NEVADA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION NEVADA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA MINUTES of the meeting of June 22, 2023 1:30 p.m., Board Chambers, Eric Rood Administration Center, Maidu Avenue. Nevada City, California MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Duncan, Milman and McAteer MEMBERS ABSENT: Chair Greeno and Commissioner Mastrodonato STAFF PRESENT: Principal Planner, Tyler Barrington, Assistant County Counsel, Trevor Koski, Deputy County Counsel, Doug Johnson, Senior Planner, Kyle Smith **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** 1. Housing Ordinance Amendment PLN23-0059; ORD23-1; GPT23-0001 **STANDING ORDERS:** Salute to the Flag - Roll Call - Corrections to Agenda. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m. Roll call was taken. Principal Planner, Tyler Barrington, advised Chair Greeno and Commissioner Mastrodonato are absent. **CHANGES TO AGENDA:** Chair Duncan asked if there are any corrections to the agenda. Planner Barrington advised there were no changes to the agenda. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Members of the public shall be allowed to address the Commission on items not appearing on the agenda which are of interest to the public and are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Planning Commission, provided that no action shall be taken unless otherwise authorized by Subdivision (6) of Section 54954.2 of the Government Code. None Chair Duncan opened public comment at 1:35pm. With none coming forward, public comment was closed at 1:35pm. **COMMISSION BUSINESS:** None **CONSENT ITEMS:** PLN23-0057; MIS23-0006: Annual review of the Development Agreement (DA) for the Harmony Ridge Subdivision. Approved at hearing. PLN23-0065; MIS23-0007: Annual Review of the Terra Alta Subdivision Development Agreement (DA) for the Deer Creek Park II Final Map. Approved at hearing. 

Commissioner McAteer thanked Andy Cassano and Mr. Amaral for all the work they have done at Deer Creek Park II and improved for fire season.

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## **PUBLIC HEARING:**

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1:30 p.m. PLN23-0059; ORD23-1; GPT23-0001. Recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to amend Chapter II of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code, Chapter IV of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code to reduce barriers to housing production including the following topical areas and corresponding Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) Sections: Accessory Dwelling Units, Junior Accessory Dwelling Units, and Second Dwellings consistent with Government Code Section 65852.21 (Section L-II 3.19); Density Bonus (Section L-II 3.16); Emergency Shelters (Land Use Tables 2.2-2.6); Employee Housing (Section L-II 3.10); In-Home Family Daycares (Land Use Tables 2.2-2.6); Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (Section L-II 3.19.1); Legacy Parcel Road Frontage Standards for Boundary Line Adjustments (Section L-II 4.1.3); Low-Barrier Navigation Centers (Land Use Tables 2.2-2.6); Medium Density Residential Maximum Density Standards (Section L-II 2.2.2); Minimum Parking Requirements Nearby Transit and Residential Parking Standards (Section L-II 4.9); Residential Care Facilities (Land Use Tables 2.2-2.6); Residential Ground-Mounted Solar Arrays (Section L-II 4.2.5 and 4.3.13); Mixed Use Density and Residential Housing in Commercial Zones (Land Use Tables L-II 2.4 and 2.5); Senior Citizen or Disabled Persons Housing Allowances (Section L-II 3.16); Technical Cleanup and Other Minor Changes (Various); Transitional and Supportive Housing (Land Use Tables 2.2-2.6 and Section L-II 3.20); and Urban Lot Splits (Section L-IV), and to amend Chapter 1. Land Use Element of the General Plan to increase allowed residential density increases from 6 to 8 units per acre in Urban Medium Density General Plan designations within Spheres of Influence (Policies 1.2.1.b, 1.2.4.b, and Table 1.3) and from 4 to 6 units per acre for mixed use residential development in Commercial and Industrial General Plan designations within Community Regions (Table 1.3) to maintain consistency between policy documents. RECOMMENDED ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: Recommend that the Board of Supervisors find the project statutorily exempt pursuant to Sections 15274 and 15282(h), and categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. RECOMMENDED PROJECT ACTION: Recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the amendment to the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance (ORD23-1) and approve the General Plan Text Amendment (GPT23-0001). PLANNER: Kyle Smith, Senior Planner.

