PORTERVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 4, 2003
CITY HALL - 5:30 P.M.

Call to order: 5:30 p.m.
Roll Call: West, Martinez, Hamilton, Irish, Stadtherr

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

There were no oral communications at this time.

SCHEDULED MATTERS

1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT WORK PROGRAM AND PRIORITIES

The City Manager stated the staff report will be presented by Mr. Brad Dunlap, Community Development Director.

Mr. Dunlap informed that in response to an increasing workload, increasingly technical projects and fewer employees assigned to the Community Development Department, it is necessary to update the Council on current and pending projects relative to their schedule and staff’s understanding of priority. Mr. Dunlap explained there is a list of projects attached to the report with information on cost, proposed year of implementation and potential funding and related comments. Mr. Dunlap said there is also a list of programs and significant work efforts that are administered by staff, as well as a listing of the committees that the Community Development Department is involved with.

Mr. Dunlap explained that the projects on the list are all considered important by staff and are recommended for completion in the year indicated. Further, the projects on the list should be evaluated relative to the Department’s overall work load and availability of funds and staff resources to undertake that effort.

Mr. Dunlap stated he would like to walk the Council through the table that staff has provided which shows the breakdown of the projects, the costs, the proposed year to undertake the effort, potential funding, as well as comments. Mr. Dunlap explained that staff has assigned a prioritization ranking to each project. Mr. Dunlap said it is important to state that staff has already identified that all of the projects are important, but the rankings allow staff to prioritize.

Mr. Dunlap explained that the final sheet attached to the report is in response to a question that Councilman Irish asked a few meetings ago about how many committees the Community Development Department is involved with. Mr. Dunlap informed the Council that the Community Development Department is involved in 26 committees, 18 of which staff is responsible for producing the agendas and work effort that is considered at the meeting.
After discussions, the City Council directed staff to leave the Island Annexations as a priority #3, bring back to the Council a summary of committees (i.e. purpose, frequency, etc.) and they will assist in prioritizing them.

2. STUDY SESSION: REVIEW OF THE CITY’S SIGN ORDINANCE

The City Manager stated that Mr. Dunlap has prepared a presentation regarding sign regulations and sign policies within the City of Porterville as requested by the City Council.

Mr. Dunlap informed the Council that in all but a few cases, signage is regulated by Article 20 of the Porterville Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Dunlap said there are a few cases where signage is regulated through something other than Article 20 and those instances would be under a Planned Development or Design Overlay. Mr. Dunlap explained that Porterville’s regulations are primarily centered around the size of signs, with a lesser emphasis on the number of signs and there is only a slight influence on the type, color and design of signage. Mr. Dunlap stated he would like to show the Council some photographs of existing signage, both good and bad. Mr. Dunlap said staff has provided a breakdown of Porterville’s sign regulations based on the major classification of signs, the zone the signs are allowed in, the benefits of the current code and any weaknesses staff has identified with the current code.

After discussions, the City Council concluded that staff return to Council in February with a discussion on sign code revisions and enforcement progress through code enforcement.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Dick Eckhoff, 30 E.Oak Ave., Chairman, Downtown Porterville Association, Inc., came forward and explained he did not speak earlier because he did not know what was going to take place tonight on the sign ordinance. Mr. Eckhoff stated he wanted to throw out a few comments and ask a few questions to get clarification on the sign regulations. Mr. Eckhoff asked the following questions: if painting on glass windows is not also considered part of the sign regulations; if there is a regulation somewhere outside the sign ordinance regarding blockage of windows completely cutting off the view; about signs that are mounted on the glass; about open/closed signs and credit card acceptance signs; if neon signs are acceptable under the current code; if dimensions means overall width at their widest point by overall height; what the status of the interim code enforcement for sign regulations will be and if the current regulations will be enforced totally. Mr. Eckhoff commented he sees banners as being a viable means of temporary advertising, but he too has a problem with them being hung up for an indefinite period or being used for anything other than temporary. Mr. Eckhoff said banners should never be used as a permanent sign and he would see no problem with some type of permit requirement. Mr. Eckhoff finished by stating he will talk with some of the downtown merchants regarding the issue of sign regulations and he is very ready to see some changes and enforcement on this issue.

Council Member Hamilton thanked the staff for their efforts in bringing Home Depot to Porterville.
The City Council adjourned to a Closed Session at 7:16 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

3. CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54956.9; CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL: EXISTING LITIGATION; CASE NAME: DOBSON V. CITY OF PORTERVILLE; CITY ATTORNEY: JULIA LEW

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned to Tuesday, August 5, 2003 at 7:00 p.m.

Georgia Hawley, Deputy City Clerk

Becky West, Community Development Secretary

SEAL:

Richard M. Stadtherr, Mayor