MEMORANDUM

TO: Trinity County Planning Commission

FROM: Kim Hunter, Building & Planning Director

DATE: January 8, 2020

SUBJECT: January 9, 2020 Agenda Item No. 6 Mines Rezone and CUP (P-17-45)

The attached comments from the public have been received as of 5pm today.
Good Afternoon Kim,

I know today is the deadline to receive comments on the P-17-45 project listed on Planning Commission Agenda for this Thursday, January 9, 2020. There are several issues with folks being able to get their comments in for this deadline. Adjacent properties and the general public were not given access to staff report until after 3:00 p.m. on Friday, January 3, 2020. The Planning office is closed on Fridays. While I was able to download a copy as well as schedule a pick up of hardcopy, that late on a Friday does not allow for inquiries to all agencies by respondents to be received in a timely manner to meet the comment deadline set as Monday, January 6th. I would also like to point out that Frontier internet has a large area outage for Trinity County on the day of comment deadline. Further restricting proper and timely access to this process. The letter of notice also has errors as it states that this project was sent to BOS on appeal. We all know that was not correct and should not be stated.

I am still reviewing paperwork received as well as waiting for important statistics, paperwork and other information to properly respond. In the meantime, I would like to make sure the Planning Commission has access to the MANY comments, concerns and factual backup that have accumulated over the last 21 months that soundly support and show the neighborhood and community members of Douglas City, CA are NOT in support of this project being placed on parcels requested. I reserve the right to email more comments and backup as information is provided to me.

There are still several errors to note: TCDOT is standing by it's previous transportation report. The report appears to still use a business model that would have lower numbers to evaluate. Mr. Tippett has stated in previous meetings that he did not use distribution industry example/information. His previous report also ends with; "Finally, considering the old location supported a propane retail and distribution business on any of these parcels. There is a propane tank farm located at the far end of this strip of parcels. They DO NOT allow access to retail or distribution. A proper look at traffic should be a requirement and insisted upon.

I have been provided a soil report submitted by applicant. The staff report states the soil was obtained from two different areas of parcels. The testing report already states that samples were not brought in at EPA standard temperatures. Were samples obtained by County staff or applicant? From what depth and specific area were samples gathered? Do we have confirmed verification from a third party that these soil samples actually came from project site?
Our neighborhood has been subjected to noise, gaseous pollution, increased traffic on Marshall Ranch Road, and non residential uses of Marshall Ranch Road over that last year from activities on the parcels listed in project. To date, there are no approved permits or CUPS on file with Planning Department or Environmental Health Department. There are abandoned vehicles and boats stored on one of the parcels. There are RVs and campers that are onsite. Some are abandoned and some have been used for living areas.

Here are the links for the Commission to review and should be treated as submission against this project in it’s entirety:

COMMUNITY INPUT TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FROM FEBRUARY 20, 2019
*the input was so large it had to be uploaded into four separate pdf links by County office
*PLEASE scroll to bottom of this page to access links/pdfs with full public input and comments submitted

BOS MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 20, 2019, MEETING
*attached for review

COMMUNITY INPUT FROM APRIL 2018 PC MEETING.

COMMUNITY INPUT FROM JANUARY 2019 PC MEETING

COMMUNITY INPUT FROM JANUARY 17, 2019 PC MEETING

C. USES PERMITTED SUBJECT TO FIRST SECURING A USE PERMIT: Recycling Center when outdoor area is utilized Campground Commercial amusement enterprise Hotel/Motel over ten (10) units or not hooked up to community sewer system Recreation vehicle park Restaurant with drive-thru service Resort Truck service station Ordinance No. 315 Section 22 Page 2 of 2 Auto repair shop Bus passenger station Laundromat Outdoor storage or sales associated with any of the uses listed in Section B Car wash Auto sales Highway Commercial complex containing more than 10,000 square feet of gross building area or occupying more than two (2) acres Mini storage Residential caretaker unit (See Special Regulations in Section 30(L) (Ordinance No. 315-580)