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Senior Planner, Kyle Smith, introduced himself and began his presentation for the 2023 Zoning Ordinance Amendments to remove barriers to housing production. Planner Smith described the project background which requires an annual review for regulations and statutory compliance. He stated one of the Board Objectives is housing and homelessness. He went on to describe changes in state law for housing and advised in 2021 the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution 21-018 and directed staff to apply for a REAP Grant (Regional Early Action Planning Grant) in which the grant was awarded to County Planning Staff. The final contract award was received in late fall of 2022. He explained the outreach, engagement and notification that was completed during this project which started in the fall of 2022. Planner Smith went on to describe the project description and intent of the Ordinance Amendment which includes updates to comply with State Law and the Statutory updates which includes ADU updates, Senate Bill 9, CA State Density Bonus Law, Employee Housing, In-Home Family Daycares and Fair Housing. Planner Smith described Housing Element Implementation and Technical updates. He advised there are 2 land use entitlements which include amendments to the Land Use and Development Code and General Plan Land Use Element. He went on the explain the Notice of Exemption for CEOA and the requirement for all future housing development to require a CEQA review. Planner Smith finished his presentation and offered to answer any questions.

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Commissioner Milman asked if SB 9 increases the FAR ratios for the County for allowable housing.

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Planner Smith advised the County does not have floor-area ratios in the site development standards, as the County uses impervious surface coverage requirements, which achieves a similar intent by a different metric. He explained the zoning ordinance amendments does not amend the impervious surface requirement

and will still apply. Duplex or lot splits or developments are required to be consistent with local development standards as long as they are objective in which the impervious surface is considered since it is percentage based.

111 Commissioner Milman asked if the Fair Housing does not require a public comment period at this point.

Planner Smith advised Fair Housing is treated like other housing developments, such as other multifamily residential developments, and will require some level of public hearing even if it just for a design review. These housing types would be treated in similar fashion. If any of these developments were proposed in a single-family residential unit then there would be no hearing or discretionary approval required.

118 Commissioner Milman asked Planner Smith to explain further what Consistent with Underlining General 119 Plan or Zoning densities means.

 Planner Smith advised if a certain parcel would be allowed to have 2 units consistent with density. For example, if the parcel is in a RA-3 zone, which is a residential agricultural zoning with a 3-acre minimum parcel size but if this parcel was to be 6 acres, they would be allowed to have 2 residences because the County's density is based on the minimum parcel size. Similarly, if the parcel was 15 acres in a RA-3 district, a property owner would be allowed to have up to 5 units on that parcel through several different mechanisms, such as traditional multi family residence or dwelling groups. If the parcel was to be subdivided there must be enough acreage to support each residence.

129 Commissioner Milman asked if the change in the ordinance would allow 10 homes instead of 5 in the RA-130 3 district.

Planner Smith stated the change is to allow for different types of housing. Currently R1 and RA districts in the Land Use and Development code does not allow duplexes, duets, or fourplexes to be developed outside of community regions. The Land Use and Development Code would require 5 individual single family residential units instead of allowing one structure or multiple structures which gives homeowners or builders the opportunity to build different housing types which this amendment would allow.

Commissioner Milman stated SB9 would allow a parcel 2 units regardless of if it is a duplex or not. She asked if this amendment is allowing something different than that.

Planner Smith stated SB9 does allow for a duplex on the parcel that previously only allowed one unit. He stated this would increase the potential density for those R1 units in the urbanized clusters.

144 Commissioner Milman asked since RA-3 is not in an urban area so it would not apply to them.

Planner Smith advised that is correct. SB9 allowance only applies to the urbanized areas and only applies to R1 zoning district.

