

MINUTES
CHURCHILL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP
Tuesday, January 26, 2021

1. Call to Order

Chair Diehl called the regular workshop of the Churchill County Planning Commission to order at 6:33 p.m. via Zoom Meeting from Conference Room 102, County Administrative Complex, 155 N Taylor Street, Fallon, Nevada.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Deanna Diehl, Chairman; Charlotte Louis, Vice Chairman; Charlie Arciniega; Myles Getto; Shane Yates and Zack Bunyard.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Scott Nelson.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Christy Sullivan, Lahontan & Stillwater Conservation Districts; Holly O'Toole, Western Nevada College (WNC) Fallon Campus; Jennifer Haley, NAS (Naval Air Station) Fallon; Jo Petteruti, The Fallon Post; Joe Mendez, Economic Development Director, Fallon Tribal Development Center (FTDC); Linda Brown, UNR (University of Nevada-Reno) Cooperative Extension; Rob Rule, Community Plans and Liaison Officer, NAS Fallon; Summer Stephens, Superintendent, Churchill County School District (CCSD); and Tim Thompson, Planning Director, City of Fernley.

STAFF PRESENT: Christian Spross, Public Works Director; Dean Patterson, Associate Planner; Ben Shawcroft, Civil Deputy District Attorney; Lorena Robles, Office Specialist; and Diane Moyle, Administrative Assistant.

2. Public Comment

Chair Diehl asked for public comments and there were none.

3. Verification of the Posting of the Agenda

Chair Diehl verified with Diane Moyle that the agenda had been posted in accordance with NRS 241 and the Churchill County Code.

4. Consideration and possible action re: Review and adoption of Agenda as submitted.

Chair Diehl asked for any changes to the agenda. Diane Moyle stated that there were none.

Member Getto made a motion to approve the Agenda as submitted. Vice

Chair Louis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5. Discussion Item:

- A. Consideration and possible action re: Updates from representatives regarding accomplishments, proposed activities, events and major projects.

Chair Diehl thanked everyone for attending to participate in the meeting. She asked for everyone's patience during this online meeting. She wants to ensure that everyone is represented and given a chance to speak.

Joe Mendez shared that he is the new Economic Development Director with the **Fallon Tribal Development Center (FTDC)**. He informed that since October they have been working on developing the 37 acres that the tribe owns where the Fox Peak Cinema is located. They are currently reviewing some proposals from developers and looking to develop the whole area. He pointed that the development interest in this whole region has also brought interest in this area as well. He explained that he is from Mexico and was part of the group that brought the first BMW facility to Latin America. He has seen what a difference a company like that can make in terms of development not only for one city, but a whole state. They are focusing on the market after COVID, or during this pandemic, to create interest in developing this area. They hope to start a couple of projects by June or July. Member Arciniega asked for clarification on the number of

acres they plan to develop, and Mr. Mendez answered that it is the 37 acres near Banner Churchill Community Hospital. Dean Patterson brought up that during the last meeting where someone attended from the Tribe there was discussion about housing behind the theatre and commercial in front including a hotel and restaurant. Has any of this changed? Joe Mendez responded that housing is the first priority, and then they will follow with retail and shopping. Phase I would be housing and retail, and Phase II, based upon how things go with Phase I and development in the city and area, they would proceed with more retail and shopping.

Tim Thompson, Planning Director, City of Fernley, reported that they are extremely busy. They continue to receive a lot of interest from people about developing in Fernley. They have several interest in industrial development, including Mark IV with 4,300 acres around Nevada Pacific Parkway, TriCenter II that are looking to develop in the southwest portion of the city, and IRG Group that is also interested in projects at the Churchill County line—they want to start on the Churchill County side and things will eventually spill over into the City of Fernley. They have about 5,000 approved units. Three thousand (3,000) of these are within a planned development located south of the canal along Highway 95 (2,000 single family units and 1,000 multi-family units), which was originally approved in the early 2000s. They are receiving some interest from people about developing this area. Infrastructure for that development will be critical.

They are seeing a lot of development in between the roundabout and Interstate 80, Exit 48. They also recently completed a Transportation Master Plan that was adopted by the City, which was the first one in their 20 year history. The data showed that Fernley has seen a significant amount of pass through traffic, so people traveling back and forth from either Silver Springs, Yerington, or Fallon areas and beyond through Fernley to Interstate 80. This impacts the roundabout. The population in Fernley has only grown about 1800 residents in the last 4 years, so the traffic impact that they are seeing is generally not going to be from the developments in Fernley yet.

