



October 3, 2018

Planning Commission Clerk
County of Humboldt Planning and Building Department
3015 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501

RE: New Zoning Districts, October 2018

Planning Department and Planning Commission;

The Willow Creek Community Services District (WCCSD) would like to express our significant concern about the upcoming Planning Commission hearing on October 4th, regarding the re-zoning of properties in Humboldt County, and in particular in Willow Creek. The reasons for our concerns are as follows:

- The notification of the zoning change has been very short. An item of this nature should involve more notification time and more community outreach. It has been our understanding through discussions with the County in regards to the General Plan update and to Commercial Cannabis regulations, that community involvement would be requested and included when changes of this nature occur.
- The downtown area of Willow Creek was recently changed in the General Plan update from Commercial Services to Mixed Use. It is our understanding that the proposed zoning change is from Commercial-2 to a new Mixed Use zoning. While the WCCSD does not necessarily have an opposition to this change, as stated above, the short notice of this change means the appropriate thought process of the pros and cons of the change have not been able to happen. It may be, as a community, that we suggest a different zoning change. Such as Mixed Use in a portion of downtown, and a remaining portion, along the 299 corridor, to remain as C-2.
- A list of properties in which zoning changing is occurring has not been published. As part of the staff report, maps are included to indicate the new zoning of properties. This is of limited help, as unless one is to sit with an old map, and flip back and forth quickly to the new map, such that their eyes can discern the changes in the zoning, there isn't a way to understand which properties are changing zoning. Additionally, given the scale of the maps in the staff report, it is very difficult to see which properties are which. It also seems reasonable that the county staff could upload the proposed zoning changes to the web GIS program, similarly to how the update to the General Plan was handled.

- A specific property in Willow Creek, APN# 522-491-017-000, which is the location of the Mercer Fraser gravel yard, is apparently up for a zoning change from Commercial Highway to Heavy Industrial (MH). The District would like to understand why this property shouldn't be zoned Limited Industrial (ML) as a minimum, as it is in close proximity to many important community services, such as an Elementary School, health care facilities, and an apartment complex. Additionally, it is our understanding that the general plan designation of Industrial Resource Related requires a Q zone when zoned either MH or ML. It does not appear to be clear in the staff report what the proposed Q zone qualifications are for this property.
- At further review of the staff report maps, I have noticed that the lot mentioned above is not shown as MH but rather as AE. This is very concerning, as I have had many discussions with the planning department with the understanding that this property was planned to be changed to MH with a Q zone. It was even put on the Board of Supervisors January 23, 2018 meeting agenda but pulled. It appears that the proposed change to AE (which does not require a Q zone) was done at the very last minute without any outreach.
- Also at further review of the staff report maps, it has been noticed that the golf course property in Willow Creek is being proposed to be changed to a Highway Commercial (CH) zoning. This is something that I am sure the Board of the WCCSD as well as the majority of our community would be very interested in knowing about, but as General Manager I didn't discuss it at our September 27th board meeting because I wasn't aware of it. Lastly, it does appear that a Q zone is included as part of the re-zoning, but as mentioned above, without the Q zone information being included in the staff report, we have no way of knowing what the qualifications are.

Given the multiple reasons listed above, the WCCSD requests a delay in the hearing on the zoning changes until the appropriate community outreach has occurred. As a community, we want to have input into the development of our town.

Sincerely,



Susan O'Gorman
General Manager

CC:

John Ford
Ryan Sundberg
Steve Madrone