149 Commissioner Milman asked if septic tank capacity is based on how much can perc or what size the tank 150 is.

Planner Smith stated both apply. He explained the length of the leach field and the soils that exist along with how quickly it can perc plus also the size of the tank to incorporate the number of bedrooms. It is essentially a function of both the tank and the disposal field.

156 Commissioner Milman asked if all development would be subject to CEQA or if there are some exemptions.

Planner Smith stated there are a number of housing types that are exempt to CEQA and those exemptions generally make the assumptions that the development would have minimal or no impacts to the environment

which includes ADUs, JADUs, Fair Housing and those types of development as long as they are a residential development units and consistent with the CEQA exemption.

163 Commissioner Milman asked if there are changes to the multi-family districts.

Planner Smith stated most of the changes apply to residential dwellings, generally, so it could be single family or multifamily homes. Most of the zoning changes are in RA or R1 district except the R2 district increase to density within the sphere of influence of the City, trying to be consistent with the General Plan and promote housing development.

Commissioner Milman asked with all of these changes, what types of impacts would be anticipated.

Planner Smith advised the hope is for it to be easier to build housing developments in some of these community regions and throughout the County. He stated they are anticipating housing project proposals to be submitted for development. The zoning changes would allow for multi-generational housing and the ability to build housing types that were previously not allowed.

Commissioner Milman stated other jurisdictions have approved floor plans or manufacturers in advance, so the applicant doesn't have to go through the same review process.

Planner Smith advised that the REAP Grant that funds this project also funded an ADU workbook project and the Building Department have released some preapproved master plans that are available on a significantly reduced price point. There are 3 are preapproved and stamped plans which would help reduce the cost of housing production.

Commissioner McAteer asked how many people attended the workshops and if there was interest in this out in the Community.

Planner Smith advised there were 12 attendees at the workshop on June 8<sup>th</sup> prior to the close of the public comment period. He also stated there were also stakeholder round tables.

Commissioner McAteer asked if the changes described in the presentation are required because of the law changes in Sacramento.

Planner Smith advised the additional housing types, fair housing and development standards were due to the state law changing. The other housing implementation updates are not necessarily required by law, but it is the County implementing Housing Element Policies and technical updates are clean up.

Commissioner McAteer asked if bullet point 1 of the presentation is Sacramento telling us how things are going to run in California, if bullet point 2 is staff asking people what they would like to see out there and these ideas were created and if that is a correct statement.

Planner Smith stated the REAP Grant award was granted for us to be able to comply with state law and since the zoning code was going to be updated, the Community was asked for input, then made other changes that would essentially reduce barriers.

Principal Planner Tyler Barrington added the County is bound by many state laws and applicants are often referred to other state laws and part of the process is to put that information into our code to make it easier for the applicant to find the information needed.

Commissioner McAteer asked how the 3 cities in the County work together on this topic.

Planner Smith stated the cities and county generally work together on housing policy as it is developed however, due to each jurisdiction being in different stages of compliance, this was not worked on

collaboratively. Planner Smith explained the Town of Truckee just recently adopted their housing element and are ahead of where the County is at. City of Grass Valley has already made changes as well. Each jurisdiction can choose to implement the changes as they come up.

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Commissioner McAteer asked if he has a house in R1 and he has decided... he went on to explain in the
Bay Area there is a huge issue that you convert your garage into living space. He asked if that is being
changed due to these laws.

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Planner Smith stated essentially it is as that garage could be turned into a JADU (Junior ADU) which would allow for a residence inside the existing walls as long as it is fewer than 500sq ft. If the garage was over 500 sq ft or detached, it could be converted into an ADU. These changes do allow for an ADU or JADU developed on every lot that allows residential housing.

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Commissioner McAteer asked if outside form the garage, to give another example of a JADU and if that is just adding a room onto an existing house.

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Planner Smith advised that a JADU cannot expand the footprint, but it is essentially for what is called an in-law unit such as a garage or an apartment over the garage.

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233 Commissioner McAteer asked if he can push out from his house to increase the footprint.