The Planning Commission gave a lot of thought about including Highway Commercial for cannabis industry use. It was determined that these spaces should be reserved for commercial ventures that service the traveling public and surrounding communities. Those are strong public benefits! Rezoning these limited supply HC parcels to accomodate an applicant's business venture provides no public benefit. His application to operate a cannabis distribution center on a grouping of parcels located directly adjacent to residential properties presents a clear basis of injury to public health and welfare. These parcels are in close proximity to Douglas City Elementary School and Trinity River. There is no municipal services support. Law Enforcement, if needed, could take hours to arrive. This is a business that holds product/property from MANY industry businesses. Storage,
transportation, disposal are all part of this business model. (see, better check that TCDOT report again!) All of which belong in zones already deemed appropriate and away from residential. The applicant has already stated he plans to develop one or more parcels with manufacturing and other cannabis related businesses. What he proposes belongs in an industrial park setting to provide proper public safety.

There is so much more to write; however, the deadline approaches. I will send more this week.

Sincerely,
Veronica Kelley-Albiez
My name is Marinda Medin and would like to resubmit my husband's and my comments that were sent in Jan 2019 in regard to the Mines' Rezone and Cannabis Distribution CUP. We do not feel that these items have been properly addressed, and we would like to draw attention to them.

The environmental Initial Study (IS) repeatedly drew its conclusions by comparing the possible businesses not requiring permits allowable under the current HC zoning to the types of business possible under the proposed C3 rezone. We feel the these comparisons are misleading and do not accurately portray the potential environmental impact that could ensue with the approval of the rezone and CUP. The assumption of the IS is that the properties in question are appropriately zoned for HC uses and can support businesses allowable under an HC zoning. The IS never questions the actual ability of the property to support businesses such as a restaurant or motel, which leads to a false conclusion that the proposed rezone and subsequent CUP would be less impactful that those businesses allowed under a HC zoning. In order to accurately portray the environmental impact of the rezone and CUP, the comparison needs to align with the current and past uses with what is proposed, rather than an imaginary scenario that could never exist on the subject parcels.

There is sufficient evidence indicating that the septic system on the CUP parcel cannot support the proposed use (see below commentary from 1/16/19), and the County has failed to provide evidence to the contrary (a recent report saying the septic tank is present and has been pumped does NOT override the warnings and restrictions placed on the original installation form). Additionally, the rezone of the AmeriGas parcel to the south used the inappropriate HC zoning as a reason for a rezone to C3 because the intended use would in fact be less impactful. “The land is not suitable for most uses allowed under the existing zoning due to poor soils for stage disposal systems.” The AmeriGas parcel does not offer facilities that would require the use of a septic system by employees. In contrast, the current Mines CUP project would significantly INCREASE the use of a septic system beyond its current and past usages. In this situation, a rezone would constitute a change in use conditions that most likely cannot be supported by the property in question.

The questionable availability of adequate water supply on the subject parcels has been brought up many times. While a well productivity report from 2014 has been presented showing adequate production rates, this report is simply a small snap shot in time and does not represent how the well actually performs in the long run. Public comments received in early 2019 by neighbors living near the subject parcels testify that the well has been known to run dry. Personal accounts of the historical patterns on the subject parcel are a better representation of water supplies than a short term well productivity report. Additionally, the fact that the well is used to supply water to the residence on one of the subject parcels was not addressed in the IR. While it has been made clear that it is not the responsibility of the County to ensure that there is adequate water available on the parcel, all factors should be considered when evaluating the ability of the parcel to support the intended purpose of the rezone. It is futile to proceed with a rezone for a business that the land cannot support. Various “band-aid” fixes are acceptable in emergency situations, however, willfully entering into a situation that is widely not supported by the community knowing that there are going to be issues that could hinder the progress of a business is not acceptable. A cannabis distribution center in the Weaverville area should be an important, long term establishment. In order to ensure the success of such a business, a well-thought out business plan rather than the current “we’ll deal with that when we get there” mentality should be employed.
Additional Comment:

On page 5 of the current 1/9/2020 Staff Report it states, “Regarding the future development of the sites in the project, it is unknown at this time what other uses may be proposed by the Applicant, or others, in the future.” The IS clearly states that “The applicant has indicated that future cannabis manufacturing may occur adjacent to the distribution facility, but there is no current plan for this use.” While future projects are not under consideration at this time, we feel that the Staff Report was misleading on this matter.