Tim Thompson further explained that there is also development near the Freemont Street and Highway 95 intersection. There is a planned hotel, a fast food business, the Grocery Outlet opened, and there is another 200 unit townhome duplex project over in that area. Then if you go west of Highway 95 along Freemont street there is another 240 apartment units that are currently under construction. Further down Freemont Street there is a proposal for about 320 multi-family units and about 50 attached or zero lot line type homes. He thinks that once they have the employment and additional residential, they will start to see more commercial development. A lot of commercial users have certain metrics that they use to determine when and where to locate. Fernley's population would need to hit about 40,000 before they start seeing interest for other big box stores such as Target. They could certainly use additional shopping in Fernley, mostly located on the west side of town.

The Jackson Ranch, which is about 160 acres as you come into town at Exit 46 and been agricultural forever, has an owner now that seems to be interested in developing this property. That has the potential for anywhere between 700 to 1,000 units in that particular area. The current proposal is just residential, and there is a parcel located across the street that would likely be a better location for some commercial development. There has been some interest in that parcel as well. Affordability remains an issue. Finding ways to encourage more compact development in a rural community is challenging. Most people don't want this as they moved to a rural area for all of the space, but they are finding that the tax structure in Nevada, although is

great for individuals, doesn't bode well for taxing entities. Fernley only receives a small amount of consolidated tax revenues, so most of Fernley's revenue comes through property taxes.

All of the development that is coming is great, but the overlaying issue is infrastructure. Much of what they have is aged and is going to have to be replaced. Funding mechanisms will have to be put into place, particularly for transportation improvements. They updated their sewer and water rates about four years ago, and people saw about a 35% increase in these rates. They are looking at creating an enterprise fund for stormwater. They don't have a very robust storm drainage system in Fernley, and they need to make improvements related to this drainage. Transportation is one of the more challenging infrastructure issues that they face. Being a rural community and most of the state transportation funds are allocated to Clark and Washoe Counties, so it has been difficult to get any big funds for their area. He did admit that they were successful in getting a couple of traffic signals on US Highway 50—one at Nevada Pacific Parkway and one at River Ranch Road. Unfortunately, they had a fatality at one of those intersections before a signal could be installed. Those should be installed this summer.

Tim Thompson reported that they are looking at development impact fees specifically related to transportation and what avenues they have to generate revenues because although the City isn't in the business of making a profit it does need to have the funds available to be able to provide the infrastructure that is needed as they continue to grow. The new development would help pay for that infrastructure, but there are a lot of existing things that will need to have repairs and replacements paid.

Mr. Thompson said that he believes that there is an MOU (memorandum of understanding) between Churchill County and the City of Fernley regarding development on the county line. They are in the process of doing that MOU and is sure that in the coming month there will be some discussions regarding the development at the county line.

Chris Spross, Public Works Director, remarked that several years ago there was talk about a connector along Nevada Pacific Parkway from the 3rd interchange on I-80 to where the Fox Peak gas station is, and he wondered if there are still plans for this. Tim Thompson answered that the Nevada Pacific Parkway extension is very much in play. They have had conversations with Mark IV, the developer of the industrial site there, as well as Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and they may be pursuing some grant opportunities or finding other funding mechanisms to be able to proceed with that. He stated that there is concern that in the long run it is very likely that the Mark IV project will use the bulk of the capacity in that new connection. This would be about a six lane roadway with an overpass to connect to Exit 50, but Mark IV would utilize the vast majority of that capacity. It is not likely that there will be additional capacity left over for other development. This would force the issue for them to figure out how to get traffic through or around Fernley. This could also be affected by the I-11 proposed interstate. It makes more practical sense to have I-11 go north to I-80 along the Highway 95 corridor, but there must be some interstate connector between Fernley and I-80 and that I-11 southbound. He thinks that working with NDOT is going to be critical—sooner rather than later.