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Planner Smith advised that changing the footprint of the residential structure would be considered an ADU as the expansion of an existing structure is limited to 150 sq ft.

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Commissioner McAteer asked if he can push out without regulations if it is under 150 sq ft.

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Planner Smith advised both the JADU and ADU are still required to comply with development standards such as setbacks, hazardous vegetation clearance, and impervious surface coverage. This law is to allow for those additional types of housing.

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Commissioner McAteer asked what a separate mother-in-law unit is called.

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Planner Smith advised an Accessory Dwelling Unit.

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Commissioner McAteer asked if he was to have a separate stand-alone mother-in-law house, he would have to be able to fit that structure on the property conforming to setbacks and asked if there are additional allowances for that.

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Planner Smith stated there are allowances for ADUs are allowed to encroach into the setback as much as up to 4 feet from the side and rear property line, but the County front yard setbacks would still apply.

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Commissioner McAteer asked if he had ¼ of an acre with a residential house and wants to add a mother-in-law house, how big can it be.

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Planner Smith stated of the house if detached the maximum size of an ADU is 1200 sq ft.

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Commissioner McAteer stated the ADU could potentially be tied to the current septic system and the setbacks are down to 4 feet on the side and rear. He asked if he missed anything in talking about this from an R1 community standpoint.

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Planner Smith stated in additional to ADU and JADUs; SB9, lot splits and additional density allowance. In an urbanized area, the R1 lot could potentially be split into 2 lots and a duplex, or 2 units put on each lot.

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267 Commissioner McAteer asked what size the lot would have to be in order to be split.

Planner Smith stated there are mineral parcel sizes defined by state law. However, the lot splits would have to meet site development standards which would need to have an adequate area for septic disposal and 100% repair area.

Commissioner McAteer asked if he was to build a 1200 sq ft ADU on the back of his property, could he also get a lot split and have it be a separate taxable lot.

Planner Smith stated if the lot split was to occur in an urbanized area, there could be a primary residential home and an ADU on each lot.

Commissioner McAteer asked if urbanized areas are within the County and where they are located.

Planner Smith advised urbanized areas are located in the areas surrounding Nevada City, Grass Valley, the Town of Truckee, part of Alta Sierra, Lake of the Pines and Lake Wildwood.

Commissioner McAteer would like to know where all the urban clusters exist within our jurisdiction.

Planner Smith provided a map from the Sate that shows the areas around Grass Valley and Nevada City as urbanized clusters.

Commissioner McAteer asked if the urbanized clusters are only in the cities and not within the County's sphere of influence.

Planner Barrington advised the map shown might not be entirely accurate as the map the originally used, which showed census date from 2010 identified other locations outside the cities as urbanized cluster areas.

Commissioner McAteer asked if the land owned by BLM, which is sitting fallow, and the state is not dealing with, this amount of empty unused land could be used for housing. He stated the BLM land near his home is fire hazard and a nonproductive piece of land. He asked Planner Smith if he could comment on that.

Planner Smith stated the federal government trumps both state and local law and are allowed to do with the land as they are directed. He also advised the state has adopted the surplus lands act which allows state entities to start to identify surplus land for housing which will eventually trickle down to the local agencies.

Commissioner McAteer stated just because the federal government, essentially BLM, owns thousands of acres of land within Nevada County that it's a shame that everyone says its federal land and leave it at that. He stated there needs to be some leadership to deal with the BLM bits and pieces out there that could be used for housing or set up as a land trade. He stated it is a lost opportunity and fire hazard as BLM lands are torch pockets within this community.

Chair Duncan stated the proposal today does give the County the option to increase affordable housing. She asked if a consultant was hired for the grant award that was received.

Planner Smith advised the grant funds were allocated to several areas and some consultants were hired for some areas such as for the ADU workbook, but the ordinance amendments were done in house by Planning Staff. He continued by explaining the ADU workbook is a joint effort with other foothill counties and a consultant was hired for that project. Also, consultants have been hired to work with the Cities to undertake some analysis on infostructure to support future housing.