Thank you,

Marinda and Jed Medin

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Previous Submission 1/16/19

Trinity County Department:

My fiancé and I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Mines Douglas City Rezone and Cannabis Distribution Facility Project. We are new residents to the Marshall Ranch Rd community as of mid-December 2018, and were not fully aware of the tumultuous rezoning proposal until we received the Notice of Public Hearing in the mail late last week (1/11/19). After speaking with neighbors, we were able to locate the correct website pathways and review the reports (the link in the Notice was not and is not valid just FYI). As we purchased this home to raise a family in, we would like to voice some concerns that we feel should be addressed.

Sewage:

IS p8: “The industrial properties to the west across Highway 3...have issues... in addition to poor sewage disposal capacity. It’s unclear whether the same issues are present on the subject parcels. The 1989 rezone findings listed in the Staff Report for AmeriGas state that the land ‘is not suitable for most uses allowed under the existing zoning (HC) due to poor soils for sewage disposal systems’.”

“this should read “east,” a mistake commonly noted in the IS

Staff Report 1/10/19 p.9: “At this time the County has determined that the proposed use is compatible with the existing septic system.”

We were baffled by the Planning Department’s evidence lacking response to the community’s concerns over the ability of the parcel to handle the wastewater of the potential 10 full time employees and additional 10 seasonal employees for 3 months of the year. After persistent requests from the community asking for documents supporting their approval of the septic, the Planning Department at last released documents on Monday of this week (1/15/19). Two documents were provided from J&J Septic, one for the construction of the residence septic in
1979 and the other for an additional septic in the warehouse in 1986. These reports are simple well installation forms. The only commentary provided is from the 1986 report and states that, "the system is approved for one toilet and one house sink only. Other usage must be approved in writing and shall require further soil excavations and expansion of field." The combination of the concerns addressed in the IS report and the commentary in the 1987 J&J Septic report raises serious question over how the county determined that "the proposed use is compatible with the existing septic system." Given the upslope proximity of the subject parcels to neighboring residences as well as the Trinity River, excessive use of the septic systems on the subject parcels present potential human and environmental health hazards that should not be overlooked. Further analysis into the soil structure and capacity of this site is essential prior to a rezoning consideration that is intended solely to allow for a business that presents a significant change in the current usage of the wastewater system.

Safety:

IS p37: "Law enforcement in the area is provided by the Trinity County Sheriff's Department and the California Highway Patrol.....Development of the project within the community is not expected to significantly increase the demand for these protection services"

We feel that these statements in the IS contradict with the State's required current cannabis business security measures. This project is fulfilling the required security measures that include a surveillance monitoring room, secured perimeter fencing, and an exterior guard hut because of anticipated crime associated with the cannabis industry. Per Trinity County Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Regulations Ordinance No. 315-823 Section 1 (15), "WHEREAS, in recent years there has been an increased number of Cannabis related incidents of burglary, robbery and armed robbery; some including acts of violence resulting in injury or death."

A cannabis distribution facility is by definition a localization of a very valuable and sought after product. We feel that the IS flippantly disregarded the safety of the surrounding community, which is our most poignant concern with the proposed location of this cannabis distribution facility. The subject parcels are located ¾ miles south on Hwy 3 from its intersection with Hwy 299. While this area is zoned Highway Commercial and Industrial In addition to Rural Residential, it is largely a sparsely lit, quiet, and isolated neighborhood with no close responding agencies. The California Highway Patrol and Trinity County Sheriff are located 6.4 miles and 7.7 miles to the north in Weaverville. While the parcels' location at the intersection of two main highways makes the site ideal for a distribution center, this same location without any nearby protection makes it an ideal target with multiple routes of travel available to those with ill intent.