Dean Patterson, Associate Planner, questioned if the Mark IV development is north of the railroad tracks, and Mr. Thompson responded that the bulk of their property is north of the tracks. Dean Patterson then inquired if their development would include the connection to Highway 50 from the north side, or would they just be putting in their infrastructure on the north of the tracks. Mr. Thompson answered that this is the classic case of them knowing they need to have another connection there, but they have to address how to pay for it. Then there is a

developer that really needs that connection to occur, so he thinks that through the development of the Mark IV project they would see the overpass extend over the railroad tracks and connect to Highway 50. Unfortunately, he thinks that a lot of people believe that it is a cure-all and once that is in that all of the traffic problems and the congestion at the roundabout are going to go away. In time as that development builds out and there is additional development elsewhere in Fernley or even in Churchill County there will still be a traffic impact through that area. Dean Patterson remarked that he imagines that everyone would be interested in bypassing that whole congested area when they are just trying to get to I-80. One of the things that came out in the Churchill County master plan discussions is that close to 50% of Churchill County workers commute to other areas for a job. This means that there are a lot of people from the county going to other places outside of the county to work. A lot of these people are connecting to I-80 in Fernley. A connection to I-80 that bypasses Fernley would be very beneficial to alleviate the congestion caused by this traffic. Tim Thompson said that 60% of Fernley's employed work outside of the City. They were losing a substantial number of people. As employment opportunities in Fernley increase, he thinks that people will choose to stay in Fernley versus having to commute, at least in the short-term. A bypass is going to be critical, and there are a couple of ideas right now. The two preferred alignments for the I-11 both terminate in Fernley—one from Fallon and one from Silver Springs. Under this scenario it is probably best that it come from Fallon through Fernley. Once you get to the county line there is a choice to go north through the wildlife management area and create a new interchange for I-80 or you go south over the canal and build a highway in the highlands where there isn't a lot of density and have an interchange at Highway 95 south of Fernley and take that over to the Wadsworth exit. These are the things that are being contemplated right now. With the TriCenter II project they are already talking about a potential bypass from Highway 95 to I-80 at the Wadsworth exit, so it seems to make some sense to potentially put that highway connector south of the City and south of the canal. Instead of having a bypass from Highway 95 to Wadsworth and then having a bypass from the county line north to I-80, you could just have one bypass that basically serves both functions. There needs to be a lot of discussions between Churchill County, City of Fernley, Lyon County, and NDOT to make this happen.

Dean Patterson question if the multi-family units Mr. Thompson spoke about is all new proposals or if they were part of developments that have been around for a while. Tim Thompson would say that they are new proposals. They have several parcels that are zoned for multi-family, but no one is looking at them. They updated their master plan in 2018, and then updated their zoning code March 2020. That seems to have incentivized developers to look at certain properties, which was the intent. The challenge is that this has happened much faster than they had anticipated, so they have the infrastructure challenges that he mentioned.

Linda Brown, UNR Cooperative Extension, reported that they still have no extension educator. They hope through budgeting and COVID to have someone in by July 1st. They are just keeping their doors open and providing the regular services—water testing, weeds, chemicals, etc.

Holly O'Toole, Western Nevada College (WNC) Fallon Campus, informed that they are going live with as many classes as possible and will see how things go. They have nursing, CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant), several biology, math, and English classes up live, and they are trying to meet the needs with Zoom, Live and Online classes. Enrollment looks good, and they are just doing the best that they can through this time.

Summer Stephens, Superintendent, Churchill County School District (CCSD), the school system is up and running. They have about 100% of the students in school district attend full time remotely—they call it Churchill Online Learning Academy. They have seen, between upticks in positive COVID case numbers and different times of the year, students in elementary and middle school start to return more to in person classes. Then there has been a reverse of this with high school students going more to online classes. This causes some challenges for the district. They were able to have 100% of their students have devices across the district, which has been part of their programming. They are working toward getting 100% of the students access to connectivity through some sort of a hotspot, wireless, or residential internet access. This is an area where the district is working with the State of Nevada to determine exactly who does not have residential high speed or broadband internet in order to find funding to bring this connectivity to the students in need. It is always a challenge to collect data from students and their families.