Chair Duncan asked if that also included the energy grid to support future housing.

Planner Smith advised the analysis is more on water than on energy.

Planner Barrington advised the pass-through grant is focused on wastewater. He advised Nevada City, City of Grass Valley and Town of Truckee were all awarded funds through the REAP Grant to look at some of their key areas to look at where they would like to build housing.

Chair Duncan stated the County needs to consider where the energy is going to come from as we currently have unmet needs for energy, and we are talking about increasing density and the energy source needs to be looked into. She stated there has been a lot of talk lately about CC&Rs and how communities that have CC&Rs probably have no clue increased density is coming. She advised that community meetings are intended to alert the community and understand how they may be impacted. She voiced her concern with the lack of participation and attendance at the meeting. She voiced concern about Community Workshops and the Community tends to not understand what that means to participate and attend. She would like to see things to be broken down into understandable language for the Community to understand and participate in the process. Chair Duncan stated County Care Homes has been a hot topic without public notification. She voiced her concern about the lack of information sent out to the Community to let them know the new laws may impact them. She would like to see more Community meetings as 12 people from the Community attending the workshop, is not enough. She voiced her concern that Community meetings and notification needs to be improved which the Planning Department may want to take on. She stated the better public outreach and participation in needed.

Commissioner Milman asked how many of these changes were dictated by the State and how many were Planning Department changes.

Planner Smith advised the majority, approximately more than 60%, are requirements in order to be consistent with State law, 30% are Housing Element implementation updates, and 10% are technical updates.

Planner Barrington stated the Housing Element is a policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors which has a number of programs and policies that the Board intended for Planning to implement. He stated the Planning Department took the opportunity to use State funding to help implement some of those policies and programs.

Commissioner McAteer asked if he could see where the R1 changes are within the Counties jurisdiction so that we can see if we need to do outreach to the Community so they can understand what is available or provide to their homeowner's association. He stated the Planning Commissioners need to know the areas that are affected.

 Planner Barrington advised Commissioner McAteer's comment is noted and stated notices were sent out special interest groups, including homeowner's association, which have requested notification. He agreed we would like more participation but there was a very robust conversation at the Workshop regarding community alternative housing. He advised there are a lot of state mandated changes, that we are required to implement, even if we do not put the changes into our code, we are required to enforce those.

Commissioner McAteer stated he is not here to pick a fight over that issue. He continued with stating if the Commissioners had a map which said these are the areas that are really going to be affected in this R1 changes. He stated that is where the issue is going to be, not in an industrial district.

Commissioner Milman stated she wants to make sure the Commission is aware these changes have already gone into effect via the State laws. She advised this is just a codification for our own local laws.

Commissioner McAteer stated he does not know where these urbanized areas are. He stated that is all he is looking for.

Planner Barrington stated he does agree a map would be helpful and that Commissioner McAteer's comments have been noted.

Chair Duncan asked Commissioner McAteer if he is wanting to hold over the action until the next meeting.

Commissioner McAteer stated that since we are codifying the state law, he would still like to see a map of what communities would be affected. He would like to be able to direct staff to visit the affected communities and advise them of law changes.

Planner Barrington stated staff can commit to looking at the urban cluster map and create a list of property owners for notifications.

Chair Duncan stated she is surprised only 12 people showed up to the Workshop and the affordable housing folks must have been satisfied. In years past, the room would be filled or near capacity when items like this are being discussed. She stated staff must have met with folks and satisfied their questions since none of them showed up at the hearing.

Planner Barrington advised it was approximately a 2.5-hour in-depth discussion.

Commissioner McAteer stated his concern is that the people in Echo Ridge association have no clue what is about to happen to them.

Chair Duncan said she suspects Lake Wildwood and Lake of the Pines will not understand what is happening. She asked how State law trumps CC&Rs.