We would additionally like to express concern over the potential use of Marshall Ranch Road as an access region for criminal activity. Marshall Ranch Road has two entrances, one to the north of the proposed project and one to the south. Other than the entrances, this residential road is not visible from Hwy 3. Three of the four proposed parcels are accessible from the back/ west side along an approximately 830 feet section of Marshall Ranch.

Security systems are not foolproof and fences are not impermeable. For the safety of the community, we anticipate further investigation into the security of this location as it relates to a cannabis distribution facility.

In Conclusion

We are not anti-Cannabis, and we are in fact excited over the prospect of what the legalization of Cannabis will bring economically to Trinity County. We applaud the location of the approved (Hoffman) distribution center in Hayfork. The completion of a Water Resources Protection Plan for
Hoffman's proposed septic use by 4 full time employees, choice of a parcel already zoned in accordance with one of the 6 zones allowable for distribution, ¼ mile distance from the nearest residence, and close proximity to a CalFire station are all examples of actions that should be taken and characteristics that should be sought when selecting a location for a distribution center in the Weaverville vicinity. The path to successful growth and stability of the legal cannabis industry requires a brave and forward front. At the same time, the ability to take a step back, be patient, acknowledge environmental effects, and listen to the voices of the community is an essential and invaluable tool in ensuring the successful economic progress of the legal cannabis industry in Trinity County.

Thank you for your time and consideration, we greatly appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Marinda Cokeley and Jed Medin
Kim, I sent a letter last time this issue came up, my feelings have not changed. Terry Mines is in violation already and no one is doing a thing about it, so what makes them think that he will comply with all rules and regulations when they give him permission to do this bullshit???

On Monday, January 6, 2020, 5:04:42 PM PST, Kim Hunter <khunter@trinitycounty.org> wrote:

Thank you, your comments have been received. They have been added to the record and will be forwarded to the Planning Commission. K.

Kim Hunter

Director of Building & Planning

Building/Planning/Environmental Health/Cannabis

(530)623-1351 Ext. 2

61 Airport Road PO Box 2819

Weaverville CA. 96093-2819

www.trinitycounty.org/Building-Environmental-Health

www.trinitycounty.org/Planning

www.trinitycounty.org/Commercial-Cannabis
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There is so much more to write; however, the deadline approaches. I will send more this week.

Sincerely,

Veronica Kelley-Albiez
Planning Commissioners,
Ref: Mines proposed cannabis Project
Hwy 3, Douglas City, Ca 96024, planning commission hearing for 09 Jan 2020
Dated 06 Jan 2020
For Your Consideration:

We the businesses and neighborhood of Hwy 3 and Marshall Ranch Road ask the planning commission to reject the EIS as written; 1) Thoroughly address the Board Of Supervisors request to adequately address their rejection reasons of the EIS; namely The Traffic, Soil contamination, and Air pollution studies, and 2) uphold your decision to reject the rezone request for the Mines proposed project, for the following reasons:

1. Why are neighborhood children less important, then schools, parks, day care centers, etc.. requiring a 1000 feet set back from any cannabis businesses, when they must live and play, night and day right next to a cannabis facility? Neighborhoods don’t have as much structural supervision as schools. Don’t these children need even more protection?

2. The approved school bus stop is less then 150' from the cannabis distribution center and its planned guard shack, and directly across the street from the building itself, why is this project then being considered at all? The school Bus Stop has been there for decades. California law requires line of sight restrictions from turns that make this bus stop point essential for children safety.
3. In the State license application it asks if the required guards will be armed or not. If crime is not an issue (which we know it does increase substantially for this activity). Mainly due to the consolidation of high value package ready to go product and cash only business transactions. Why would this applicant select a location without municipal protective services nearby. Why would the applicant not consider these services essential for not only their business but for the protection of surrounding businesses and residents? Police protection response time to our neighborhood, per there own statements, is 25-35 minutes or longer, with just two officers in the whole county on patrol duty at any given time.