Ms. Stephens reported that about 74% of the students do go to school every day in person. Right now, a group goes in the morning for three hours, they disinfect things, and then another group goes in the afternoon for three hours. They feel that it is important to have the students at school every day. Other school districts that are doing things differently. The students at the middle school and high school only take two classes at a time and they move through them rather quickly. Because of the three hour timeframe they believe that this helps them to focus, and they are seeing a huge decrease in behavior problems. They have an increase in attendance. They are just finishing the semester, but at the middle school they have seen a reduction in failures and there's been a small reduction in this as well with the high school students. They will continue to use the same model for the second semester because not enough restrictions have been lifted. She gave an example of a traditional situation on a school bus with elementary kids where they could seat three students per seat (six students per row), and with the restrictions they really want two and no more than three students per row, which is one or two kids per seat. They cannot get as many people on the bus as previously.

Summer Stephens reported regarding COVID cases in the district and exclusions, which are when a person either has symptoms of COVID or became exposed to the virus and had to be excluded from in person school. At this time the total excluded (not with COVID) for the year has been 1,752 people since the start of school in August, and this total could include repeat persons because of exposure either at school or outside of school. They have not pinpointed any cases spreading at school from the 93 cases experienced so far. None of those have been transmitted through a school activity—class or bus. They believe that the school is extremely safe. Staff wide there have been 65 staff members excluded with 33 positive cases. They are in the throes of the first round of vaccinations; they have done about 200-250 vaccinations of staff members and substitute teachers. This groups will receive their second round in February. They hope that this contributes to a reduction. She said that for the last three days they have had no cases in the district reported.

Ms. Stephens stated that they are just trying to take care of the children and support families. They provide breakfast and lunch every day to all children in the community from birth to eighteen years old—not including formula or baby food. Families can take meals from their distribution for all children in the family whether they are in school or not. There are specific locations where these are distributed.

Dean Patterson, Associate Planner, remarked that the master plan has an education chapter and talks about enrollment. It was noted with the last update that the numbers for

enrollment had declined since the recession started, and there was a projection that these would start climbing again. Now that we have had to deal with COVID, what impact has this caused on enrollment? He said that the last numbers that were provided for the 2019-2020 enrollment was 3,250. Summer Stephens explained that the number was probably a little higher than that when the school year finished. They actually started down about 200 students and the student number has increased since the opening of the school year. The way that the state law and funding model work it would have been better if they had been exactly the same. They have some funding issues that will have to be worked out. She shared that there is a trend nationwide where students haven't reported anywhere. People moved on, especially last spring; they left, went to live with other family, or whatever, and now they don't know where these students are. It is a concern because there is no way to track them to ensure that they are safe and so on.

Rob Rule, Community Plans and Liaison Officer, NAS (Naval Air Station) Fallon, provided an update on the Navy housing by stating that Phase I through Phase IV has been completed with a total of 160 new or updated homes. Phases V through VI is underway with an estimated completion by late summer or early fall 2021. Once completed their total inventory of Navy provided homes will be 219. They did a housing inventory last year, an analysis of what is currently necessary for the base, and they determined that there was deficit of about 162 homes. Even with the 219 homes completed through this year, there will still be this deficit. They will probably move toward a Phase VII for housing. The base has requested additional housing and moving to the planning phase to try to accommodate the deficit. This would be constructed in the area north of the current housing. This is an area where there used to be housing.

Rob Rule then spoke regarding the FRTC (Fallon Range Training Complex) Modernization. The FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) included a 25 year extension for the Fallon Range Training Complex. The expansion for the Fallon ranges was not included in that NDAA. The legislation did direct the Department of the Navy and the Department of the Interior to create a committee to work through cultural and natural resource management issues for the Fallon ranges. Churchill County is part of that committee.

Mr. Rule informed that they are winding down on about five or six years of pretty big growth on the base. They have completed the innovative training simulator facility and that is starting to turn over and get operation. That building is basically a big empty shell full of simulators that will help aviators perform things that really can't be done on the range. The airspace isn't really big enough to accommodate some of the trainings that are necessary. This gives them a virtual space to perform this training. They also completed the Navy Reserve Center. That reserve group is moving from Stead to Fallon. The administrative personnel and leadership for the NOSC (Navy Operation Support Center) reserve center is being relocated. All of the temporary duty, drills and everything related to reserve duty will come and report to Fallon. It was desired to consolidate this with a base somewhat for security reasons, but also so that some of the reserve personnel could perform some of the duties on base. The new hangar for the F-35 that was originally scheduled for completion in 2022 is currently on hold.