Commissioner Milman stated State law does indeed trump CC&Rs as it is stated clearing in SB9. She stated the conversation right now is about potential things that could happen to someone but on the other hand there is potentially a lot of people that live in these areas that would like to be able to build an ADU and have their kid, mother-in-law, a renter, etc to be able to live in them. This option is now available to them that was not available previously without potentially being turned into Code Compliance.

Chair Duncan agreed there will be people that are happy about it and some will not, but people still need to be aware. She stated she is concerned the homeowner's associations do not know about this.

Planner Barrington advised notifications did go out to Homeowners association on our list and went out to over 200 entities. He also advised several years back state law was changed so CC&Rs cannot prohibit ADUs.

Planner Smith advised even though there was a formal outreach, there is a lot of conversations and informal discussions that happen at the counter when people come in wanting to build ADUs and are not allowed or people want to ask questions about code compliance. He stated staff does a good job at educating each community member they speak with.

Chair Duncan stated it is still a small percentage of the community at large. She stated she is concerned ADUs do not have to comply with the fire improvements if the existing dwelling was developed prior to these conditions. She stated adding sprinklers have always been a cost factor when building an ADU.

Planner Barrington stated the exterior of the home still needs to meet wildland urban interface criteria such as defensible space.

Chair Duncan opened public comment.

Mimi Simmons, resident of Nevada City, stated she is a broker and deals with a lot of people that want to have ADUs. She advised she is on a committee to try and make the County more friendly to consumers and taking steps to be more proactive. She currently has a guest house, and even though she never rented it out, she decided she wanted to make it a legal ADU, and the County was great to work with. She did have some

processes to go through and her big concern is that one of the bedrooms in the main house was converted to a den, and in doing so, it reduced her home to a 2-bedroom then by adding the ADU, it would increase it back to a 3-bedroom house which could rely on the current septic system. However, she was advised she needed to put in a new septic tank, so her reason to be at the hearing is to hear how this will proceed, as she had to stop her project due to not being able to install a new septic tank.

Chair Duncan closed public hearing.

**Motion by Commissioner Milman** to Recommend that the Board of Supervisors find the project statutorily exempt pursuant to Sections 15274 and 15282(h), and categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

Second by Commissioner McAteer. Motion Carried on a 3/0 vote. (2 absent)

**Motion by Commissioner Milman** to Recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Ordinance amending Chapter II of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code and Chapter IV of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code (*Attachment 1*).

Second by Commissioner McAteer. Motion Carried on a 3/0 vote. (2 absent)

**Motion by Commissioner Milman** to Recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Resolution amending Chapter 1 of the Land Use Element of the General Plan (*Attachment 2*).

Second by Commissioner McAteer. Motion Carried on a 3/0 vote. (2 absent)

Chair Duncan asked for any informational items and project updates.

Planner Barrington advised there are no scheduled Planning Commission meetings at this time.

Chair Duncan stated past practices were to have meetings in Truckee and asked if any items would be coming forward for that.

Planner Barrington stated there are a few Use Permits but they are both incomplete at this time. He stated both of those items will be scheduled to be heard in Truckee.

Chair Duncan asked if the rafting companies are due for a review.

Planner Barrington advised that he does not believe that rafting companies have started this year due to the rivers being too high.

Chair Duncan asked if Darkhorse is expired or still alive regarding the Club House.

Planner Barrington believes they may be expired at this time, but they did submit a building permit for the facility they installed over the driving range.

Chair Duncan stated Quick Quack is in operation and asked when the Idaho Maryland Mine is going to the Board of Supervisors on October 2 and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Commissioner McAteer stated he was under the impression the Idaho Maryland Mine hearing was going to the Board in August and asked why it was extended to October.

Planner Barrington advised he is not aware of the reasoning behind those dates being chosen.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Commissioner McAteer at 2:50 p.m

485	Second by Commissioner Milman
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487	Chair Duncan adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.
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489	There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50p.m. to
490	the next meeting, at a date to be determined, in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 950 Maidu Avenue,
491	Nevada City.
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494	Passed and accepted this day of, 2023.
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497	Brian Foss, Ex-Officio Secretary
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