Commissioner Tapia, all in favor, motion carried.

AYES: Chairman Drescher, Commissioners: Ramirez, Tapia, Pallares

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Romero

- b) Nomination of Vice Chairman.

Chairman Drescher nominated Commissioner Ramirez for Vice Chairman, 2nd by Commissioner Tapia, all in favor, motion carried.

AYES: Chairman Drescher, Commissioners: Ramirez, Tapia, Pallares

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Romero

8. **Commission Meeting Time** - Report, discussion and possible minute action regarding changing the Planning Commission meeting time from 7:00 pm to 6:00 pm (Director Mobley)

Commissioner Ramirez moved to approve changing the time back to 6:00. Seconded by Commissioner Tapia, all in favor, motion carried.

AYES: Chairman Drescher, Commissioners: Ramirez, Tapia, Pallares

NOES: None

ABSENT: Romero

9. CONSENT CALENDAR - The Consent Calendar consists of items that in staff's opinion are routine and non-controversial. These items are approved in one motion unless a Commissioner or member of the public removes a particular item.

- a) Approval of Minutes from December 9th, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting.
- b) Community Development Department Project Report for the Month of December 2013.
- c) Code Enforcement Report for the Month of December 2013.
- d) Building Reports for the Month of December 2013.

Commissioner Tapia moved to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, all in favor, motion carried.

AYES: Chairman Drescher, Commissioners: Ramirez, Tapia, Pallares

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Romero

10. PUBLIC HEARING

- a) Report, Public Hearing and Possible Approval Re: A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Wasco Approving an Amendment to Conditional Use Permit 489-87 to increase operating capacity from 900,000 tons of sub-bituminous coal per year to 1,500,000 tons of non-metallic minerals per year.

Chairman Drescher opened public hearing at 7:07 p.m.

Director Mobley gave staff report. Director Mobley stated that the Department has received letters from Shafter-Wasco Irrigation District and 2 letters from the Sierra Club.

Fred Busch from Savage Services presented information on what the approved CUP would mean for the company. Savage Coal has been doing business in Wasco for 23 years. With the approval of the CUP they will employ 65 staff and 4-5 in management. He reported that early last summer there were findings of some coal that had spilled on the railroad tracks it was taken care of immediately.

Chairman Drescher asked for public comments and gave instructions on where to turn in public speaker cards.

Tom Franz, Association of Irrigated Residents, Wasco resident. Stated that Wasco has the worst air in the valley. There was coal dust on the railroad, mercury levels, chromium in small amounts. Wasco will be the

only City receiving coal. With HECA coming they will be taking a lot of farm land, 85% of irrigated water, 150 trucks will be coming in and out. He asked the Commission not to accept or make any decisions tonight.

Chris Romanini, HECA Neighbors. Opposed to amend Savage Coal CUP. Submitted pictures of coal on train tracks, reported to San Joaquin Valley Air Control and nothing was done. Is Wasco going to do monthly water reports?

Michelle Abernathy, Resident. Was in support of the project.

Mark Lambooy, Local Farmer. Opposed the project.

Justin Bone, Buttonwillow Resident. Opposed the project. Concerned about the number of trucks and safety of roads.

Irene Pena, Resident. Was in support of the project and submitted a 600 plus survey that was taken.

Christina Snow, Buttonwillow Farmer. Opposed the project.

Gerardo Pompa, Resident. Was in support of project. The project would increase employment.

Gordon Nipp, Sierra Club. Opposed the project.

Marion Vargas, Resident. Opposed the project. Concerned about the air quality.

Ann Gallon, Sierra Club. Opposed the project, entered pictures of coal on tracks.

Trudy Douglass, Resident. Opposed the project. There will be health risks of coal dust and Savage Coal is over 20 years old.

John Romanini, Buttonwillow Farmer. Opposed the project. There needs to be an EIR done. There will be contamination in our food.

John Martin, Wasco Resident. Was in support of the project. Mr. Martin stated that he has worked across the Savage Coal Company for 20 years and has never had any problems with them. Wasco needs to grow make the recommendation to increase the project.

Chairman Drescher stated that the CUP will only go through if HECA is approved.

Commissioner Ramirez stated he would like more time to review the project further.

Commissioner Palleres also stated he would like more time to review the project further.

Commissioner Tapia would also like to wait.

Chairman Drescher said she would approve the project now.

Directory Mobley stated he would like to clarify anything that needs to be done. He would like direction on what the Commission wanted to do.

City Manager Allen addressed the water issue. He stated that monthly reports are taken for our drinking water and there is no contamination reported.

Director Mobley asked the Commission is they would like to continue for 30 days.

Commissioner Drescher closed public hearing at 8:40 p.m.

Commissioner Drescher made a motion to continue item until next meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, all in favor, motion carried

Ayes: Chairman Drescher, Commissioners: Ramirez, Tapia, Pallares
Noes: None
Absent: Commissioner Romero

11. REPORTS FROM STAFF - None

12. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS – None

13. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Ramirez moved to adjourn meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Tapia. All in favor, motion carried.

AYES: All
NOES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Romero

Meeting adjourned at 8:54



Debra Andreotti
Secretary to the Planning Commission



Jill Drescher
Vice Chairman