

**RIO DELL PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 27, 2026**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Knight called the regular meeting of the Rio Dell Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present were Commissioners Knight, Arsenault, and Millington. Absent were Commissioners Angeloff and Gurney (excused).

Others present were Community Development Director Caldwell, and City Clerk Dunham.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

Approve Minutes of November 25, 2025 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Arsenault/Millington to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2025, regular meeting as submitted. The motion carried 3-0.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

Commissioner Knight called for public comment on any matter not on the agenda. No public comment was received.

**SCHEDULED MATTERS/PUBLIC HEARINGS/STUDY SESSIONS**

Review and Consideration of the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) Grant Application for Caleb Salstrom at 371/375 Wildwood Ave.

Community Development Director Caldwell provided a staff report recommending approval of the Façade Improvement Program Grant Application for Caleb Salstrom at 371/375 Wildwood Ave. He said that the applicant is proposing Hardi-Lap siding on the bottom 2 feet of the building, Hardi-Panel siding above the lap siding and Hardi-shingles at the top 2 feet of the building. The building will be painted medium gray at the top and bottom and light gray on the middle panel siding. The trim will be dark or black. New doors, exterior lighting and signage are included. He noted that the proposed project results in significant aesthetic improvements to the area as required by the Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.

He noted that the total estimated cost for the materials is \$12,500 with the grant covering one-half of the cost. There is no reimbursement for labor since the owner is doing the

work and the Façade Improvement Program Guidelines don't allow for reimbursement to the owner for labor.

Staff recommended approval of the project as presented.

Commissioner Arsenault commented that he thought the colors were drab.

Commissioner Millington agreed that the colors on the building were boring and suggested a different color trim.

Community Development Director Caldwell pointed out that the green signage provides a good contrast to the gray color of the building.

Review and Consideration of the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) Grant Application for Pedro Delgado at 210/220 Wildwood Ave.

Community Development Director Caldwell provided a staff report and said that the applicant is proposing a 1-foot Gemstone in Vanilla Bean on the bottom of the building removing the failed lower LP Inner-Seal lap siding and the lap siding on the top and to replace the siding with T-1-11 panel siding. The total estimated cost for material and labor is \$12,700.

He said that he conveyed to the applicant that staff believes that the proposed materials do not result in an attractive façade, and as required by the Façade Improvement Guidelines, the project as proposed does not result in significant aesthetic improvements to the area.

Staff recommended the project incorporate Hardi Shingles on the top, Hardi Lap siding on the middle portion of the building and an additional 1-foot layer of Gemstone faux rock on the bottom.

Community Development Director Caldwell reviewed the estimated costs of staff's proposed materials from Home Depot and noted that they were actually less than the estimated cost provided by the applicant.

He recommended denial of the project as proposed and said that hopefully the applicant will consider changing the materials as proposed by staff. He said that he would also encourage the applicant to consider changing the existing color of the building to coordinate with the Vanilla Bean Gemstone.

Review and Consideration of the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) Grant Application for Toheed Ahmad at 127 Wildwood Ave.

Community Development Director Caldwell provided a staff report and said that the applicant is proposing removing the existing Board and Batt siding below the canopy and replacing it with Hardie Lap siding. The siding will transition 48” onto the north wall of the building and staff is recommending that the lap siding also transition 48” onto the south side of the building. The stucco above the canopy is proposed to be replaced with stained 1x6 Western Red Cedar over Hardi Panel siding. New trim included a combination of 2x10 Doug Fir at the top of the front of the building and the 48” transition along the sides and 1x6 -5/4 Hardie trim as the corners, doors and windows. He said that staff are recommending that the top trim extend the full length of the building on both the south and north sides.

He noted that the applicant is proposing a color scheme of light gray on the front and 48” transitions onto the side of the building and a medium gray on the sides on the building with the sign repainted a darker gray color.

Community Development Director Caldwell indicated that the applicant would need to update the cost estimate for the project and estimated the total materials cost to be about \$6,000.