4. Why would you choose to Limits the property rights and lower the property values of all the surrounding parcels, and creates a nuisance to those effected, over the future rezoning rights of the one applicant? Why would the commission take four of the eleven Highway Commercial properties our General Plan stressed as important for our core business area out of existence? Mr. Mines bought the property with only HC rights, and by his own admission helped develop the Cannabis ordinances that stressed HC as the only zoned business not allowed for cannabis operations.

5. Why would you choose to Limit adjacent property rights by limiting their abilities to host school children for field trip settings, of which we have done in the past and plan to continue in future, and prevents any ability to use our properties as day care centers and the like (two families on Marshall Ranch Road have one member each on the DCES board of education).

6. Why would you want to Limit and take away HC zoned properties in the Douglas City Core business area, our DC community plan states it want to keep. Businesses not allowed next to this type of business would also be shut out. Would you put a new business next to this industry? No developers we have talked to would. So how will this business positively effect our community or attract new business to our communities chosen core business area. It won't. There is no County or community benefit to this business location. No taxes go to the county or the community, just the state. Not to mention the costs to the county to service this business.
7. The DC community Plan has multiple goals throughout the document that are not in favor of this heavy commercial project. Only two were used to support the project in the EIS, and were used to skew the true intent of the DC community plan which favors the leisure, recreation and tourism industry and stresses the protection from any business that would threaten the current lifestyle of the community to that end. Why?

8. Why would an applicant choose a building with years of logging truck and maintenance repair contamination, so much so that volunteer firefighters have stated they wouldn’t go in there if it caught on fire, for pure safety concerns. By the way, Never addressed in the EIS. Why would the planning department never sample the soil for contaminates the community plan stated where likely there. Before the EIS was corrected by public discovery that revealed contaminated waste was found and dug up on the old sawmill sight. The Shelton’s discovered the same waste dumps on their property, I’m sorry to say through this discovery process they were covered back over and left in place (which was also owed by the logging company, but for a mysterious reason was not inspected as the property across the Hwy 3 was. Why? There is enough evidence presented by the community plan, the planning departments own records and the restrictive land use title deed (provided by the residence research yet again) indicating contaminated waste dumps, and multiple soil contamination (that require more than two handfuls of soil in two small locations sent in for assessment by the owner himself) to require at least the same effort by state environmental inspection agencies as previously accomplished on the other part of the sawmill property, and to explore how mitigated land use restrictions apply only to part of the old sawmill property and not all of it. Please protect the public and do the right thing.

9. Why would you consider rezoning these properties over the overwhelming opposition from Douglas city residents. Over 200 DC residents alone signed the opposition statement. Over 250 total county residents. That's just a few signature collection days worth of signatures, with the residents signing at the Douglas City General Store, 1.3 hours at the DC post office, and a few over social media. In addition, the large TAA membership organization has sent in a letter from their lawyer Mr. Underwood stating numerous
members oppose the Mines Project. There are only Approximately 785 Total Douglas City residents, a large portion of which are seasonal residents (per EIS) not available for signature at this time of year, half of which are children (very conservative estimate) which leave a huge portion of the adult DC population in opposition. That figure is not including many others written opposition statements sent directly to the commission and supervisors. All adjacent Residential and business property owners strongly opposed the proposed mines project.

10. EIS as written and corrected, still has major flaws, no required cumulative effects, no required environmental water restrictions investigations for downstream water wells effects, No soil or building contamination inspections/tests, and Traffic Analysis report that has not been corrected and has major issues skewing the accuracy of the EIS negative declaration, that could end up costing the county millions in road improvement projects. Please see detailed information in submitted documentation.

