

PATAGONIA PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES, 3/26/2019

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7PM. P AND D MEMBERS PRESENT: DAVID BUDD, TODD NORTON, SUSAN LANGE, GARY RETHERFORD, MELISSA MURRIETTA

The Chair introduced the Planning and Development Committee members and instructed the audience as to what this meeting is about. The audience was asked to either express or write their comments and input on the subjects presented. Those wishing to email comments were asked to write to patagoniagov4@qwestoffice.net, attention Isabel Van Nest.

The Town Plan was discussed briefly by David Budd. The plan will be reviewed, and updated as appropriate, in the coming year.

Denise Bowden, representing South32 Corporation and Red Mountain Ranch LLC, was asked to present the application by R M Ranch. South 32 is requesting a Use Permit for the use of 20-plus acres on Harshaw Road, for parking and loading/unloading of South 32 mine-related vehicles.

Benefits that would flow from this parking/staging area were said to include: less idling of vehicles, decreased traffic congestion, less parking congestion in town, fewer hazards, and greater safety for employee and employee vehicles.

Raoul Pena continued the presentation, noting that this staging area will accommodate about 200 vehicles. He reiterated this will be a safer parking place for employees and those traveling back and forth on the roads.

He briefly discussed the drainage issue. He projected an acceleration/deceleration lane would be added to Harshaw. The new lot would have a 24/7 security guard, fencing.

The area would be enclosed with a sense of minimal lighting and lights that meet the dark sky limits. A restroom area, not connected to Town water sewer systems, is planned. A dumpster area is included.

P and D Member Gary Retherford concentrated on the issue of lighting. High powered lighting would ruin quality of life at night for neighbors nearby, he expressed, and he asked if no lighting would work for the project. Security concerns were expressed.

For the audience Carolyn Schaffer ask that any flood control work on the project be done with the close cooperation of the Flood and Flow Committee that serves the town.

Questions were asked about what the trucks in and out of the site would be transferring, Mr. Péna stated that no hazardous materials will be transferred.

Comments from attenders were numerous and spirited. Among them: Why the emphasis on safety and security? What about Patagonia isn't safe? It was asked whether a 30 foot or 50 foot entrance would be needed, with concern expressed about the size of vehicles to be accommodated.

Further comments expressed thoughts that the application needs to further address the well or wells on the property, water issues, roads and right of way issues, and light pollution.

Concerns were expressed that the application for parking and support services to South32 industry and the General Plan of the Town of Patagonia do not match up well, with some saying the parking plan was "out of sink" with the General Plan.

Greg Lucero, representing South32, was closely questioned and stated that the corporate intention in the future was to avoid moving ore, the core product, anywhere through Town limits.

In a final note, group was also informed that eastern Santa Cruz County has recently been designated the 55th National Heritage Site in the United States.