He said that staff believe the proposed project as required by the City’s Design Review Guidelines does result in an attractive façade and results in significant aesthetic improvements to the area. Staff recommended approval of the project subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant shall submit an updated cost estimate.
- 2) The lap siding shall transition 48” onto the north and south side of the building.
- 3) The 2x10 top trim shall extend the full length of the building onto both the south and north sides.

Commissioner Knight commented that he noticed some rot on the north side of the building and asked if that would be repaired.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that staff would recommend to the applicant that it be repaired.

Discussion ensued regarding paint versus stain on the Western Red Cedar above the canopy. Commissioner Knight said that he likes the look of stained wood, but it requires maintenance and needs to be re-stained to keep it from looking weathered.

Community Development Director Caldwell commented that Olympic Duro Coat paint is a great product.

Commissioners agreed to add to the conditions that the Western Red Cedar be painted instead of stained and that the rot on the north side of the building be repaired.

A motion was made by Arsenault/Millington to approve the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) Grant Application for Caleb Salstrom at 371/375 Wildwood Ave. as proposed. The motion carried 3-0.

A motion was made by Arsenault/Millington to deny the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) Grant Application for Pedro Delgado at 210/220 Wildwood Ave. as proposed by the applicant and that the design as proposed by staff be approved. The motion carried 3-0.

A motion was made by Millington/Arsenault to approve the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) Grant Application for Toheed Ahmad at 127 Wildwood Ave. subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant shall submit an updated cost estimate.
- 2) The lap siding shall transition 48” onto the north and south side of the building.
- 3) The 2x10 top trim shall extend the full length of the building onto both the south and north sides.
- 4) The Western Red Cedar above the canopy is painted instead of stained.
- 5) The rot on the north side of the building is repaired.

The motion carried 3-0.

#### Presentation – 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report

Community Development Director Caldwell provided a brief overview on the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report and said that every jurisdiction in the State is required to prepare the annual report. The purpose of the document is to report on the City’s progress in implementing its General Plan. The report will be presented to the City Council at their meeting of February 3, 2026, and then sent to the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) as required by State law.

He provided a brief overview of the plans, projects, and accomplishments for 2025 and noted that the Building Division of the Community Development Department issued 139 Building Permits with a total valuation of \$2,328,426.

He said that the City held hearings regarding PG&E’s Rule 20A Undergrounding Program, offering a ratepayer funded pathway for Rio Dell to convert overhead electrical distribution

lines to underground service. The City Council approved amended the boundaries of Underground District No. 2 to meet the required public interest criteria. The 20A work will result in a dramatic aesthetic benefit to the community along Wildwood Ave.

Other noted accomplishments included the Heussler 4-Plex Design Review for the construction of a new 2-story 4-Plex, the Humboldt Seed Co. Cannabis Dispensary Conditional Use Permit, Housing Text Amendments as mandated by the State, updates to the Industrial Commercial zoning regulations, update of the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps, approval of a Conditional Use Permit for Margro Advisors for two vacation dwelling units, amendments to the City's Accessory Dwelling Unit Regulations, Update of the Safety Element incorporating the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, amendments to the City's Sign/Billboard Regulations, approval of Façade Improvement Grant applications, various grant application submittals, and continued exploration of a potential shared use of the Todd parcel as part of the proposed relocation of the Cal Fire Humboldt-Del Norte Unit Headquarters.

Community Development Director Caldwell agreed to continue the item to the next regular meeting for further discussion if necessary.

Commissioner Arsenault asked for an update on a new larger electronic LED sign.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that the City was not successful in getting the grant and said the estimated cost for a new sign was \$15,000.

Commissioner Knight asked if there was any information on potential tax revenue for the City.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that the Finance Director would be submitting the mid-year financial report to the City Council in a few weeks.

## **STAFF COMMUNICATIONS/UPDATES**

Community Development Director Caldwell said that there were no items scheduled yet for the next meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Knight/Arsenault to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting on February 24, 2026.

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Patrick Knight, Vice-Chair

Attest:

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Jessica Hill, City Clerk