Rob Rule then talked about the REPI (Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration) program. This is the conservation easement program where Churchill County and the Navy have had a formal partnership since 2003 to preserve large tracts of land, which helps protect the mission of the base and keeps farming in the valley. So far, the program has protected about 8,000 acres and has brought about \$17 million of Department of Defense funding to farmers and agricultural producers here in the Lahontan Valley. Normally, they complete about four projects per year that encumber conservation easements around the base. There is another

REPI program that is more centered on the ranges. This past summer NAS Fallon transferred about \$2 million to the Department of Wildlife, and those conservation projects are basically centered on ranches within that airspace. That money comes from the Department of Defense and goes directly to farmers within Nevada.

Rob Rule continued with an update on the Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center (NAWDC) received the first US stationary craft developed navy tactics with the F-35. Two of those aircraft showed up this past summer. There are four more remaining that will be paced out through the next two to three years as they come off of the production line that will be sent to Fallon. There has been a total of five military construction projects to support that F-35 program. The first F-35 TOPGUN course trained at Fallon this last summer, and they are looking to push through the first deployment to the aircraft carrier. The F-35 squadron will come through Fallon as part of airwing training and deploy to the aircraft carrier sometime in 2021 or 2022. There is expected growth with base personnel—military, civilian, and contractors. They have added about 43 personnel to aircraft maintenance and information security on the base. That number is expected to grow another at least 250, which is unprecedented growth for Fallon. They have probably gained about 200 people over the last 10-20 years, and they expect to add 250-1,000 just in the next five years. Most of this is linked to the expected growth and potential expansion of the mission in Fallon. There isn't really more flight hours that can be put into the air, but certainly the sophistication and the school development that is run here is looking at a lot of potential growth.

Dean Patterson noted that during discussions for the update of the master plan over a year ago it was indicated that there would be an increase of 12.6% in military staff and 15.9% in contractor/non-military staff. Is this still going to happen, or will it change? Was it impacted by COVID? Rob Rule responded that it would happen and are included in the numbers he provided. This should not be impacted by the virus. Dean Patterson further inquired whether the move of the reserve personnel from Stead to Fallon was included in the numbers that they have or if it was something new that wasn't included. Rob Rule answered that this should be included in the numbers that were provided. This would account for only about 25 of the staffing required for the reserve center and the other people coming in would be temporary and would cycle through. Dean Patterson mentioned with regard to the conservation easement program and the work to get participation with NRCS (National Resources Conservation Service). Has this started to happen yet? Rob Rule explained that they had a meeting with the NRCS state conservationist, and he is basically supportive of the conservation program and the participation for NRCS in this program. What NRCS brings is additional funding where the County wouldn't necessarily need to come up with. This is a huge benefit to the County in terms of acquiring easements on larger tracts of land of several hundred acres to over 1,000 acres. The affordability for the County becomes very difficult in these situations. The NRCS piece is a great part, and their goals and objectives are very similar. There were a few items that NRCS was taking a look at and they are supposed to get back with the Navy in a couple of weeks. Dean Patterson asked if they had joined in with a project yet, and Rob Rule reported that they are looking forward to a project of about 1,500 acres in the County. Both the Navy and NRCS has funding on hand in Nevada to do that deal.

Christy Sullivan, Lahontan and Stillwater Conservation Districts, stated that they are still holding their tree sale. They haven't been in the office very much due to COVID, and this has caused them to get behind on some things. They will be working with NRCS, Albert Mulder-District Conservationist, holding a local working group. This will be put together in the next month. She has also been working on a website for the conservation districts that she hopes to

get that approved at the February meeting. Mr. Schank wanted her to include something on the website about the conservation easement program. She wants to work on the poster contest; however, with school being what it has been things have been difficult to coordinate with the teachers. She will try again to get more participation from the students. Summer Stephens, CCSD, requested that Christy contact her or Robin Jordan, Family & Community Engagement Coordinator regarding the poster contest.

Chair Diehl asked if there were any others wishing to make a presentation or have comments or questions regarding any presentation so far. There was no response.

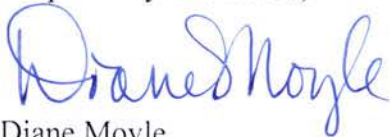
6. Public Comment

Chair Diehl asked for any other public comments, and there were none.

7. Adjournment

Chair Diehl thanked everyone for coming to participate. There were no further comments or questions, so he adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Moyle
Administrative Assistant