

**CITY OF CASTROVILLE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL CALLED JOINT MEETING
WITH
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
1209 Fiorella
City Council Chambers
February 11, 2026
Wednesday
5:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bruce Alexander called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. for the City Council Planning and Zoning Commission Board member Valarie Solis opened joint meeting due to Chairman Jim Welch's late arrival.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Bruce Alexander	Scott Dixon, City Administrator
Mayor Pro Tem Sheena Martinez	Debra Howe, City Secretary
Councilmember Houston Marchman	Breana Soto, Community Development Director
Councilmember Phil King	
Councilmember David Merz	
Councilmember Robert Lee	

Others in attendance:

Planning and Zoning Commission members

III. CITIZENS COMMENTS

The City Council will hear comments from any citizen or visitor. Speakers must address their comments to the presiding officer rather than individual council members or staff; stand at the podium, speak clearly into the microphone, and state your name and residential address before speaking. Speakers will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes for testimony. Speakers making personal, impertinent, profane, or slanderous remarks will be given one warning before losing the privilege to speak or may be removed from the room. In accordance with the State Open Meetings Act, the City Council is restricted from discussing or taking action on items not listed on the agenda. Action can only be taken at a future meeting.

No one requested to speak.

Mayor Alexander announced the meeting would be ending by 7:00 p.m.

IV. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Discussion and review of Development Agreement Policy

Mayor Alexander spoke briefly on the Unified Development Ordinance having been voted down and the Development Policy that had been prepared as a stop gap until the ordinance was adopted.

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Mayor Alexander said he did not agree with putting the City's position in any policy. Mayor Alexander said the City should negotiate with all developers.

Community Development Director Breana Soto provided a presentation on why development agreements were needed. Ms. Soto said development agreements helped with long-term growth, showed commitment to the residents, aligned the development with public priorities and protected fiscal sustainability and the community character. Ms. Soto said the City could not regulate the type of building materials but with a development agreement the City could work toward the City's standards. Other advantages if the development consented to voluntary annexation were: infrastructure timing, developer cost participation, enhanced design standards, volunteer civic land and possible incentives tied to the benefits. Ms. Soto said the Planning and Zoning Commission (P& Z) had reviewed the ordinances and codes associated with an agreement. Ms. Soto said the commission wanted values first, fiscal sustainability, community character, quality design, connectivity, civic space, and transparent process. P & Z Board member Solis said the commission had looked at for better clarity. Councilmember Merz said the City could not regulate a lot of things but they could look at the previous agreements and know what the City wanted in the new policy. Mr. Merz said the City did need a development policy in place for a reference and get easy access. Mayor Alexander felt the City had ordinances in place for developers to follow and this was what the City wanted but with a development agreement the developers took advantage of the City. P & Z Board member Bryan Griffin said continuity with a written document was needed and wanted Castroville to be on the upside with developers. Councilmember Merz said he saw things in the Country Village Phase II development things that should/could have been better, such as connectivity. Mr. Merz said a policy would help as there were things they could put in a policy that could not be done by ordinance or in the codes. P & Z Board member Solis said she did not think there should be specific details in a policy document. P & Z Board member Troy Griggs felt they could not do that as it was too restrictive.

P & Z Chairman Jim Welch arrived at the meeting at 5:26 p.m.

Councilmember Lee said he did not want incentives mentioned in a development policy at all as that opened the door for developers to possibly take advantage of the city. Mr. Lee felt if that were to happen the current citizens would be paying for infrastructure and other things in the development. Mr. Lee provided a copy of his edits to the original P & Z's revised development agreement to the City Council and the P & Z Board. Mr. Lee said the edits as directed by City Council were sent to the P & Z for review and were not in the backup material for this meeting. P & Z Board member Griffin said he agreed with Councilmember Lee's rework of the proposed policy. Mr. Lee said he had contracted several cities and they did not give incentives. After further discussion, all agreed the edited version of the development agreement provided by Councilmember Lee was the one the City should use. Councilmember King agreed the City needed a policy but he disagreed with Councilmember Lee on the City could lose out, the City could do what it wanted to but if the development did not agree to annexation the City could do nothing. Ms. Soto said they agreed the City was looking at the values of the City with incentives last. Ms. Soto said P3 would be providing a presentation at a future meeting and the City Council may wish to look at a policy more then. All agreed on the values provided by the P & Z and they could be included in the agreements and policy. Ms. Soto said if the City Council wanted to include language on connectivity, underground utilities, landscaping options, Dark Sky lighting, street signage enhancements, housing variety, and block length and layout. Councilmember Martinez was in favor of underground utilities, dark sky lighting and block layout/length. Councilmember Merz said he had not been at previous meeting but he wanted to see more connectivity, see more stub-out areas with more connections to other neighborhoods. Mr. Merz said he would like to see a better layout for utilities, with all being in public

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owned right of ways, not located in the rear of the properties. Mr. Merz said he would like to see smaller zoned – RC- for small apartments/duplexes to help sustain neighborhoods. Mr. Merz said the wording could be changed to variety of types and sizes to variety, including apartments and duplexes. City Administrator Dixon said all supported a value with specificity. P & Z Board member Griffin recommended Chairman Jim Welch to work with City Staff during the review process for a proposed development. Councilmember King agreed with Councilmember Lee and Councilmember Merz suggestions to be included. Mayor Alexander said he liked the value document. Councilmember Lee was concerned with the amount of water-rights the developers were required to bring to the City being based on LUE's and not it appeared to address green spaces, i.e. parks, or areas of the streets with grass that would require additional water. City Council wanted to get the P & Z Commissions ideas on the agreement. P & Z Board member Marques Fuentes said all of the P & Z's ideas were in the presentation and the board had discussed block lengths and layouts in depth and was unsure of why it was not shown that they wanted to have the streets longer in length. City Administrator Dixon said the process was to update the ordinance and include what they wanted. Ms. Soto encouraged the Council to speak with others in their districts and send over to the P & Z for review. Mr. Dixon said to prioritize what they wished to work on. Councilmember Martinez wanted to look at manufactured housing and requirements. P & Z Chairman Welch asked if P & Z were to look at setting the procedures to come to the City and if this was what the City Council was wanting the P & Z was not qualified to determine some of the items. Ms. Soto had provided the proposed process of coming to staff, P & Z, then City Council. Council wished to have public input before going to P & Z then City Council. Councilmember Merz felt the City should not require an irrigation system in the development policy. Councilmember King felt connectivity was in the agreement but to add within and to each neighboring developments. Councilmember Merz said there was a process in place to make changes to the Subdivision and CZO ordinances if the City Council chose to do so. Councilmember Lee said the agreed upon new development agreement policy wording could be incorporated into the Subdivision Ordinance now if they so wished.

V. **DISCUSSION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

VI. **ADJOURN**

Mayor Alexander adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Bruce Alexander
Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Howe
City Secretary