11. Testimony by multiple and extremely reputable citizens with 30 plus years of historical data referencing rezone requested parcel water limitations, to wit going dry during summer months, are completely ignored in the corrected EIS, in favor of one flawed and limited report from a wet month from 2014. It is becoming apparent through other cannabis license holders that have faked water well reports that those reports can no longer be trusted. Please ask for details from Ms. Hubbard. It's time the planning department learns, to trust but verify. How can the supervisors rely on a water report suspected as flawed by the commissioners as potentially inadequate, still be recommended by the planning department yet in opposition to the planning commission itself? Why?

12. This project proposal is all tied into one request, and the excuse given when questions arise as to the Neg Dec, and rezone, is that they need to be addressed in the CCUP portion only, and that is in error. That excuse lends itself toward applicant bias. The past Planning department head always fill back on this statement when questions became difficult. Just pass all the other stuff, despite flaws, and we can address them all in the CCUP, is ridiculously biased, and does not protect the rights of the citizens of this
county, or their right to object (because public comment is over by then)
Numerous ignored CUP violation and or reported violations go unanswered
for years leaving the public unprotected, unhappy, and unable to see timely
or at all compliant compliance (see numerous multiple examples given in
documents submitted to the commission and supervisors).

13. The past planning Department Head and the applicant keep stressing the
Parcels have not been in use at all (08 nd 09) or at least not for over 4 years
(still in the corrected EIS and per their testimony before the
commission). That is in error as pointed out by the public. The Bundy's
rented and used all four parcels as did the Shelton's before them, right up
until a year before Mine's family purchased the property. To say they
weren't all used as Highway Commercial for the last 30 plus years also
misrepresents facts skewing the report in favor of the applicant position. All
properties were used for storage, reloading logging truck equipment and
used by CAL TRANS for culvert pipe storage etc. To state as fact, they have
not been used as HC, is misleading the commission and supervisors, at best.

14. When has the Planning Commission ever approved a rezoning
request when: 1) its gone against the vast community majority that opposes
the proposed rezone and facility; 2) Overturned its own ordinances written
and approved just a year ago, that protects its citizens; 3) When has it ever
rezoned only for one particular industry, when it has already provided six
other zoning approved land uses, the very definition of illegal spot zoning,
especially when an applicant was a sitting, appointed supervisor, with
powers to influence decisions; 4) When has the planning commission ever
upon discovery of applicants misleading testimony not withdrawn the
application as per Ordinance 315-829 section (7) a-I, ; 5) and finally has ever
gone against its own four principles 2016-077, specifically designed to
protect the public from exactly this situation?

In the future this industry may become a social and cultural norm, crime
free, but that is not now! It may take a decade or so before this occurs,
leaving this neighborhood and its local community to face today's reality. To
wit A Federal Government opposed to cannabis legalization. The State and
Federal Government who still considers cannabis a controlled substance and a narcotic, with all the crime that goes with it. Required State licensed facilities, that the State itself recognizes should be located in controllable environments.
That is why all licensed cannabis facilities we were able to research are located in municipal or remote industrial areas that have municipal services, located next to police stations, fire departments and City Halls - not: 1) 35 plus minutes away from limited police protection, 2) far away from distant or volunteer fire departments, 3) no municipal Waste Treatment facilities, 4) no Municipal water supplies that will not infringe on adjacent properties clean water rights, 5) and not provide for our basic human rights to live in an environments that is safe for our children and families. There is not one of you who, right now, would vote for this rezone and distribution facility if it was to be located in your front yard, Why would you vote for or allow it to be in ours?

Thank-you for all you do for us
For our community
David Albiez
We don’t live in Douglas City, but support that community in their concerns. We live in the supposed Out Opt area in Lewiston but find some things have been allowed. Thank you, Antoinette and Ralph Schwartz 2541 Lewiston Rd. Lewiston 96052

Sent from my iPhone